

# **Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group**

**Registered Charity number 1161254**

ANNUAL REPORT OF TRUSTEES  
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31<sup>st</sup> OCTOBER 2018

## **CONSTITUTION**

The Rhododendron Camellia and Magnolia Group (the Group) is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation and is a partner group of the Royal Horticultural Society. It is independent of the RHS but the Partnership Agreement encourages close cooperation between the two charities. The Constitution and Rules which govern the Group are published on the Group's website <http://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org/information/constitution>

## **PURPOSE**

The purpose of the Group is to advance the education of the public in the plant genera rhododendron, camellia and magnolia and in the conservation and protection thereof by, but not by way of limitation:

- a) ensuring continuity in the care of collections of the genera in public gardens by supporting professional gardeners and taxonomists through travel sponsorship and other appropriate means
- b) operating a website
- c) organising shows
- d) producing literature
- e) acting as an advisor by providing assistance in identification, conservation and reproduction of unusual or rare species or cultivars.

Having regard to the Group's aims and objectives, the Trustees believe these meet the public benefit requirements of the Charities Act 2011.

## **TRUSTEES AND MANAGEMENT**

The charity trustees manage the affairs of the Group and may for that purpose exercise all its powers. The Trustees may delegate their powers and functions to the Management Committee. At least 2 Trustees must be present at any Management Meeting.

The Trustees are required to provide an Annual Report and independently examined accounts to the Charity Commission every year.

The Trustees who served during the year were:

|                  |                                   |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|
| David Millais    | (Chairman)                        |
| Philip Evans     | (until 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2018) |
| Graham Mills     |                                   |
| Dr. John Marston |                                   |
| Barry Cooke      | (from 1 <sup>st</sup> June 2018)  |

## **2017-2018 REVIEW**

The AGM was held at Westonbirt on 28<sup>th</sup> April, by kind permission of the Forestry Commission. This was followed by a guided tour of the rhododendrons within the Arboretum. Nick Butler, Jackie Butler and Barry Cooke were elected for additional roles within the Committee. The Management Committee held 2 meetings in London, with other meetings at approximately monthly intervals by Skype. Day to day running of the Group falls on the hard work and dedication of a small number of volunteers. Without a Yearbook Editor, the decision was taken to form an Editorial panel to commission and edit articles for publication, with Barry Haseltine as Lead Editor.

Following an approach by the Chairman, the Committee was delighted to learn that HRH The Prince of Wales has agreed to become our first Patron, and this is likely to be for a 5 year term. This is a great endorsement of our work, and we look forward to his patronage.

## **ACHIEVEMENTS**

Christopher Legrand, our new Events Coordinator, organized a successful tour to Northern Ireland, where a number of excellent gardens were visited. His organization of this tour was much appreciated by the many members who attended. Two new branches have been established to serve members in North-East England and Ireland.

The Bursaries sub-committee, under the Chairmanship of Dr John Marston, approved one application for study funds, and will seek to publicize the funds available in the future.

The Centenary Fund commissioned the propagation of a collection of magnolias bred by the late Kent nurseryman Amos Pickard, to be planted in the grounds of Canterbury Cathedral as they become ready. Discussions continued with Ness gardens to hold a plant reference collection of camellias suitable for the North.

The criteria for the 'Outstanding Gardens Scheme' for good rhododendron and magnolia gardens were agreed and the first gardens should be approved next year. This will link in with the International Camellia Society's Gardens of Excellence Scheme, to encourage and promote good gardens specializing in plants of our genera.

Public facing events: The Group supported and helped to organize 2 Shows at RHS Rosemoor, and 1 Show at RHS Harlow Carr. We also helped at the RHS Early Rhododendron Show at Savill gardens where the ornamental plants section was greatly admired.

Having made significant savings on the mailing costs to overseas members, the opportunity was taken to simplify and reduce our membership fees for overseas, by charging the same as UK rates.

## **FINANCIAL REVIEW**

The Group is very grateful to Jenny Fly who maintains our accounts most efficiently. She has been instrumental in helping the Trustees to prepare our annual return as a charity, recovered Gift Aid on donations made, and has ensured the smooth running of all financial operations.

Significant cost savings were made this year, especially relating to the Yearbook which has reverted to its smaller size, and savings on the Bulletin printing and its distribution to members. Due to the popularity of the tour to NI which was budgeted with smaller numbers, a larger surplus was made. As at the 31<sup>st</sup> October, our total reserves improved by £5999 to £47,796. Now that the accounts have turned from a loss a few years ago into a healthy surplus, the Trustees will consider how to make use of these funds.

This report and the accounts can be seen on the Charity Commission website, [www.charitycommission.gov.uk](http://www.charitycommission.gov.uk) and at <http://www.rhodogroup-rhs.org>

## **INDEPENDENT EXAMINER**

Member, and retired Chartered Accountant, Russell Beeson has carried out an independent examination of the Financial Statements of the Group relating to the 2017-2018 accounts as required by the Charity Commission. The Trustees are most grateful for his expert help.

## **APPROVAL**

Approved by the Trustees on 10<sup>th</sup> March 2019 and signed on their behalf by the Chairman, David Millais.

Signed:

David Millais

Date: 10<sup>th</sup> March 2019