

The image features three red deer with large, dark antlers, positioned in a row against a solid blue background. The deer in the foreground is in sharp focus, showing its brown fur and facial features. The two deer behind it are progressively more faded and semi-transparent, creating a sense of depth. The text '2015 ANNUAL REVIEW' is overlaid on the left side of the image.

2015 ANNUAL REVIEW



THE BDS YEAR

2015 saw us continuing to focus on deer welfare and the promotion of conservation in balance with the environment. In delivering these aims we communicated with over 60 policy groups and organisations, attended more than 25 shows and provided 142 events throughout our branch network. We also launched new training initiatives, published important research and worked with young people across the country. To help us achieve all of this, over 200 organisations and individuals contributed sponsorship, donations and prizes.

Our year is as varied as our work, taking in local initiatives and national launches alongside managing the charity and fundraising.

Here is a sample from our 2015 diary.



January

- Installation of Temporary Illuminating Multipurpose (TIM) signage at deer crossing site in Hampshire to reduce driver speed and deer collisions

February

- Main Society audit
- Annual Deer Journal editorial meeting

March

- London dinner and fundraiser
- Dulverton Trophy inter-branch deer photographic competition judging

April

- First electronic membership survey conducted
- Five BDS DSC1 courses run across the country

May

- Retirement of Mark Nicolson after 14 years as Society Chairman
- Appointment of new BDS Chairman

June

- Annual Internet Auction raises £35,000
- Royal Cornwall show attracts record crowds

July

- Launch of Poaching Incident Recording Booklet at The Scottish Game Fair, Scone
- New Skills Award framework launched at CLA Game Fair, Harewood House

August

- Launch of BDS training and mentoring scheme in Swinley Forest
- Moy Game Fair

September

- The Midland Game Fair
- Appointment of new Training Manager

October

- Launch of new BDS website
- Publication of BDS research into lynx reintroduction

November

- Business plan and budgets for 2016 approved by Board
- Game Cookery evening at Elmwood College, Cupar

December

- Board Development Day
- Society Annual Raffle drawn

CONTENTS



This Annual Review underpins the British Deer Society's aim to be the UK's leading authority on wild deer and their management. It looks at the Society's governance, structure and activities throughout 2015.

As well as summarising the annual accounts, the review highlights key issues that BDS has addressed in the past year, reports on our continued support for deer-related scientific research and outlines some of the activities undertaken by branches throughout the UK.

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The British Deer Society was founded in 1963 to protect the species of wild deer within the UK.

Promoting conservation through a programme of education, research, deer management, training, shows, and the Society Journal, Deer.

Cover image © Neil McIntyre

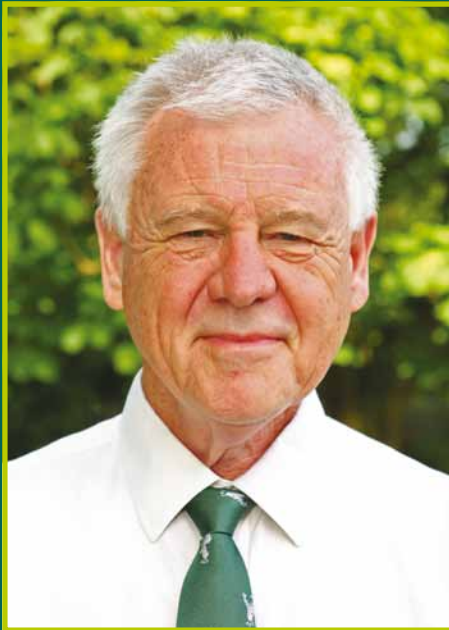
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Annual Review in
association with
Swarovski



A PERSONAL VIEW CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

"As your new chair, I wish to increase the Society's responsibility, relevance and significance"



It has been a most interesting year, with animal welfare very definitely in the public and political eye!

Before focusing on recent BDS activities I must acknowledge the enormous progress made by our outgoing chair, Mark Nicolson, during his tenure. Over his 14 years in office, he has brought Trustee Directors to the board who have increased our business awareness, and consequently secured a much more stable financial position, despite starting from a precarious situation. We are now in the happy position of having a small profit this year, while fully satisfying the Charity Commission regulations with regard to reserve funds.

As your new chair, I wish to increase the society's responsibility, relevance and significance.

I intend to do this, with the help of a very capable Board and staff, by making sure that our governance will withstand any scrutiny, by ensuring that our education and training material is up-to-date and directed at the right audience, and by ensuring that our

research is directed at topics which will be most beneficial to the welfare of deer.

Charities are very much in the news at present, both in respect of the way they raise money, and how they spend it. We have finalised a clear story about who we are and what we do, and have advertised for Trustee Directors who have experience in ethical ways of raising funds. We will request your approval of the appointment of these directors, and hope you will vote for them!

MAKING BDS RELEVANT

To direct real energy into promoting our relevance and significance, we have formed sub-boards to use the Directors' skills to improve some of our activities including:

Science and Research – current projects include practical uses of genetic tools, the effects of disturbance on deer, and the importance of Lyme's disease.

Qualifications and Training – ensuring that what we offer is relevant to both

industry and private members. This year we introduced the Skills Awards, and made more courses available to qualify for these.

Education – bringing our material right up-to-date, appropriate for internet and social media, and of particular to appeal to non-stalkers and schools.

Communications and awareness – ensuring our profile and standing is properly presented as an authoritative source of knowledge and current opinion. We have all seen how the power and effect of social media can either positively or negatively affect the significance of an event. We must learn how to use this medium to proactively publicise what we do in an accessible and constructive way.

We are currently forming sub-boards for policies and political engagement, and for membership: we are looking for members who have these skills to help us and you don't have to be a director to contribute!

GROWING THE MEMBERSHIP

I've made it a mission to try and meet as many members as I can. Where possible I go to the bigger shows north and south of the border, the Area Councils, Deer Defence Management meetings, and local branch events. This year we will be hosting a dinner

in London, aiming to harness the social skills of our members to attract like-minded friends who will also be able to contribute to the Society. Do let HQ know if you think you can attend and contribute. I'm looking forward to it!

An overview of our membership data tells us that while BDS member and supporter numbers remain steady at about 6,000, the average age of our membership is rising slowly. Clearly we need to appeal to young members, and soon! I remember that when I became chair I challenged each member to introduce a new one! I've done my bit (three), so could I again ask you to do the same? It will make such a difference.

FUNDRAISING

The annual BDS internet auction is a highly significant fundraising event for the Society. Last year it raised over £35,000 and this year, with over 150 lots, I have high hopes for a similar if not even greater total. I hope you will join in the bidding. Many of the donors are dedicated Society members, and I am very grateful for their considerable generosity. The same is also true of those who donate prizes to the raffles and draws. I try to bid for at least two different estates each year, and this gives me a good insight into different styles of estate management,

and to the attitudes of industry stalkers. We really should manage to make the Society a 'must join' organisation for them.

