

## **BRITISH SMALL ANIMAL VETERINARY ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual General meeting of the BSAVA (Ltd) was held at the BSAVA, Woodrow House, 1 Telford Way, Waterwells Business Park, Quedgeley, Gloucester, GL2 2AB

### **25.01 Chair's Welcome**

Dr Hoad welcomed everyone to the meeting and declared the meeting open. Dr Hoad advised virtual attendees to vote using the raised hands option and that he would let them know when any votes had been counted.

### **25.02 Apologies for absence**

Dr Gow informed the Annual General Meeting that apologies had been received from:

Mr A Ash, Prof P Bedford, Mr J Bower, Mr E Chandler, Prof S Dawson, Prof N Gorman, Mr A Green, Prof M Herrtage, Mr J Hird, Mr H Locke, Prof C Mooney, Mr G Petrie, Dr C Sturgess, Mrs L Turner, Dr D Wadsworth and Mr J Wells

### **25.03 Minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting**

Dr Hoad proposed that the minutes of the 31<sup>st</sup> Annual General Meeting of the Association held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 9.30 am were accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

### **25.04 Matters arising from the minutes**

There were no matters arising.

### **25.05 President's Reflection**

Fellow Trustees, Members of the Association and colleagues.

Has it really been a year? Carl said to me 'enjoy your presidential year - it'll be over before you know it.' Overall, he was right - although some parts of the year seemed to take a lot longer. The CMA hearing, for example, lasted about a decade. I still wake up some nights screaming - 'no, no, not the Spanish Inquisition!' And it's not over yet! More on that later.

I took over from Carl last year, all fresh-faced and eager (that's me, not Carl) but aware that I had big shoes to fill (that's Carl's, not mine). The imposter syndrome kicked in immediately and hasn't stopped yet. However, I have been incredibly ably supported by the BSAVA family - especially our CEO, Amanda Stranack, and the leadership team, who have treated me with immense patience, care and understanding. Rather like a sous chef you have high hopes for but are slightly afraid he might burn the soufflé! I don't think I have, although there have been one or two slightly singed moments: most notably when talking on live radio about dogs eating drugs in parks. We have taken a more proactive approach to PR this year, which has helped to improve public awareness of the role of the BSAVA and has been a good use of our trusted resources. I am very grateful to the WH team for their support and expertise in crafting responses to questions from the media.

For David's benefit, I have recently been trying to work out the roles and responsibilities of the President - a little late, some may say! Articulating what an 'average' day, or week, looks like as President of the BSAVA is not easy, and on paper I was alarmed at how little I appeared to do: especially since it has filled almost 7 days a week since last June.

However, there are several ways of working out the amount of work done. In terms of physics, work done is equal to force times distance moved. I weigh around 80kg, and as to distance moved, I made a rough calculation, taking into account travel to China, Athens, Northern Ireland, Glasgow, Wales, Birmingham, Manchester, London and Gloucester - plus all of BSAVA's regions on the road trip I did with Carole, I have done around 50,000km. The work done is thus 80x50 million, or 4 billion Joules.

I have travelled about one and a quarter times round the Earth.

It feels it.

As to the work done: 4 billion joules equates to 956,000 kcalories, or around 1,062 full English breakfasts. That feels about right, too.

So, what has BSAVA done over the past year?

A real highlight was the launch of our refreshed brand. Although the most visual part of that is our new logo, the brand refresh itself goes far beyond that, symbolizing, as it does, our commitment to excellence and innovation. United by the power of association, we are working towards a future-ready, more member-centric organization, standing at the very heart of the small animal veterinary community. The Programme of Change is ongoing, and we are starting to see very positive outcomes, with several key projects progressing at pace such as the AI Assistant and our new approach to lifelong learning.

Earlier, I mentioned the CMA investigation. Meeting the demands of the investigation has taken a huge amount of time - and continues to do so. I am particularly grateful to Adrienne Conroy, our head of Policy and Communications, for wading through documents that are better measured in kilos rather than in numbers of pages. We are doing our best for our members to ensure their voices are heard and hope that positive change comes out of the investigation. It has already shown us that our customers have a great deal of trust and faith in their vets, which is gratifying. Greater transparency around veterinary pricing can only improve that, and help our members deliver contextualised care to their patients. There is optimism that a new Veterinary Surgeon's Act - long overdue - may be part of the CMA's remedies and that veterinary nurses may at long last get the recognition they deserve by protection of the title.

