

Secretary's Report

Greg Lovett ARPS

Meetings

The Committee meet bi-monthly, all meetings being undertaken by Zoom. We have therefore had 6 meetings since the last AGM. Committee meetings generally last a couple of hours on a Friday evening. I must thank the members of the Committee for their diligence in making the effort to prepare and attend Committee meetings and in particular to turn up on time. While there are inevitably occasional absences, the members of the Committee had all done their level best to attend.

Committee

As I mentioned at last year's AGM, the Trustees of the RPS introduced some new Terms of Reference, the document that sets out how the Nature Group (and all the other Special Interest Groups) are governed. These changes have come fully in force over the last 12 months.

As a result as we come to this year's AGM we have been operating with an elected committee of 7 individuals:

Group Chair	Duncan Locke
Group Finance Officer	Peter Ward
Group Secretary	Greg Lovett
Group Engagement and Events Officer	Ann Miles
Group Communications Officer	Ian Wilson
Ordinary Committee Members	Dawn Osborn
Ordinary Committee Members	Ralph Snook

This is a smaller committee than we have been used to operating with historically, but we are allowed to delegate responsibilities to individual volunteers or to teams of volunteers to assist in the execution of committee duties or in delivery of Group activities. We have been lucky enough to have enjoyed the support and assistance of:

Christine Holt - Membership Secretary
Bruce Kendrick - Publicity and events
James Foad - Residential Weekend Advisor
David O'Neil - Immediate Past Chair

You may recall that Dawn Osborn announced that she will be stepping down as Editor of the Iris and the Spring 2025 Edition will be her last as Editor. While Dawn will be a very hard act to follow

we have received some offers of help in this respect and we hope to be able to announce the appointment of a new editorial team for the Iris in due course.

On the subject of changes, after many years helping to organise the annual Residential Weekend, James Foad has now stepped back from that role. Those of us that have had the pleasure of experiencing one of the Group's residential weekends in the past will be all too aware of the amount of hard work and effort that have gone into making them as successful as they have been.

Facebook

The Nature Groups' Facebook Page is moderated by Ann Miles and myself. We currently have 389. Members of whom 311 are considered to be active. One rate course of the year 115 people have applied to join the page, 63 of whom met the membership requirement and were allowed to join. We have declined membership of the page to 52 applicants, in each case because they failed to provide confirmation of their membership of the RPS and the Nature Group.

Of those who declared a gender, the membership is 66% male and 32% female.

The membership is largely UK based, 353 members are based in the UK, 7 in Ireland, 4 in the USA, 3 in each of India, New Zealand and Hong Kong. We also have 2 members in Switzerland and a member in each of Belgium, Israel and Gibraltar.

Perhaps unsurprisingly the most popular times to access the page is either over breakfast or later in the afternoon/early evening (UK time).

I am pleased to confirm that over the course of the year Ann and I have found the Nature Group Facebook page easy to moderate. Thanks to those who participate in the group we find that comments are generally helpful and supportive even where there are negative points to be made and, most of all, are relevant to our Nature Photography

Image Critique Forum

As some of you will be aware, this time last year we set up the "Towards Associate" image critique forum aimed at those members of the Group who are working towards the Associate qualification and who would like to receive feedback on individual images. This initiative was intended to be separate from the existing Advice Days and One to Ones (which look at panels of images) but is intended to be complimentary to them.

Our aim with the "Towards Associate" group has been to provide a forum for those taking part to provide feedback which will, over time, help them recognise what constitutes images that meet the criteria needed for inclusion in a panel of images at Associate level. The facility allows those taking part to upload images for positive critique by other members of that closed group. The group includes some individuals who have already achieved either Associate or Fellowship distinctions, who are able to offer advice and guidance.

Inevitably with a forum of this nature most people choose to participate for a limited time, and once they become more confident of what is required for the Associate qualification they will want to step back from membership as they concentrate on their panel submission. As a result there is generally only a short waiting list and I encourage those members who are interested in taking part to email me for further details.

Greg Lovett ARPS
30 March 2025