LOOKING AHEAD

Finally, what would I like to achieve in 2016? I think that the relevance of the Society is as much an issue for all of you as it is for the board. My (and I hope, your) primary concern is to attract new members. We all have a passion for the welfare of deer, and their humane and sensitive management in the wild, for the enjoyment of all. While it's obvious to us, it does need explaining to the rest of the population, and by doing that well we will attract new members with all kinds of reasons for being interested. If we all explain clearly what the society is for, and how it goes about achieving these aims we will find we have a very good story to tell. I would be very grateful for your help in doing this.



Michael Thick

OBJECTIVES AND PRIORITIES

The British Deer Society is the only organisation working throughout the UK exclusively for the welfare of wild deer.

THE SOCIETY:

- Provides support and funding for academic research about deer and their habitats.
- Promotes knowledge and understanding about deer.
- Works closely with other countryside and animal welfare organisations to ensure that deer remain in balance with their environment.
- Ensures that policy makers receive practical and factual advice.
- Provides high quality education and training so that deer can be effectively managed.
- Publishes the only UK journal devoted solely to wild deer.
- Supports regional branches offering a forum for discussion, local events and activities for deer enthusiasts plus advice and talks to local groups and the public.

PRIORITIES FOR 2015 WERE TO:

- Improve governance to deliver the Society's objectives more effectively.
- Update, review and revise aspects of the BDS training programme.
- Develop and launch a new set of Skills Awards to provide ongoing development and recognition of the breadth of knowledge and skills involved in deer management.
- Consult the membership directly to ascertain their perspective on key issues.
- Increase membership and appeal to the younger deer enthusiast.
- Provide more initiatives at local level to broaden the Society's appeal to members and the public.
- Fund and encourage more research into topical deer issues.
- Launch the new Society website.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2016:

The Board intends to continue to focus on good governance, implementing a Board skills audit and seeking to improve the balance within the Board. Where gaps are recognised it intends advertising more widely to attract new Trustee Directors from a broader cross section to strengthen specific skill requirements.

The Board will continue reviewing its communications and awareness strategy to ensure it remains effective and is appropriately targeted to support promotion of the Society's message.

A review of membership status, categories and administration will be undertaken to see if the strands are correct for optimum appeal and delivery.

The Board will continue to encourage research focusing particularly on areas in the public interest.

The BDS five yearly deer distribution survey will be undertaken to examine the current status of the species and any changes in their distribution across Great Britain and Northern Ireland.



DELIVERING OUR MESSAGE

For the majority of people their first contact with the Society is via a search engine tool or website link to BDS, so initial impressions and overall message are critical to engagement.

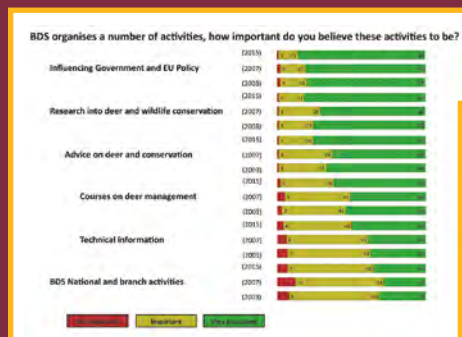


The website serves as a general information source which has to accommodate all requirements: the general public, professionals, educators, researchers, media and our members. At the same time it also acts as a vital marketing and fundraising tool advertising membership, training courses and handling direct sales. In 2015 BDS launched its new website. The launch followed considerable planning and development and the site now incorporates vibrant graphics and eye-catching imagery as well as including extensive information

on all strands of BDS work with dedicated microsites for local branches.

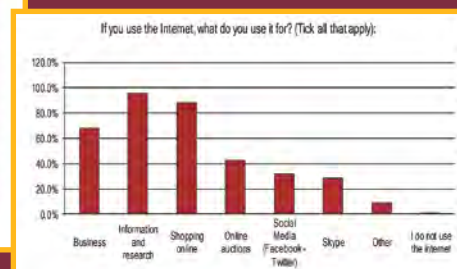
COMMUNICATION

Digital technologies form an increasingly important part of everyone's world and BDS now engages tirelessly via email and uses the insatiable social media giants of Facebook and Twitter to dissipate instant news and gauge popular reaction.



In 2015 BDS used Survey Monkey to conduct its membership questionnaire by email for the first time. BDS's electronic newsletter Deerbytes is also now circulated twice a month reaching 7,500 subscribers.

The membership questionnaire confirmed the importance of Deer Journal as the Society's major voice for all general deer topics including research, photography, stalking matters, legislation, training, general articles, and branch activities. Responses from the questionnaire revealed that 85% of members confirmed they wanted to receive the Journal in hard copy format whilst 6% would prefer it online. This is something that will in due course be explored further through the relevant sub-board group.



SHOWS

BDS continued to attend numerous shows throughout the UK in 2015. The shows provide an important opportunity to present the real face of the Society and make contact with the public at grass roots level: they provide a platform for BDS to inform on many current issues, showcase the work of the Society and encourage understanding of deer and their welfare. Show stands also work as springboards for launching new initiatives and recognising achievements. At the Scottish Game Fair held at Scone, the Society promoted a new Incident Recording Booklet as part of its campaign against poaching and at the CLA Game Fair it launched its new Skills Awards, held book signings and presented the Jim Taylor Page Trophy.



Dave Goffin (left) with Michael Thick launching the new Skills Awards at the CLA Game Fair



The branches took part in many regional shows in Great Britain and in Northern Ireland with over twenty five shows being attended – the Society is extremely grateful to all its volunteers who assisted.

EDUCATION

Display posters and leaflets were distributed on request to numerous educational establishments, colleges and visitor centres over the year. Powerpoint presentations for use as educational tools on the website were revised and checked out by a sample of primary headteachers and educators and a few amendments made to maximise the value of the work. They are currently being trialled with children at three primary schools since it is they who will of course represent the actual end users.





TRAINING: CHANGES AND DEVELOPMENTS

Image © David Jockey

2015 saw the introduction of some exciting long-term training initiatives as well as the continuing success of the more traditional BDS activities.

The Society's Deer Stalking Certificate 1 (DSC1) courses continued to attract students to numerous venues throughout Great Britain and Northern Ireland. BDS courses are recognised for first-class tuition and our student pass rate remained high.