We have continued our involvement with the BVA's working group on RCVS Governance, ensuring that our members' views on a new Veterinary Surgeon's Act are represented. We are also involved with the RCVS working group on contextualised care which has become a bit of a buzzword over the past year and has led to a lot of confusion over what amounts to overtreatment or negligence.

It has been a very successful year for BSAVA's ProtectME initiative: working with RUMA we have seen a decrease in antibiotic usage in small animals, and RUMA's Antibiotic Amnesty in November saw an increase in the number of practices willing to get involved in the return of unused antibiotics and other medicines. In recognition of his work on the ProtectME poster, and for other services to BSAVA, it was my pleasure to have awarded Life Membership of the BSAVA to Fergus Allerton.

Those of you who read our Articles of Association regularly will notice a few changes - and there will be a few more as we progress through our governance restructuring, with the aim of

improving member representation and decision-making. With that in mind, we are absolutely delighted to have a nomination for Jo Megarity as the first Veterinary Nurse on the BSAVA Board.

As I said earlier, I have been to Northern Ireland several times; sadly, one of those occasions was the funeral of Des Thompson, and another was Simon Doherty's funeral. Both are very much missed, but there is some consolation in the news that Simon is to be awarded the King's Medal posthumously, and we will be paying tribute to Des Thompson in the form of a new BSAVA Award - the Des Thompson award for General Practice.

One of my greatest delights this year has been to travel to many conferences and Congresses - China (Suzhou), Athens, Wales, Scotland, Northern Ireland, Birmingham, Manchester and Stratford. Aside from clocking a record high number of CPD hours, these have been an opportunity to meet up with old friends, make new ones, and, importantly, to begin conversations that have led to new or improved collaborations for BSAVA - the Power of Association in practice.

In December and January, I embarked on a tour of the Regions with Carole. Hereafter termed the Road Trip, we covered almost a thousand miles and joined the Regions for their AGMs - and occasionally for their CPD events also. I consider myself to have been incredibly lucky to share this time with Carole, and the Road Trip will forever be emblazoned in my memory. We discussed all aspects of BSAVA's history - although the main topic of conversation was food, so I always arrived at the Regions starving!

Carole is leaving us today, as you know. Her unceasing devotion and commitment to BSAVA and her incredible knowledge of the membership will be missed greatly. Carole has been at the very heart of BSAVA's community, and it would be easy to underestimate the role she has had in keeping our volunteer levels as high as they are. We welcome Leigh-Anne Beattie who will help us navigate the increasingly difficult course of volunteer engagement. As our lives appear to get busier and busier, it is hard to find time and enthusiasm after work to go to CPD events, let alone arrange them, and so we are incredibly grateful to all of our volunteers who run regional events, become involved with committee or support the association in the many ways our valued volunteers do.

Going to CPD events is very invigorating and learning new stuff is fun. But what is even more energising is being reminded that you are part of an amazing profession. It is easy to lose sight of that when you hear of the CMA investigation or have had a day of angry clients. Reconnecting with other members of the profession, sharing cases, stories or gripes, is both cathartic and rejuvenating. We should take pride and joy in being part of the veterinary profession and make it our constant endeavour to play our part well - reaching out to fellow vets and nurses who may be struggling as well as encouraging and supporting those in the early stage of their careers. Fellow vets and nurses are our friends, and we should treat them as such.

Having become slightly tired of travelling, finding most trains, planes and automobiles cramped, I have recently taken to travelling on the outside of planes. Other than a tendency to catch flies, moths and small birds in my mouth, it really is rather refreshing, and I'd recommend it to one and all. I also raised well over £2,000 for PetSavers, which continues to be excellently chaired by Rosie Godfrey. Rosie and David undertook a grueling trek along the Thames a couple of months ago, raising a similar amount.

It will not have escaped anyone's attention that the decision was made to call time on Congress. I should note that this decision has only recently been made and the report we are

presenting today is for 2024 and so will not reference the decision taken. That said, it is a decision of great significance, and it is important we take this opportunity to discuss it and answer any questions you may have.

