



## **Secretary's Report for AGM 2023**

### **Duncan Locke ARPS**

#### **Committee**

Since last year's AGM on the 9th April 2022, we have had five well attended Zoom Committee Meetings plus a number of shorter ones to discuss particular issues. Committee Meetings will continue to be held on Zoom at about 6 to 8 weeks intervals unless there is an opportunity for the Committee to meet face-to-face without incurring additional travel costs.

There has been one change to the Committee during the year. Nick Bowman stood down from the role of Assistant Programme Coordinator at the end of 2022 for personal reasons and I would like to thank him for the tremendous amount of work that he put into helping Ann Miles with Field Meetings.

The Committee is elected for two years and the present Committee will stand down at the AGM on the 1st April 2023. At full strength the Committee should have twelve Members and going forward into the 2023 – 2025 period we will only have eight Committee Members. We are always keen to hear from Group Members who are interested in joining the Committee and helping to run the Nature Group. We are also aware that we have some specialist roles on the Committee and long term will have the difficult task of filling these.

#### **Nature Group Membership**

I act as Membership Secretary in that I monitor the number of Members in the Group and send a welcome e-mail and a copy of the latest issue of The Iris to each New Member.

The membership of the Group as of the 1st March 2023 was 899 as compared to 960 Members on the 1st March 2022, so there has been a 6.5% decrease in membership during the year. Some of this decline may be due to the ongoing issues with the RPS Membership System, particularly in the summer of 2022.

Over the period 1st March 2021 to 1st March 2022, 125 New Members joined the Group and, based on overall membership numbers, 186 left so there continues to be a high turnover of Members.

As of the 1st March 2022, the Group had 841 Members in the UK, Eire, the Isle of Man and Channel Islands plus 58 overseas Members. The biggest overseas Group is in the USA, with 14 Members.

Although the Group membership is down from last year, I am encouraged by the fact that we had 28 New Members join the Group in January and February 2023, which is comparable with past years.

## **Issues with the RPS Membership System**

As many of you will know the RPS installed a new Customer Relationship Management system in the middle of 2022 and this has caused significant issues with the Membership and Event Booking systems. One area that has been a particular issue for me is the preparation of the address list for The Iris. A number of Members' addresses have become corrupted on the database so please let me know if you do not receive your copy of The Iris and do login to the RPS Website and check that your details are correct.

Due to the issues with the Membership System I have delayed handing over the role of Membership Secretary to Chris Holt. This I will be doing in the near future.

## **What Do Nature Group Members Want?**

As I said at last year's AGM, I believe that the aim of the Group is to inspire and educate its Members into taking better images of the natural world and so we must organise events for Members to get together and develop their nature photography. We now have an ever growing programme of Field Meetings, Workshops and Residential Weekends. It would be very helpful if you could let Ann Miles or any other Committee Member know what events you would like the Group to organise.

## **Date and Venue of the 2023 Spring Meeting / AGM / Opening of the Annual Exhibition**

Finally, the 2024 Spring Meeting, AGM and opening of the Annual Exhibition will be at Smethwick Photographic Society on Saturday the 20th April 2024 (date to be confirmed). In the mean time, stay safe and enjoy your natural history photography.

Duncan Locke ARPS  
15th March 2023