

# BDS Trustee Policy and Guidelines

(also applicable in part to Staff Officers and Voluntary Officers)



## Background

The BDS Trustees have in the past made a number of decisions about how Trustees should act, but these decisions are often contained in the Minutes of Trustee meetings and therefore unknown or difficult to obtain for those who follow later. This document aims to draw together these decisions and other guidance in one place that can be easily updated. It would be sensible if Officers, both Staff and Voluntary, also followed this guidance wherever possible and appropriate. This guidance document includes an outline description of roles, so that those in office can see which duties fall where within the organisation. These descriptions are not exhaustive, just an indication of who does what.

In addition to these notes, the Charity Commission website is a useful source of information. Links include <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/list-of-charity-commission-cc-guidance-publications> for a list of publications and <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/charity-commission-guidance> for various guidance documents.

## BDS Trustees

The Constitution of the BDS states that there must be between 3 and 12 Trustees. Principle roles comprise the Chairman, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and DCG Convenor (an ex officio member of the board). Three or four of these principle Trustees can act as an Executive for day-to-day decisions. The Trustees of the BDS have overall responsibility for the management and administration of the Society.

## BDS Trustees should aim to :-

- Attend Trustee meetings, BDS Members' Days and other meetings, functions and presentations on behalf of the Society whenever possible
- Promote the Society and act to protect its good name
- Carry out the duties of their office within agreed timescales
- Respond to emails and other communications as promptly as possible, whether from other Trustees or BDS members or the general public

All Trustees will be expected to sign a formal declaration of eligibility before taking up the role.

## Finance

As a general principle, if a Trustee, Staff Officer or Voluntary Officer has a budget they should work within this and they are only authorised to use funds on previously agreed budgeted items. Any items outside the agreed budget or significantly higher in cost than the agreed budgeted amount must be referred to the BDS Executive for approval. In the case of Staff Officers, the Line Manager may be consulted in the first instance

The Bankers of the Trust are Lloyds plc. Two signatures are required to authorise payments exceeding £500.

- The Treasurer should be notified if it appears likely that the cost of a budgeted item will be exceeded by the lesser of 10% or £100. The Treasurer will discuss the position and seek approval from the BDS Executive for appropriate action if necessary.
- The Treasurer should be advised in advance of any proposals for any items of expenditure which were not envisaged in the original budget proposal, regardless of whether these can be accommodated within the overall budget allocation. If the Treasurer agrees the expenditure is reasonable, then the matter should be referred to the BDS Executive for approval.
- The Treasurer should be informed if there is a significant change in the activity for which the budget was allocated. If the cost of a particular activity falls below the allocated budget then the surplus may not be used for other purposes without the approval of the BDS Executive.

- **Trustees and Officers are strongly advised to follow these guidelines and seek prior approval if in doubt, as the Society cannot guarantee that it will cover expenditure incurred outside of these guidelines.**
- The BDS has agreed to maintain a financial reserve of at least 25% of the annual general expenditure of the Society.
- Trustee travel expenses can be claimed at a maximum of 25p per mile or a maximum of 2<sup>nd</sup> class rail fare (unless first class is shown to be cheaper)
- Trustees and Officers are expected to deal promptly with any new memberships and sales; money and explanatory details for both should be sent to the Membership or Shop Officers
- Trustees and Officers are expected to deal promptly with all other financial items, including donations; these should be sent to the BDS Treasurer

### **Computer use (Trustees and Officers)**

- Maintain an active and up-to-date anti-virus system on all computers and other electronic devices
- Ensure electronic equipment and sensitive files are password protected or encrypted
- Backup important data regularly and maintain it securely
- Start all Society related emails with BDS in the subject line to allow easy filtering of relevant items
- Do not send emails without a subject line, as these are likely to be considered 'spam'

### **Other items of note**

- The Society has Trustees Indemnity Insurance (TII) (cover for £500,000)
- Local group events are covered for insurance purposes by BDS Public Liability Insurance, provided that organisers advise BDS and the event is shown on the BDS website prior to the event taking place
- Trustee meetings will if possible be timed to follow those of the DCG so that any items relating to the latter that need Trustees approval can be dealt with efficiently

## **Roles of Trustees, Staff and Voluntary Officers**

A brief summary

### **BDS Patron – Sir David Attenborough**

### **BDS President – Mike Dilger**

### **Chairman of the Board of Trustees (volunteer)**

Responsible for overseeing the day-to-day running of the Society. Chairs Trustee meetings. Leads the BDS Exec.