Before I open the floor, let me just say this was not a decision taken lightly by the Board. The harsh reality is that for several years, the association has been funding a Congress deficit in the hope that it could work towards a more sustainable financial situation that would have allowed it to continue to deliver Congress. Sadly, despite this investment, indicators such as delegate and exhibitor purchase patterns have not provided the required confidence that this was a viable outcome. Consequently, it was decided that continuing to underwrite Congress at significant expense to the association was preventing it from investing in other areas of innovation.

And, let us not forget that the BSAVA has a clear mission and, as a charity, an obligation to deliver our charitable objectives. The trustees, rightly, have taken the view that this action was necessary to ensure the resources, including financial assets, could and should be better utilised.

As many of you might have seen on various social media channels, Congress has been a much loved, even cherished part of many of our lives. There is no doubt that as a place to learn, Congress was second to none. As a place to meet old colleagues - and make new ones, Congress was second to none. As a place to find out about new drugs, equipment, support available to practices as well as meet exhibitors, Congress was second to none. I know many of you will have reflected on this sad news and some have accepted it while others might still be coming to terms with it.

And with that, I'm happy to answer any questions specifically related to the decision on Congress. There will be time at the end of the meeting to discuss AOB.

Wolfgang Dohne wished to express his concerns about the decision to retire Congress, he felt this was not the right decision and that this should have been discussed with the membership before a final decision was made.

Penny Watson also wished to express the same concerns, whilst she completely understands why the decision was taken she felt very strongly that as a large organisation we need to have an annual meeting for our members to attend.

In response, Julian reiterated that the decision had not been taken lightly and he wished to reassure the meeting that plans for the future were under consideration.

David Wadsworth asked a question about our relationship with sponsors and whether this would continue, Julian responded that many of our sponsors had been in touch as they are keen to move forward with us.

Ian Ramsey added that today's graduates do wish to network and meet, just not at Congress and therefore we need to consider how we fill this void.

Julian thanked those members for their questions and comments and he hope that the exchange was helpful, it is now time for BSAVA to look forward, to regain our place as innovators of the veterinary CPD field and to really give our members what they need for truly inspirational lifelong learning.

I haven't yet put a quote in, and I'd like to now: This is from the Prophet, by Khalil Gibran, and is about friendship.

'And let your best be for your friend;  
If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know its flood also.  
For what is your friend that you should seek him with hours to kill?  
Seek him always with hours to live.  
For it is his to fill your need, but not your emptiness. And in the sweetness of friendship let there be laughter and the sharing of pleasures.  
For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed.'

Never has there been a stronger need for the veterinary profession to recognise that we are a community and that life is much, much better if we can all work together.

No speech would be complete without a long list of thank yous - and first and foremost I would like to thank my wife, Sylvia, for supporting me over the past year. She and my two daughters have been my main source of encouragement during my presidency: boosting me when my imposter syndrome was in full flood, and putting up with my many absences and long hours locked in my office on Teams meetings and report writing.

A huge thank you to my fellow Board members and to Amanda. You have counselled me amazingly well over the past year. The work you do for BSAVA is quite incredible, and we all owe a debt of gratitude to you. The staff at BSAVA are, without exception, amazing. Each and every one works tirelessly to ensure BSAVA's reputation for excellence is untarnished. They have become true friends over the past year - I'd stand on a plane for any one of them!

I've already mentioned our volunteers, but I think their contribution merits another mention. Life in the modern world doesn't seem to give us the leisure time we were promised by Tomorrow's World 40 years ago. To give up any of that precious time is a true gift and is valued by all of us. Thank you.

We are losing two Board members: Carl Gorman and Jim Hughes. Carl has been a very hard act to follow, and I can only hope that I have gone some way to continue the excellent work he started in his term. He has been on hand whenever I needed him for help, support, and the occasional - 'no, you berk, you can't do that!' Jim has been a dedicated and conscientious honorary treasurer - but more than that his has been the voice of reason and good sense at many Board meetings and workshops. He has, to put it plainly, more than done his time, and we all owe him big time!

Two new trustees stand in the wings - awaiting your approval. Niall Connell becomes our new Junior Vice President, and Jo Megarity joins as Honorary Treasurer. We wish them both the best of luck in their roles; their presence will enrich BSAVA immensely.

Waiting in the wings is David Godfrey: I will formally introduce him presently, but I wanted to take the time here to thank him for all the support he has given me over the year, and to wish him the very best of luck.