We have developed close relationships with various police forces providing a number of firearms licensing personnel with places on BDS run DSC1 courses. The forces concerned deem them of particular importance providing them with a better understanding of firearm users, knowledge in relation to deer management and an enhanced respect for those presenting DSC1 as a qualification for firearm-related matters. Another

organisation to benefit from the DSC1 course was Help for Heroes. In 2015 BDS supported the charity by delivering a talk on deer and management at Catterick followed by a DSC1 course at the services personnel recovery centre at Tedworth House, Tidworth.

The Society's renowned specialised Deer Management Course also attracted good numbers of students. This year the examination format changed from daily content-related exams to a three-hour end-of-course examination. Student feedback suggests the new approach allowed them full concentration on each day's teaching with many feeling their retention of information benefited as a direct result.



A significant area of deer welfare is the need for prompt cessation of suffering caused to animals involved in deer vehicle collisions. 2015 saw an overhaul of the Lantra approved Humane Animal Dispatch Course and the revised course was widely delivered. BDS also worked closely with two police forces in development of a bespoke animal dispatch course. This will be specific to the volunteers used by these forces to attend instances under their emergency call out schemes.





NEW SKILLS AWARD

Whilst traditional training has been maintained, the Society is continually looking to further develop its deer-related activities. Feedback from DSC1 and 2 course participants indicated a desire for additional courses or events designed to further their knowledge and skills within deer management. Following considerable planning by a BDS board sub group, to meet this demand the Society launched its new Skills Award at the 2015 CLA Game Fair.

The Skills Award introduces a number of new courses and gives recognition to a wide range of deer-related qualifications already held. Operating at bronze, silver and gold levels, achieving each is based on a points system. Currently 26 components exist for consideration including off-road driving, carcass butchery and habitat assessment together with several new BDS courses including first aid, outdoor survival and advanced shooting. Mandatory components such as DSC1 to qualify for a bronze award are required with accreditation given for courses provided by other organisations.

The current selection of award elements is not exhaustive, and the BDS Training Committee will consider a request for any additional qualification held but not currently listed.

INTERNET-BASED ULTIMATE DEER DATA

2015 also saw the Society prepare for the launch of a new internet-based Ultimate Deer Data. UDD is a key learning medium for students undertaking DSC1 or for anyone seeking comprehensive information on deer and their management in the UK. Changes in IT hardware and a swing toward mobile device usage resulted in the Society responding to market changes by developing a new method of online delivery.

Groundwork was also done for the Society's five-yearly UK deer distribution survey in 2016. Again embracing modern technology, an internet recording programme was built to open up the survey to a substantial number of new observers across the UK.

TRAINING THE NEXT GENERATION



Each year several young people obtain their DSC1 qualification thanks to the Jim Taylor Page educational bursaries.

A lifelong teacher and deer enthusiast, Mr Taylor Page left the legacy for educational purposes. In 2015 Sophie May Watts was one of the recipients of the bursary and attended the three-day DSC1 course in Devon.

"I was the only girl but I couldn't have asked for a better group of people to learn with. The handbook is now highlighted, annotated and will stay with me as a reference guide long into the future. Identification and ecology was my favourite part of the course, as demonstrated when I achieved full marks. We all did well thanks to excellent teaching."

Sophie May Watts

Many of those now taking DSC1 have little or no experience of stalking and need to build that experience base before being able to further their skills. To help them get reliable hands-on training BDS has taken on a five-year lease to manage the deer in Swinley Forest. Utilising this 3,000 acre woodland estate in Windsor, in partnership with The Crown Estate, the Society offers members one-to-one training in all aspects of stalking and shooting deer, gralloching, transportation and larder operations, leading to a carcass in chilled storage ready to enter the food chain.



NEW ROLES



Dave Goffin, BDS Training Manager for 13 years moved within BDS to become Technical Manager. He brought a wealth of technical deer knowledge to his new role, which also

allowed him to focus on managing surveys and progress new developments.



Glyn Ingram joined the Society as its new Training Manager. Glyn brought a lifelong interest in deer and natural history joining BDS from a background of wide-ranging deer

management roles including wild park and farmed deer.



CAMPAIGNING AND INFLUENCING

Campaigning is an integral part of our work and we work in partnership with a range of organisations to promote deer welfare and conservation and to ensure that the interests of wild deer are taken into consideration by public and private sector bodies.

DEER VEHICLE COLLISIONS

A key campaign remains concern over deer vehicle collisions and the need to make the public more aware of areas with high incidence of deer. The volume of traffic on Britain's roads and the numbers of wild deer alongside them in certain places presents obvious dangers. Where there are known accident black spots, particularly in heavily afforested areas such as parts of the New Forest, on Cannock Chase and in Sussex, BDS branches have campaigned tirelessly



In Scotland, Transport Scotland (Environmental Committee Carriageway) and Highways Scotland continued its meetings with interested parties concerning the development of the A9 road between Perth and Inverness. Scottish Trustee Director John Bruce pressed for consideration of deer access points in any new carriageway development and supplied information on underpass/overpass use by deer in England.

whether for fencing and deer passes or more signage, and have tested various warning signs and deflectors. Hampshire County Council continued its trialling of Temporary Illuminating Multipurpose (TIM) signs on targeted roads. At Cannock Chase where deer-vehicle collisions run at between 150 and 200 a year, Staffordshire County Council's Ranger Service working with Staffordshire Police and BDS Midlands, Wales and Marches branch erected new road signs aiming to warn motorists and provide information about what to do if a vehicle is struck.



CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE

Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) is highly infectious and has a devastating effect on wild and farmed deer. BDS continues to campaign hard to keep CWD out of the UK by promoting awareness of the disease at border control points, and encourages travellers to and from North America to pay particular attention to the cleanliness and biosecurity of outdoor equipment.

POACHING

Poaching campaigns remained high on the agenda in all areas of the UK. John Bruce represents BDS at the Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW) Scotland where he is the plan owner for the Poaching and Coursing Priority Group. A booklet co-funded by BDS, BASC and Scottish Land and Estates on Reporting Crime incidents was produced and launched at the Scottish Game Fair. Its aim is to allow the public to accurately record poaching and coursing incidents. In Northern Ireland branch chair Greg Kane represents BDS at the PAW-NI and Poaching Sub Group whilst in England Area Chairman Morris Charlton attends PAW where the Priority Poaching Group organised development of a new app to report poaching crime.