### **Vice-Chair**

Co-ordinate the preparation and delivery of the overall BDS strategy. Act as a member of the BDS Exec.

### **Secretary (volunteer)**

Responsible for the administration of the Society, including submissions to the Charity Commission.

### **Treasurer (volunteer)**

Oversees all financial matters on behalf of the BDS.

### **DCG Convenor (volunteer)**

Oversees the conservation, recording and scientific activities of the BDS.

### **Other Trustees (volunteers) – elected annually in rotation**

Assist in the strategy and decision making of the Society.

### **Conservation Officer (full-time paid staff)**

Responsible for conservation issues in England and Wales, also partly in Scotland in partnership with BDS Scottish Officers. Looks after Darter, the annual online recording feedback. Runs specific projects such as the White-legged Damselfly Investigation. Helps to raise media and public awareness of BDS and dragonflies.

### **Conservation Outreach Officer**

Oversees BDS publicity, including social media. Collates and edits Dragonfly News. Has responsibility for English and Welsh HotSpots. Organises BDS outreach opportunities and recruits outreach volunteers.

### **Scotland Officer Conservation (part-time paid staff)**

Works with land owners and site managers to promote the conservation and recording of dragonflies in Scotland, particularly Scotland's suite of special species.

### **Scotland Officer Projects (part-time paid staff)**

Works with land owners, site managers, community groups and individuals to raise awareness of dragonflies and improve dragonfly habitats.

### **BDS Fundraiser (part-time paid staff)**

Research suitable grants to support our BDS work, apply for grants, appeal for donations and ensure all grant reports are submitted as requested.

### **Records Officer (paid role)**

Oversees the data gathering and storage of dragonfly records. Works with the Biological Records Centre and NBN Atlas to ensure secure and accurate data storage and accessibility.

### **Webmaster (volunteer)**

Maintain and update as necessary all aspects of the BDS website in association with the BDS Conservation Officer and others

### **Membership Officer (honorarium)**

Oversees all membership matters including membership subscriptions, reminders and database. Ensures that all BDS members receive their twice-yearly mailings.

### **Librarian/Archivist (volunteer)**

Stores and maintains the BDS archive of newsletters / magazines, journals and others important papers.

### **Dragonfly News magazine Editor – currently part of Conservation Outreach role**

Collate and edit twice yearly issues of Dragonfly News.

### **Journal Editor (volunteer)**

Collate and edit twice yearly issues of the BDS Journal.

### **Field Meetings Organiser (volunteer)**

Encourage BDS members to lead events and support Field Meeting Leaders with risk assessments and guidance notes. Ensure all BDS events are publicised on the BDS website.

**Shop Manager (volunteer)**

Purchase agreed stock items for the BDS shop, advertise items for sale and process orders.

**Migrant Recorder (volunteer)**

Collate records of migrant dragonflies and chair the Odonata Records Committee (OCR) on behalf of the BDS.

**Groups within the BDS****Dragonfly Conservation Group – voluntary members, plus ConsOff and Records Officer**

The DCG is a standing body of the BDS. The DCG aims to co-ordinate the conservation, education, research and training aspects of the BDS, working closely with the Trustees, BDS Recording Scheme and Staff Officers.

**BDS Recording Scheme – network of voluntary members**

A network of Vice-County Recorders and individual recorders who collect, process and submit dragonfly records to the national database and hence the NBN Atlas via iRecord, other recording schemes and the BDS Records Officer.