

## 2015 Annual General Meeting

Here are a few updates from last year's AGM.

### Members' questions

A number of questions were raised by members. Here's what's happened on some of the subjects raised.

A question was asked about **the impact of the Trust's renewables programme on the wider environment** and how this might be reported in future annual reports. Peter Nixon, Director of Land, Landscape & Nature, answered the question and has provided the following update: 'The chief way of measuring and reporting progress is through our Environmental Management System (EMS) which provides a framework for managing and externally assessing our environmental performance. All but one of our regions and countries have achieved EMS accreditation up to at least level 2 and our final region will be assessed in October. We have achieved a cumulative 6% reduction in our in-house energy consumption against a 2009 baseline, and through continuing investment believe we will be able to hit our target of a 20% reduction by 2020. We are monitoring our water use and waste production, aiming to reduce both. We have reduced business miles travelled by staff. Our strategic focus on improving the condition of all our land for nature and the natural environment, with a focus everywhere on good soils management, will benefit carbon retention and reduce carbon dioxide emissions. As our ability to measure performance develops so will our ability to include detail in future annual reports'.

A question was asked about **how many staff were paid less than the new National Living Wage** of £8.15 per hour and when would the Trust be bringing all of its staff into line with this rate. Tina Lewis, Director of People & Legal Services, answered the question and has provided the following update: 'In 2015/16 our annual pay award was 4.5% which is considerably higher than the average pay award in the charity sector. As part of this pay award, we decided to pay the Government's National Living Wage rate of £7.20 per hour to all our staff from 1 April 2016, and not just those over the age of 25 years which is the statutory minimum. This will cost the Trust over £1 million a year. As a result 76% of our regular employees are now paid above the new Living Wage Foundation's recommended rate of £8.25 per hour (outside London). We are continuing to monitor the situation to ensure our pay rates remain fair and competitive. But it's not all about pay. We value all our staff and each year we ask them how they feel about working for the National Trust, across a wide range of topics including pay. In our last staff survey 94% told us they were satisfied with their working conditions. But we recognise we can always do more, and we will continue to work closely with our employees (and our union) to look at how we could improve further'.

A number of questions and comments were made about **volunteering at the Trust**, particularly about whether the Trust was doing enough to attract the volunteers it needs to open its places. The Chairman and Director-General acknowledged the vital contribution made by volunteers. They acknowledged too that the experience at different properties might vary but said that overall the evidence indicated there was no crisis in volunteer recruitment. This continues to be the case. Volunteering &

Participation Director, Helen Timbrell, explains: 'The good news is that in our 2015 annual volunteer survey 64% of our volunteers strongly agreed that they would recommend to others volunteering with the Trust. That's our highest score to date and met our target. This is good news for recruitment in future. We're doing more and more to make volunteering a rewarding experience. For example, work is underway to explore different ways of organising volunteer roles and responsibilities across a range of properties. This will help ensure properties continue to attract more volunteers'.

A question was asked about **whether the Trust was considering using tea with the Fairtrade accreditation**. Director of Brand & Marketing, Jackie Jordan, answered the question and has provided the following update: 'Last year the Trust tendered its tea supply contract as planned. The company *Clipper* was awarded the contract because of its track record of a 'triple bottom line' approach i.e. environmental, social and commercial. The *Clipper* range we'll be using is Fairtrade certified'.

### AGM resolutions

There were two AGM resolutions at the 2015 AGM. A members' resolution proposed that **the practice of emboldening the names on the voting form of the recommended candidates standing for Council** should cease. The resolution was carried by members and subsequently agreed by the Board and the Council. The names of recommended candidates will no longer be emboldened on the voting form. This change is being codified in the Trust's Governance Handbook, our compendium of governance process and policy.

A resolution presented by the Board sought members' agreement to a **proposal to reduce the size of the National Trust Council from 52 to 36** members by 2018. The resolution was carried by members and was subsequently agreed by the Board and the Council. The transition from 52 to 36 has now started.