Image © David Jenner

THROUGHOUT THE YEAR THE SOCIETY IN PURSUIT OF ITS AIMS MET AND/OR CORRESPONDED WITH:

Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA)
Animal Health and Welfare Board for England (AHWBE)
Association of Deer Management Groups (ADMG)
British Association of Shooting and Conservation (BASC)
British Deer Farms and Parks Association (BDFPA)
Cairngorm Deer Advisory Group (CDAG)
Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA)
Central Scotland Green Network
Country Land and Business Association (CLA)
Countryside Alliance (CA)
Cross Party Animal Welfare Group, Holyrood
Deer Management Qualifications (DMQ) Board meetings
Deer Management Qualifications Quality Assurance Group (QAG)
Deer Management Round Table Group
Defence Estates (DDM)
Defra Wildlife Health and Welfare
Deer Initiative (DI) Partnership and Ltd Company meetings
DI research group
Deer Initiative Best Practice Steering Group
DI (Wales)
European Commission
European Food Safety Authority (EFSA)
Firearms and Explosives Licensing Working Group (FELWG)
Financial Conduct Authority (FCA)
Food Standards Agency (FSA)
Forest Enterprise (England)
Forest Enterprise (Scotland)
Forestry Commission (FC)
Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust (various)
The Heather Trust
Highways Agency
Institute of Chartered Foresters
The James Hutton Institute
John Muir Trust
Lantra, Sector Skills Council for the environmental and land-based sector
Lead Ammunition Sub Group
Lowland Deer Network (LDNS)
Mammal Society
Moredun Research Institute
Moorland Forum
National Biodiversity Network
National Gamekeepers Organisation (NGO)
National Rifle Association (NRA)
National Trust
National Trust for Scotland
National Wildlife Crime Unit, UK Tactical and Co-ordinating Group
Natural England
Northern Ireland Assembly's All Party Group on Countrysports
Northern Ireland Deer Society (NIDS)
Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW)
Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW) Scotland
Partnership for Action against Wildlife Crime (PAW) Northern Ireland
PAW Poaching Priority Committee
PAW Scotland Poaching & Coursing Priority Group
Police Firearms Licensing Liaison Groups
Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI)
Police Wildlife Liaison Officers meetings
Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (RSPB)
Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA)
Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture (SASA)
Scottish Gamekeepers Association (SGA)
Scottish Government (various divisions)
Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH)
Scottish Landowners and Estates (SLE)
Scottish Venison Partnership
Scottish Wildlife Trust
Standing Conference on Countryside Sports (SCOCS)
Tracking Mammals Partnership
Transport Scotland
Ulster Reform Club
Various university/regional council specialist interest and biodiversity groups
Veterinary Deer Society
Wild Deer Association Ireland (WDAI)
Wildlife Trusts (various)
Zoological Society of London



RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

Image © Stuart Gay

BDS works to help wild deer in the UK exist in harmony with the environment and ensure that their future is secure.

A key part of this process is to support scientific study and research with particular reference to the relationship of deer with their natural habitat, forestry, agriculture and areas to which the public have access.

The science and research sub-board oversees our research objectives and establishes a list of priority areas for funding applications (or on occasion, directly commissions our own research). Whilst we are happy to consider applications for funding for any deer-related topic, we will clearly favour those that meet our published criteria.

Current research themes are:

- Deer impact on the environment and human interests
- Impact of humans on deer including welfare and disturbance
- The role of deer in livestock and human diseases
- Urban deer: problems caused and problems associated with management
- Novel methods of controlling impacts of deer
- Ways of improving the welfare impacts of culling wild deer
- Responses of deer and their habitat to climate change

- Research to help combat wildlife crime
- The community carrying capacity of deer

BDS particularly encourages CASE applications where it acts as the industry partner to National Environment Research Council (NERC) funded studentships or similar. This way of working enables the Society to support a larger number of projects than it might otherwise be able to do. Details of research criteria, funding and how to apply can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/glk8wwc>

Projects recently or currently receiving financial support include:

The potential for reintroduction of Eurasian lynx to Great Britain: a summary of the evidence
Jos M. Milner & R. Justin Irvine

This report was commissioned by BDS after it was proposed that a reintroduction of lynx could help control Britain's burgeoning deer



population. The report gathered all current evidence about the lynx into one place, so an informed opinion can be formulated. It will be used to inform any responses BDS may make during the consultation phase of any future applications to release lynx into the wild. More information at <http://tinyurl.com/j8nm2cv>

Detecting changes in deer numbers in space and time

Gauthier, Irvine & Stephens, Durham University



The project focuses on the highlands of Scotland as an example of where recreational land use might impact on the economics of deer stalking. Specifically, it reports on a pilot study to find out whether available management information can help identify trends in the abundance, culling levels, distribution and habitat preferences of red deer in order to determine whether further research into the drivers of change might be warranted. More information at <http://tinyurl.com/z8v2sq4>

Ecological determinants of Lyme borreliosis risk in the South Downs National Park and the potential for one health based interventions

J Middleton, University of Brighton

Here the aim is to build an evidence-based picture of the ecological determinants of Lyme borreliosis risk in the South Downs National Park (SDNP) and to suggest potential interventions. The study will



provide a mapped assessment of risk and causal factors and support development of policies that avoid or minimise conflicts between public and ecosystem health. Given the widespread distribution of the disease, knowledge of its ecological determinants will be of value beyond the Park. More information at <http://tinyurl.com/jp347k7>

The relative contribution of genetic drift and natural selection on founder populations of deer

Menno de Jong, University of Durham

This study focuses on understanding the relative importance of stochastic factors (events or systems that are unpredictable due to the influence of a random variable) and natural selection for founder populations introduced to a new habitat. In the UK there are several species that originated in distinct habitat in Asia (sika, muntjac and Chinese water deer) or were reintroduced from Europe (roe and fallow deer) and started as small founder groups in the UK. The focus will be on two species – roe deer, and reindeer introduced to the British overseas territory of South Georgia in the South Atlantic.

These studies will provide valuable information about the potential for species to adapt to local habitat in spite of small founder populations and are relevant to the long-term survival and management of these species. More information at <http://tinyurl.com/gqh88qg>



Image © George Trebinski

Deer, biodiversity management and ecotourism in the Hebrides

H M O'Neill, University of Durham

This PhD project encompasses conservation management, ecology, animal behaviour and ecotourism. Specifically, it looks at how tourism-induced disturbance affects the time budgets of red deer and how this disturbance influences the efficacy of red deer over traditional sheep breeds in promoting biodiverse short-sward habitat. Research methods involve both direct observations (utilising thermal imaging equipment) and indirect measures of recording habitat use through mapping deer pellets, tracks and trails. In addition to a doctoral thesis, conference presentations and academic papers, the results of this study will help the owners of the Isle of Ulva decide on the future management of red deer and their habitat on the island.



BDS funding provided the state-of-the-art Reconyx Ultrafire trail cameras required to track deer movements and record video evidence of deer behaviour on the island.

To see the resulting videos, go to <http://tinyurl.com/bdsthermalimaging> or scan the QR code.



"The Reconyx Ultrafire trail cameras enabled me to quantify the habitat use of certain areas on the island during both daylight and twilight hours. Not only was I able to retrieve the data I needed, I also captured images of deer utilising the walking paths throughout the island revealing that approximately 1-2 hours after the tourists had left the island deer would start walking along specific paths. From initial observations it would appear the deer are very much in tune with the movements of the tourists. Furthermore, these trail cameras also captured video footage allowing me to also record the behaviours observed on those paths."

