

## News from Council – spring / summer 2014

**Elizabeth Stockdale**, General Secretary

Council met on March 2014 at the Conference Centre, Warwick HRI, Wellesbourne and then on 27th June 2014 at the White Hart Royal, Moreton-in-Marsh. Council has welcomed a number of new trustees Mike May, as General Treasurer, Roy Kennedy as Publications Officer, Matt Back as Convener of the Nematology group committee and Paul Miller as Convener of the Pesticide Application group committee. Council looks forward to working with all these new trustees. Council also approved applications for membership from 89 new applicants and noted the breadth of interest amongst applications for membership. We also look forward to working with these new members in the months and years to come.

At the March Council meeting, the annual process of staff review is completed. Council thanks all the AAB staff for their hard work in 2013 recognising that there have been a number of staffing changes during the year and staff have been able to maintain an effective service through their commitment to work flexibly. Council were pleased to be able to award small bonuses to all staff to recognise their hard work and effective delivery of the AAB objectives over the year.

Council is very interested in supporting the development of innovative approaches to information sharing and would welcome ideas from members on how we could achieve this most effectively as part of our “conference” programme. Council has agreed that funds will be made available to support conference organisers in the development of public engagement opportunities and/or the web-based resources that are publicly accessible alongside any AAB conference. Conference organisers should highlight any opportunities on their conference proposals. A working group is beginning to look at the use of

Aspects as an on-line resource and it will also take a preliminary look at other ways to capture and share information – if you want to get involved in its work or just want to share some good ideas you have seen work in practice, please contact me at [gensec@aab.org.uk](mailto:gensec@aab.org.uk)

During the spring, a survey of AAB’s young scientists was carried out. Council was concerned that the AAB was not currently providing the types of service and support that were attractive to early career scientists. The survey highlighted some areas /opportunities. Council thanks those individuals who had taken part in the survey. A Task and Finish group (August 2014 – August 2016) is being established to develop AAB work with young scientists. This group will review current provision, then develop and test options for the AAB to provide improved support for early career scientists. Again in this area if you want to get involved or just want to share some good ideas you have seen work in practice, please contact me at [gensec@aab.org.uk](mailto:gensec@aab.org.uk)

As you will have seen elsewhere in the Newsletter, 2014 is the centenary of the *Annals of Applied Biology* journal. The Centenary conference is being held 9-10 December at Rothamsted. It is also the final year for the current editor – Prof. Jari Valkonen – and Council want to express their thanks for the work that he has done for the Journal. At the June Council meeting, Prof. Simon Leather was confirmed as the new Editor-in-Chief for *Annals* from 2015. Meetings between Council and the *Annals* editors will take place over the next few months to ensure that we continue to build on our close relationships through an aligned strategy. Watch out for more information in the next newsletter about Prof. Simon Leather and his vision for *Annals* in the future.