

FEDERATION OF BRITISH BONSAI SOCIETIES &
FRIENDS OF THE NATIONAL BONSAI COLLECTION

Minutes of Annual General Meeting for the year ending
31 December 2024

12 p.m. Sunday 23th March 2025 at the
Louden Suite, Birmingham Botanical Gardens, Edgbaston, Birmingham

1) Members present: Committee members – Peter Fielding, Malcolm Hughes, Barry Walker, Kim Turton

Societies. Ambion B. S. South Staffs, Cardiff and Glynderi Bonsai Group.

2) Apologies.

Committee members – Nigel Wright, Chris Durne and Denise Baum – Pick.

Societies. Fenland, Akamatsu, South Yorkshire, North Lincs, Kent, South Devon, Newbury and District, Leicester and Somerset.

Of the societies who sent their apologies, all had nominated the Chairman to carry their proxy.

3) Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the 20th March 2023

The minutes of the previous AGM were presented and accepted as accurate. Proposed by Malcolm Hughes South Staffs BS, seconded by Peter Fielding of Ambion. Passed unanimously.

4) Matters arising. There were no matters arising from the previous minutes.

5) Reports.

a. Chairman.

Peter Fielding presented his written report which is appended to these minutes. Proposed by Kim Turton and seconded by Dave Barnsley of South Staffs.

b. Financial.

Treasurer Malcolm Hughes reported that current FoBBS cash holdings are £9092.37. He feels that the finances are at a satisfactory level and that of the 60 member societies in the past year the majority took up the separate insurance, the premium of which remains quite low.

He continued by explaining a problem that he had during the year regarding Companies House was resolved by a telephone conversation with them.

Malcolm concluded by explaining that after seeking advice with experienced people his proposal that FoBBS register as a charity in order to reduce the issues involving Companies house was dropped.

c. Friends of the National Bonsai Collection reports.**i) Chairman**

Barry Walker presented his written report which is appended to these minutes.

ii) Financial

Treasurer Malcolm Hughes reported that current FNBC cash holdings are £7677.79, up £651.60 from last year.

6) Election of officers

All officers were willing to stand again and were voted for on block. Proposed by David Barnsley (South Staffs Bonsai Society), seconded by Matthew Griffiths (Cardiff and Glyndoor). Unanimous.

7) Other business

Possible future FOBBS events were considered. Malcolm Hughes suggested that after the completion of the redevelopment work at the Botanical Gardens FoBBS might consider putting on an event similar to "Best of British Bonsai" event and that it might be marketed as a re-launch of the National Collection. Dates may be in 2027 or 2028 depending on completion of building work.

8) Date and venue of next AGM

22 March 2026. Birmingham Botanical Gardens 12:00 p.m.

FoBBS Chairman's Report

-  This past year has been excellent for FoBBS. There has been an increase in the number of societies joining making 60 for 2024. This is due in no small part to the exceptional insurance we can offer clubs and societies – which incidentally the price of which has been maintained for 2025!
-  Once again FoBBS entered the RHS Chelsea Flower Show and gained our 26th Gold award for the display. This beautifully manicured exhibit was built, maintained and overseen throughout the week by 'The Bonsai Boys', Nick Payne, Russ Wheeler, and Tim Back to whom the heartiest praise and thanks must be directed. The Bonsai Boys have agreed to put on our display at Chelsea for 2025 – thank you.
-  In June, FoBBS sponsored the British round of the New Talent Competition (NTC) with the winner competing against 23 other country winners in the European Bonsai Association (EBA) NTC competition. Brian MacKichan of Exeter Bonsai Club who kindly provided space at the 'Bonsai by the Sea', Exmouth, allowed FoBBS space for the very competent candidates to spend three hours producing a bonsai from scratch. The trees were supplied by Oakfield Bonsai nursery and the final judging was scrupulously conducted by judges Frank Reid and Rowly Hester. The winner was Nathan Oswin who represented Britain at Reus, Spain where he was highly placed.
-  The UK round of the 2025 NTC, will be at the Birmingham Botanical Gardens on 8 June being part of the Midland Bonsai Show. The EBA final will be in Lithuania in October.
-  After the most successful Bonsai South West Show hosted by RHS Rosemoor in 2023, FoBBS will again be sponsoring a similar show over the Bank Holiday weekend of 3 – 4 May 2025.
-  The National Bonsai Collection, being part of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens, hosted a number of Open Days; these were stewarded by some FoBBS Bonsai Society members, local to Birmingham. Clement summer weather allowed talking to interested visitors, promotion of Bonsai, and even to do a little work on their own trees!
-  Peter Fielding

FNBC Chairman's report

Well that's another year behind us, as per last year the collection is in good fettle apart from two large Junipers, they are both looking rather unwell. Having spoken with several people it seems they have suffered from being too wet for a long period of time; currently they are in the cold green houses at the gardens being folia sprayed each day whilst keeping the soil on the dry side. Fingers crossed for a recovery.

The area of the Birmingham Botanical Gardens in which the National Collection is currently contained is earmarked for demolition in the current redevelopment scheme. A meeting has been arranged this month to discuss possible new locations within the gardens for the Collection. I will report back with any progress. The plans are currently indicating that the collection will be a key feature within the gardens.

We did meet one member of the gardens who had been attending the gardens for over twelve years who accidentally went the wrong way and bumped into the collection when we were working on the trees, who had no idea it was there! This clearly shows how tucked away the current location is, hopefully we can resolve that issue with the relocation.

Once again a big thanks to all the maintenance team for their efforts throughout the year, and a call out to anyone who feels they may be able to assist with the collection.

Barry Walker
FNBS Chairman