THE DEER THAT WALKED THE WORLD

BDS has supported the Dama International project since its inception in 2011. Funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, this important project explores the natural and cultural history of the European fallow deer to better understand its spread around the world.



The project team has now produced a 30-minute film about the project. Shot by wildlife photographer Luke Saddler, the footage has been chosen from hours of filming across the country and can be viewed via a link on the BDS website. To view the film, go to the Advice & Education section online then click on Deer Species. The fallow deer entry contains a direct link to the video on YouTube.

Alternatively, view the video at <http://tinyurl.com/zc95vek> or scan the QR code.



SURVEY MONKEY HELPS DEER RESEARCH

Seventeen hundred members of BDS and BASC completed an online survey on deer urine lures and their use as a possible link to the spread of Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD). CWD is fatal to many species of deer and it is vitally important to ensure Britain remains free of this debilitating disease. Apart from the importance of the subject, the survey was significant in itself. The format enabled recipients to respond quickly to the need for information and BDS to devise, distribute and collect responses on a very short timescale.

DEER DISTRIBUTION SURVEY 2016

Developing technology is increasingly enabling BDS to interact with its members and the public efficiently and in a timely fashion.

Looking ahead we anticipate that our survey work will increasingly be undertaken online.

The Society hopes that employing user-friendly, state-of-the-art technology will ensure wider cross-country participation in its 2016 deer distribution survey enabling BDS to produce an accurate picture of deer species presence across the UK.





Meeting our education and research objectives and delivering our campaign messages costs money and the management team is constantly seeking new income streams and ways to maximise existing ones.

Our annual auction and prize draws continued to make a significant contribution to income and we are grateful to everyone who supported these. We also recognise the fundraising efforts of countless branch members whose local events continue to make a valuable contribution to BDS work.

ANNUAL INTERNET AUCTION

Over 135 lots were available covering everything from photography, outings and meals to the traditional stalking, shooting and fishing offerings. Among some fascinating and unusual lots were a day's food smoking course in Cumbria, a trail camera workshop in West Sussex and a lunchtime tasting menu at the two Michelin star Ledbury Restaurant in London. All told the 2015 auction raised over £35,000 and as always, our thanks go to everyone who donated a lot, and to all those who bought them.

2015 GRAND DRAW

A decision was taken to ring the changes again and have a grand draw with a selection of prizes to have a much broader appeal than a rifle and be of interest to everyone whether stalkers or not. Inevitably one or two prizes were specific to stalkers but the majority not.

BDS was generously given: 8.5 x 42 EL Swarovision Binoculars donated by Swarovski Optik, a Roaring Red Stag painting by Clare Brownlow donated by the artist, a Paramo Halcon Jacket (lady's or gent's) donated by Mark Held, Arxus Primo Leather Zip Wellington Boots donated by John Hammond Sporting, a Red Deer Antler Horizontal Candlestick donated by Clock House Furniture Ltd, a Purdey 'Deer Hunter' Knife donated by Holt's Auctioneers, a Javelin BiPod donated by Spartan Precision Equipment Ltd, a Case (6 bottles) of Nicolas Feuillate Champagne donated by Perdix Publishing, and a Box of Venison donated by Round Green Farm Barnsley.

The Society is most grateful to all its generous donors.

LEGACIES AND TRUST DONATIONS

It is particularly gratifying when someone recognises BDS in their will and the Society extends its grateful thanks to those who have made legacies or bequests to help continue its work.

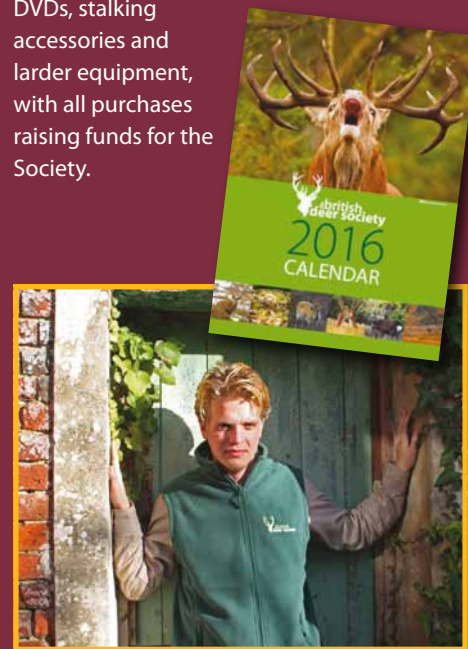
In 2015 donations were gratefully received from Mr & Mrs TCS Haywood's Charitable Trust, David Lloyd Charitable Trust and Mrs N E M Warren Charitable Trust.

More information on fundraising activities, donations and leaving a legacy to BDS is available on the website.

ONLINE SHOP

Purchases from BDS online shop continue to raise significant income for the Society.

Products available online include BDS branded clothing, calendars, books, DVDs, stalking accessories and larder equipment, with all purchases raising funds for the Society.



HOW WE WORK

Day to day management of the Society is undertaken by a management team reporting to the Board of Trustee/Directors. The Board has overall responsibility for the Society and its members have wide-ranging experience and deer interests.

The Board is supported by five sub-board groups covering Policy, Research, Education, Promoting Knowledge & Awareness and Training.

There are four main board meetings a year (two actual and two virtual) with significant work accomplished between by the various groups using Webex meetings and email.



Image © David Jolley

The Board is responsible for:

- Setting policy
 - Agreeing business plans and budgets
 - Overseeing sub-boards
 - Publishing an annual report and accounts
 - Managing risks
 - Directing and overseeing the work of the Management Team.
- Setting targets and monitoring progress
 - Making and maintaining links with partner organisations
 - Supporting research
 - Contributing to regional and national developments and responding to deer-related issues
 - Promoting the Society's activities while protecting and enhancing its reputation.

The Management Team is made up of the Society Chairman, Vice Chairman, Treasurer, General Manager, Training Manager, Technical Manager, Finance Officer, Scottish Area Trustee/Director and other Trustee/Directors as appropriate. All Trustee/Directors have an open invitation to attend meetings.

The Management Team is responsible for:

- Implementing policy and delivering business plans
- Financial management
- Developing new initiatives

RISK MANAGEMENT POLICY

The Society's Trustee/Directors take a responsible view of risk management, and in accordance with the provisions of SORP 2015 (Statement of Recommended Practice) Accounting for Charities, examined major risks to which they considered the Society might be exposed, reviewing and putting in place systems and procedures to manage and mitigate them. The process is recorded in a risks register which is subject to regular review.

