



## Newsletter May 2025

### The Annual General Meeting

The Annual General Meeting took place on Saturday the 26<sup>th</sup> of April and was attended by 28 people. It was followed by a wonderful talk and power point display on herbaceous clematis by Richard Hodson.

The minutes of the AGM will be distributed as part of the papers for next year's AGM, but here are the main changes that were agreed by the members.

#### The Executive Committee

Aidan Armitage was elected Honorary Chair. Peter Culliney was re-elected as Treasurer, and I was re-elected as Membership Secretary. No nominations were received for the post of Honorary Secretary. Emma Coyle, Laurie Jones, Alison Smith and Clive Tolley remain as Committee Members, and they have now been joined by Valerie and Simon Nicoll who were elected to the Committee.

#### Membership Categories

Honorary Memberships to be retained, but no new ones created.

The category of Junior/Student Membership to be removed.

Existing Life Memberships to be retained for the present, but no new ones granted.

Single and Joint annual Memberships to be replaced by a Digital Membership or Digital Membership Plus depending on whether a digital or paper copy of the Journal is requested each year. This new Membership category will cover a household and will be introduced for existing members in 2026 and for new members when the new web site is launched later this year.

There is clearly a lot of detail behind these decisions and further information will be given out over the next few months. The Executive Committee sees the introduction of the new web site as crucial to the drive to increase the number



of members that we have, and the reduction in membership fees, as outlined in the papers circulated before the AGM, is also a key component of this.

New Membership Categories			
Category		Fee	Action
Honorary Membership	Worldwide	nil	To be retained
Life membership	UK only	-	To be retained
Digital Membership	Worldwide	£15	To be introduced
Digital Membership Plus	UK only	£25	To be introduced
Digital Membership Plus	Outside UK	£35	To be introduced
Statutory Membership	or Organisation	nil	To be retained

## The New Web Site

Peter Culliney is leading on this and, after much research into other plant society web sites, George Foster Design was approached to become our partner to develop a new visually and functionally attractive website for the Society. George has extensive experience of working with plant societies to improve their images and presence on the internet. Some of the content of the existing BCS web site has been imported but a great deal of new material and images are required. Peter gave a detailed presentation to members at the AGM, and it is hoped that the new web site can be launched in early Autumn.

## The need for a Social Media Strategy - Urgent help required

A social media strategy is yet to be developed, and the Executive Committee would welcome discussions with anyone who can assist in this. If you have anyone in your family who is 'social media savvy' and would be willing to help, please contact Aidan, Peter, or myself.

## Outstanding Membership Renewals

It was agreed that the period of grace for renewal of annual Memberships will be reduced from 6 months to 3 months with effect from 2026. To those of you who are yet to renew your membership this year please do not wait until the end of the current grace period but do so as soon as possible so that the Treasurer can finalize our budget for this year. 2025/26 promises to be a period of exciting change and expansion which I hope that you all wish to be part of.

## The Annual Journal 2025/26

It is that time of year when I send out a plea for articles for this year's Journal. Many of you did the Society proud in 2024 with the range and quality

of the material that you submitted. My role as Editor is not only to put the Journal together but to help budding writers to share their interests, knowledge and personal experiences of growing clematis. I know some people are unsure about whether they have anything interesting to say about clematis or are daunted by the challenge of writing for the Journal. That's where I come in. If you have ideas that you would like to talk about or photos that you think may be worth sharing, then please contact me and I will help you get them into the Journal. Go on, please give it a go.

## The British Clematis Society Seed Exchange

We propose to recommence the members seed exchange with your help.

Although this has declined over the last few years, we feel it is one of the benefits of being a member and may attract new members to our Society.

Firstly, seed that is donated needs to be trimmed, ripe and good quality rather than quantity.

Donations must be received by the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2025 to ensure entry into the seed list. If you think seed may arrive after the closing date you may contact Laurie Jones to arrange for an alternative posting arrangement.

If you send in a packet and you are unsure about the name (species, hybrid or cultivar) please give some indication of colour and/or size and/or photo (email) as the seed may otherwise be of little value.

We will not be posting out seed lists (email) except on request. Please contact me before the 1<sup>st</sup> November 2025 if you would like a seed list posted to you.

Best wishes,

Laurie

Mr Lawrence Jones

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Ken Black, Membership Secretary

6<sup>th</sup> May 2025