2015 AWARD ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE BALFOUR BROWN TROPHY



Awarded to Professor Rory Putman

A past BDS Honorary Scientific Advisor, the importance and breadth of Professor Putman's work as a scientist and consultant was universally acknowledged. His many publications and scientific papers have made a significant contribution to the deer world and better deer management.

THE JIM TAYLOR PAGE TROPHY



Awarded to Norman Ball, a stalwart of North East England Branch.

Norman has given unstinting service for countless years both as a past branch chairman, and as secretary and committee member.

AWARD FOR RECRUITMENT

Most blister pack sales were again achieved by SW England Branch.

BDS INDIVIDUAL PHOTOGRAPHER OF THE YEAR

Won by Stan Kemish, Wessex branch.

SPECIAL PRESENTATION

Outgoing Chairman Mark Nicolson was presented with a pair of silver whisky tumbling bowls handmade by silversmith Malcolm Appleby and thanked warmly for his exceptional work as Society Chairman for 14 years.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM weekend was hosted by the South East England Branch. Saturday centred around visits to Hampton Court Palace and Home Park followed by Richmond Park and the Isabella Plantation in the afternoon.

On Sunday, before the AGM the BDS Honorary Veterinary Advisor Peter Green talked on the changing understanding of deer welfare and how it might be assessed. James Adler and Steve Proud from Surrey Wildlife Trust then gave an update on the introduction of red deer into a military training area at Pirbright.



WHO'S WHO

PATRON:

HRH The Prince of Wales KG,KT,GCB,ADC (P)

TRUSTEE/DIRECTORS:

President Sir Michael Strang Steel Bt DL

Chairman Mark Nicolson
(until May 2015)

Michael Thick
(from May 2015)

Vice Chairman Dominic Griffith

Treasurer Philip Mackenzie

**English/Welsh
Area Chair** Morris Charlton
(from February 2015)

**Scottish
Area Chair** John Bruce

Roddy Ando
Selena Barr
Dorothy Ireland
John Johnson
Maitland Rankin
Nicholas Rout
Charles Smith-Jones
Leigh Welch

HONORARY ADVISORS:

Veterinary Peter Green BVSc,
Cert EO, MRCVS

Scientific Dr Alastair Ward

Legal Wilsons, Solicitors

STAFF:

General Manager Sarah Stride

P/A, Sales Administrator Sue Varvill

UK Training Manager Dave Goffin
(until Sept 2015)

Glyn Ingram
(from Sept 2015)

Technical Manager Dave Goffin
(from Sept 2015)

Training Coordinator Dawn Cope

Finance Officer Phillip Rosslee

Membership Coordinator Annie Nadin

Administration Assistant Sharon Towers

VICE PRESIDENT:

Major The Hon PC Baillie

FELLOWS:

Raymond Chaplin BSc, MIBiol, FZS
Norma Chapman
John Childs
Dorothy Ireland
Jeanette Lawton
VJA Manton MRCVS, FIBiol
Hugh Oliver-Bellasis, FRAGS
Professor Rory Putman
Richard Prior CBiol, MIBiol, MIEEM
John Thomas MBA, TD
Tony Waterson

BRANCHES:

ENGLAND

South East England | South West England
East Anglia | Wessex | East Mercia
Midlands, Wales and the Marches
Yorkshire | North East England
North West England | West

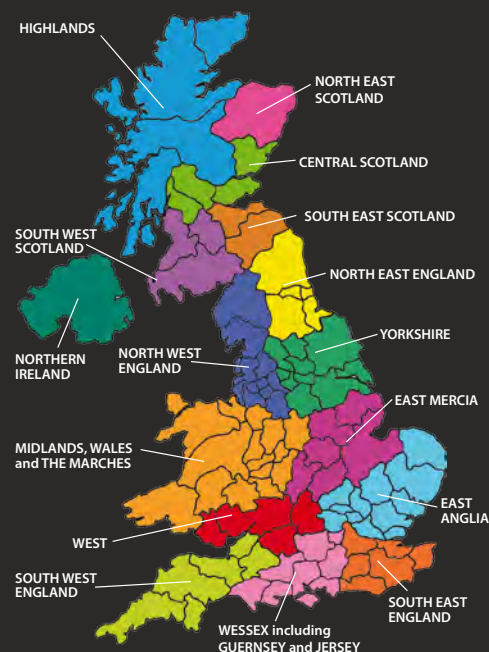
SCOTLAND

South East Scotland | Central | Highlands
North East Scotland | South West Scotland

NORTHERN IRELAND

SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP:

DEFENCE DEER MANAGEMENT



BRANCH HIGHLIGHTS

Our 16 branches ran a full programme of events throughout the year as well as attending shows to support BDS. Their combined effort is gratefully acknowledged. Here is a selection of the year's activities.

SOUTH WEST ENGLAND



Busy event programme

The stand at the South West Game Fair was very busy with sales of all things stalking-related, new member recruitment and signing up students for DSC1 courses. May saw the start of a hectic 17 days attending three major events. Dave, the tame red stag, proved a hit with children at the Devon County Show, Royal Bath & West and the Royal Cornwall Show.

NORTH EAST ENGLAND

A talk by branch Chairman Ian Smales brought local photographers and members of various wildlife groups together to find out about deer in the local area.

In November, Peter Gray presented the branch annual veterinary update and looked at Chronic Wasting Disease in relation to the use of urine lures.

EAST MERCIA

Quiz night

The branch held a quiz night based on DSC1 questions and The Ultimate Deer Data. The questions were prepared with the assistance and support of BDS Training Manager Dave Goffin, and analysis of the answers given by the established stalkers present suggests that once qualified they tend to maintain their local knowledge, but can 'lose' that of other species and issues.

WEST



Country Fair

Branch attendance at Gloucestershire's Frampton Country Fair in September was blessed with fine and warm weather and the BDS stand was well attended. Raffle prizes included a butchered roe carcass, a day's stalking, a roe sack and a bottle of whisky.

EAST ANGLIA



Deer in history

A visit to a recreation of a Neolithic encampment created by Will Lord behind his Suffolk cottage provided a hands-on way to find out about the importance of deer to our ancestors. Members learned about how the ancients hunted and killed deer, how they used their bones and antlers as tools, and tried their hands at skinning and butchering a carcass using flint tools.

SOUTH EAST ENGLAND

Help and advice

Answering calls and questions from the public is an important part of all branch activity. Whilst many of the enquiries received are general in nature the subject of deer in gardens remains a priority for a significant number of those making contact at branch level.

NORTH WEST ENGLAND



Range Day

The branch's first range day of the year took place at Grayrigg near Kendal in May. In addition to zeroing practice from 100m there was a simulated stalkers' shoot. Despite an increasingly strong crosswind, there was a good standard of shooting.

First Aid course

May also saw members attend a Level 2 Emergency First Aid at Work (plus Forestry) course. A follow-up evening demonstration included the use of a defibrillator.

MIDLANDS, WALES & THE MARCHES



Annual shoot

The branch annual shoot and barbecue took place in June at Covenhope, Herefordshire. Despite the threat of rain, it held off and a good day's shooting was enjoyed by the 20 entrants.

YORKSHIRE

Great Yorkshire Show

This year's stand focussed on ticks and Lyme Disease. A surprising number of visitors had experienced the disease, or knew of those who had suffered, and HRH The Duchess of Cornwall, when she toured the display, stressed the need for BDS to continue this programme of education.

WESSEX



Image © Charles Smith-Jones

Muntjac deer

In April, Charles Smith-Jones gave a presentation on muntjac deer. Already established in Berkshire and Hampshire, muntjac have now been sighted in both Dorset and Wiltshire.

New Forest Show

With over 100,000 visitors the New Forest Show stand always provides a good opportunity to talk to the public. The touch table proved very popular with youngsters as well as grown ups and was backed up by a fascinating display of antlers.

NORTHERN IRELAND



Dogs for deer

Hugely popular last year, the level of enquiries for Danish expert Neils Sondergaard's follow-up event meant numbers had to be limited to twelve owners and their dogs, plus 18 observers. They worked a previously laid trail and participants also benefited from one-to-one advice.

SOUTH EAST SCOTLAND



Alan Tweedie gave a talk in November on cull planning, the importance of accurate population counting, natural mortality rates and how to set cull targets to achieve management objectives.

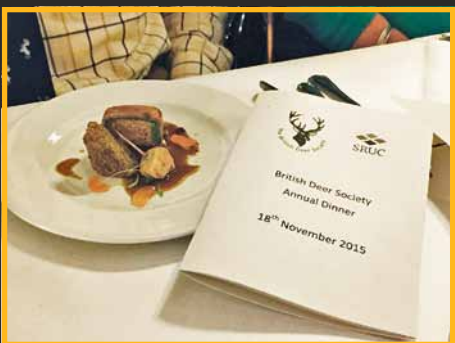
NORTH EAST SCOTLAND



Perruque head

A branch member took this picture of a buck with perruque head. The condition is believed to be due to the interruption of the testosterone supply resulting in a continual growth of antler under velvet.

CENTRAL SCOTLAND



Gastronomic game

The branch worked with SRUC Elmwood Campus (Scotland's rural college) to organise a Masterchef-style competition for catering students. James Finlyson was named Game Chef 2015. Branch members sampled his food, and that of fellow students, at the annual dinner the following week.

SOUTH WEST SCOTLAND

Aimed at the less experienced shot, a Marksmanship Day, held at Parton, courtesy of Peter Jackson, was fully subscribed. All progressed well and were able to move on to more experienced techniques later in the day.

HIGHLANDS



Sir Michael Wigan and Johnnie Macdonald, Borrobol stalker hosted a visit to the Borrobol Estate in Helmsdale to review deer management practices. The estate rises to 600ft above sea level, covers 22,000 acres and holds around 200 stags and 250 hinds.

DEFENCE DEER MANAGEMENT (SERVICES BRANCH)

Wiltshire Symposium

June saw the DDM shooting event, symposium and AGM take place at the Land Warfare Centre, in Warminster, Wiltshire. The symposium attracted 130 members, some of whom travelled a significant distance. The shooting event took place on a Salisbury Plain field firing range under stalking conditions.

Membership numbers

DDM membership numbers are very good. There are 45 on the waiting list who will be allocated an appropriate group as places become available.



DEFENCE DEER MANAGEMENT





Image © Brian Phipps

Financial Review for the year ended 31 December 2015

The 2015 Accounts set out overleaf are the consolidated financial statements of the British Deer Society including all branches and the wholly owned subsidiary BDS (Sales and Services) Ltd. The Accounts are presented in the same general format as last year. The support costs have been re-allocated over the direct charitable and other expenditure in accordance with the current best practice for Charities and SORP 2015, and on a consistent basis from year to year.

SUBSIDIARY – THE BRITISH DEER SOCIETY (SALES AND SERVICES) LTD.

Sales and Services recorded a breakeven for the year although turnover has reduced by £5,390 on the previous year. However this result is struck after the Company has absorbed £32,192 of the main Charity's costs so the division is a major contributor to the total overheads of the Society. I noted last year that a new website was being designed; this has now been completed and members should find it easier to find their way around and purchase what they require. However the marketing situation remains the same in that the Society is competing with much larger commercial operations that have the resources to update websites and stock on a more regular basis. Thus I would once again urge members to use the Society for all their stalking-related purchases rather than sourcing them from other commercial websites.

CHARITY

I am pleased to be able to report that the Society has recorded a small surplus of £9,077

for the year with £3,744 contributed by the branches to the overall income. There was a small loss of nearly £598 on the Society's investments compared with a gain of just over £8,000 in the previous year; this is a creditable result considering the fall in financial markets towards the end of 2015. The income, which mainly comes from subscriptions, training and fundraising, has held up well and by the end of the year overall was up £5,110 on the previous year. Membership numbers have held up well with those leaving being replaced by new members but overall numbers remain static and there is an urgent need to expand the membership. There are moves to disseminate the Society's knowledge of deer into the school system and this has already been done on a trial basis. This may provide an opportunity to recruit members at a much earlier age and even if the membership was free at this stage, it could translate into fully paid membership at a later stage.

About half way through the year we were forecasting a substantial loss in excess of £40,000. This was due to budgeting for a new staff resource and the move of the previous training manager to perform a different role for the Society and recruitment of a new training manager. This was expected to cause some disruption to the training programme and increase costs; in fact training income was comparable to that of the previous year and the loss in this division was similar at about £20,000. Fortunately the Society also received some unexpected income including £15,000 in donations plus financial support from the Lonsdale Trust for the building of

the new website. However these are 'one off' items that will not be repeated in the current year. The new training manager is expanding the training programme with new initiatives to include within the Skills Awards such as a First Aid course. He is also exploring other new ideas which it is hoped will boost training income in the current year. One of the Society's main objectives is to further deer-related education and research. The new sub-board group established to consider research projects has resulted in more good projects coming forward and an increase in research and education expenditure of £12,000 in the current year. Other costs have been kept well under control and almost identical to the previous year.

In financial terms the Society is standing still with both income and expenditure at almost identical levels to the previous year. If we want to generate larger surpluses to spend on education and research we must either generate more income (which means more members) or reduce our costs. The biggest cost is staff salaries and wages and these cannot be reduced as the staff at Fordingbridge and elsewhere are already fully stretched and working beyond full capacity. Once again I would like to record my thanks and appreciation to all the Society's staff who have all contributed to this year's financial result. The year ahead may be more difficult but the Society has robust financial resources and there are a number of new initiatives which will drive change in the future.

Philip Mackenzie, Treasurer

GROUP STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Total 2015 £	Total 2014 £
INCOME FROM:		
Donations and Legacies		
Members subscriptions and Donations	351,220	353,235
Legacies & Specific Donations	1,000	449
Grants and Sponsorship	14,946	8,136
Total Donations and Legacies	367,166	361,820
Other Trading Activities		
Fundraising events Auctions and Draws	45,823	39,436
Trading income	82,582	87,972
Total Other Trading Activities	128,405	127,408
Charitable Activities		
Training Income	141,930	140,122
Branch Activities	35,511	35,685
Investment income	2,820	5,687
Total Income	675,832	670,722
EXPENDITURE ON:		
Raising Funds		
Direct costs of fundraising events	27,980	27,874
Membership Marketing and Data Management	88,256	93,276
Trading	50,389	50,251
	166,625	171,401
Charitable activities		
Research & Public Education	77,000	65,001
Technical and advisory	71,506	74,826
Media and Publications	89,633	89,793
Training	161,915	161,272
Other Activities	99,478	104,179
	499,532	495,071
Total Expenditure	666,157	666,472
Net Income/Expenditure	9,675	4,250
Other recognised gains/(losses)		
Gains/(Loss) on Investments	(598)	8,090
Net movement in funds	9,077	12,340
BALANCES AT 1 JANUARY 2015	475,855	463,515
BALANCES AT 31 DECEMBER 2015	484,932	475,855

GROUP BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31 DECEMBER 2015

	Group 2015 £	Group 2014 £
FIXED ASSETS		
Tangible assets	66,567	56,285
INVESTMENTS	153,220	153,817
CURRENT ASSETS		
Stocks	18,953	17,871
Development Costs		8,000
Debtors	32,809	50,120
Deposits with Banks	161,278	170,000
Cash at bank and on hand	190,236	174,809
Total current assets	403,275	420,800
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due within one year	108,755	126,049
NET CURRENT ASSETS	294,520	294,751
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES	514,307	504,853
CREDITORS: Amounts falling due after more than one year	29,375	28,998
NET ASSETS	484,932	475,855
Representing:		
INCOME FUNDS		
Restricted Funds	100,043	155,223
Unrestricted Funds:		
Designated funds	43,497	43,497
General fund	341,392	277,135
	484,932	475,855
TOTAL FUNDS	484,932	475,855

FINANCIAL REPORT 2015

These Summarised Accounts are an extract from, and are consistent with, the Statutory Accounts but may not contain sufficient information to allow for a full understanding of the financial affairs of the Society.

Our Auditors, Messrs Fletcher & Partners, have given an unqualified audit report on the full Statutory Accounts, which were approved by the Directors (who also act as trustees for the charitable activities of the British Deer Society) on 10 March 2016. They will be presented for approval of the members at the AGM on 15 May 2016. The full Statutory Accounts have been prepared in accordance with the Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to Smaller Entities (FRSSE SORP 2015).

Copies of the full Statutory Accounts will be lodged with the Registrar of Companies and the Charity Commission. The full accounts may be inspected at the Society's offices at The Walled Garden, Burgate Manor, Fordingbridge, Hampshire, SP6 1EF, and copies are available to members on request.

Signed on behalf of the Board
Dominic Griffith, Vice Chairman

24 March 2016

INDEPENDENT AUDITORS' STATEMENT TO THE TRUSTEES AND MEMBERS OF THE BRITISH DEER SOCIETY

We have examined the summarised accounts for the year ended 31 December 2015.

Respective Responsibilities of the Trustees and Auditor

The trustees are responsible for preparing the summarised accounts in accordance with applicable United Kingdom law. Our responsibility is to report to you our opinion on the consistency of the summarised accounts with the full annual consolidated accounts and the compliance with the relevant requirements of section 427 of the Companies Act 2006 and the regulations made thereunder.

We conducted our work in accordance with Bulletin 2008/03 issued by the Auditing

Practices Board. Our report on the company's full annual consolidated accounts describes the basis of our opinion on those accounts.

Opinion

In our opinion the summarised accounts are consistent with the full annual consolidated accounts of The British Deer Society for the year ended 31 December 2015 and comply with the applicable requirements of section 427 of the Companies Act 2006, and the regulations made thereunder.

Fletcher & Partners,
Chartered Accountants and
Statutory Auditors
Salisbury, 24 March 2016



Image © Charlotte Stride

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

AUCTION AND DRAW DONORS 2015

Adrian Liddle
Alan Shannahan
Alex Bingley
Andy Pearce
Ashley Boon
Audiofit
Ben Carter
Ben Ramsden
Bernard Clement
Blackdown Stalking
Blaze Publishing
Braefoot Venison Company
Capreolus
Charles Smith-Jones
Chewton Glen Hotel
Chris Packham
Clare Brownlow
Clock House Furniture Ltd
Coch-y-Bonddu Books
Colin Foster
David Davies
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Don Palfrey
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Major Tom Wills and Captain
Nicholas Wills
Margaret Ralph
Mark Boulton
Mark Held
Mark Nicolson
Michael Hitchmough
Mike Bagnoweic
Monarch Country Products
Mr Richard Wills
Mrs Emma Paterson
Mrs Park

Napier UK
Norma Chapman
Nichola Fletcher
Nick Pitts
Nick Tempest
Patrick Hook
Paul Greener
Paul Messenger
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Peter Elliott
Philip Mackenzie
Pietas Venatores
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Richard Scrope
Robert Thomas
Roddy Ando
Ross Minerva
Round Green Farm Barnsley
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Steve Bennett
Swarovski Optik
Telfer, Overton, Tweedie
Syndicate

The CLA Game Fair
The Earl and Countess of
Harewood
The Earl of Dalhousie
The Earl of Lonsdale
The Ledbury
The Marquess of Aberdeen
The Seafood Restaurant Ltd
Thoresby Estate
Tony Dalby-Welsh
Vicars Game Ltd
Wildlife-Products
William Mathews Taxidermy
Woburn Deer Park
Woodland Ways
Woodmill Shootings Ltd
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Derek N Stead
Friends of Bushy & Home
Parks
HA Waterson
Headmeasuring at CLA
Justin Peckham
Louth International Women's
Association
Marc Baldwin
Belton Park Golf Club
Chris Evans
Matthew Dobie
Ross Minerva
Highland Field Sports Fair

**Our thanks to these and
the many other donors
and benefactors not
included here.**



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Design and layout: Phoenix 2, www.phoenix-2.co.uk

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