I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to serve as President over the past year. I am proud to call myself a member of the BSAVA: an association that diligently serves and supports so

many of our wonderful profession. We don't yet know what the future has in store for us, but we do know that we are doing everything we can to prepare for it!

### **23.06 Honorary Secretary's Report**

President, Members of the Association, honoured and distinguished guests. It is a pleasure to serve as Honorary secretary and I'd like to thank my fellow board members, the incredibly professional team at Woodrow house for the support in starting the position. But of course, like many BSAVA volunteers, I have been part of the association for many years and want to personally thank Carole Haile for her incredible contribution to BSAVA but also her good-humoured guidance over the many years. It was an honour to present her with The Ray Butcher Award this year: her contribution to animal welfare through nurturing the association is incalculable. I'd like to welcome Leigh-Anne Beattie into the team as the new Volunteers Manager.

Total membership for year end 2024 was 10,260 members including the 300 volunteers who all power our association. Full-fee paying members, years 1-3 qualified, PG Certs and overseas members all increased slightly compared to 2023.

The past year has been fast moving (although maybe not as fast as Julian's year) and one of continuing progress with many aspects of the programme of change put into action. Some are obvious: such as the branding mentioned by Julian, others are under the bonnet such as work to integrate databases and sections – removing silos to allow a more unified approach delivering our mission.

### **Policy**

The BSAVA Policy and Communications department has been very busy over the last 12 months representing members and the profession. Significant resources have been devoted to the ongoing Competitions and Marketing Authority Market Investigation. Engaging with the CMA, as well as with other associations to provide a unified voice for the profession. BSAVA has also been involved in and facilitated many panel discussions. This will obviously continue to be a significant focus.

A selection of other examples are engagement with DEFRA Animal Welfare Committee on cat breeding, as well as continued input regarding *Brucella canis*, Dangerous dogs, microchipping, Northern Ireland Pet Travel Scheme, parasiticides and avian influenza. To name just a few.

We are committed to representing our members and the companion animal veterinary community to positively influence policy as well as improve animal health and welfare.

### **Structure, Governance and Management**

During discussions with the charities commission they suggested that it was best practice that our CEO was not also a trustee, so as a result, Amanda Stranack has stepped down as a Trustee but of course remains CEO. As part of the programme of change we have consulted with Professional Associations Research Network and will be assessing their recommendations on governance. We are grateful for the continued co-leadership of Council by Freda Scott-Park and Ian Ramsey.

## **Publications**

The publication department was supported by the Publications Working Committee, we thank Nick Bexfield for chairing and welcome Georgia Woods-Lee to the position of chair of this committee.

Print book sales were relatively static compared to the previous 2 years. The top three revenue generators were Textbook of Veterinary Nursing, cat/dog formulary and new Thoracic Imaging manual. Digital sales now account for 43% of revenue. There is a strong pipeline of books in the system, with six in production, six at the writing/editing stage, and a dozen in commission/planning stages.

Moving to the Journal of Small Animal Practice, we would like to thank Nicola Di Girolamo who has been editor for the last four years and welcome Marije Risselada who has taken up the position. A new submission system and peer review process was implemented to improve author experience and there has been a decrease in submission to publication time. There has been an increase in submissions, up 15% - which is a reversal of the previous trend. Additionally, downloads exceed 800,000 for the first time.

Protect-Me posters: A rabbit specific version was published last year, now with online supporting documentation. The standard format was translated for China in association with partners, and a Portuguese translation is in production. These will significantly improve antibiotic stewardship.

Work has been underway to develop an AI Assistant called “Rover” which uses BSAVA resources of publications and course material to provide relevant information. This is currently being trialled with a group of members.

## **Regions - Community**

The power of our association is from the 12 regions. Matthew Erskine has continued in his position of Chair of Regions and linking with Woodrow house. In 2024, 134 hours of regional CPD was offered in a range of formats. A total of 2342 delegates attended these.

There has been integration of regional CPD with the Continuing Education Department. Emphasis will be on community engagement and interactive learning.

Internationally, we collaborate to help the profession's voice be heard. Our representatives in 2024 and ongoing are: FECAVA Patricia Colville, WSAVA Mark R Johnston and UEVP Krista Arnold. We continued to provide free BSAVA overseas membership to our Ukrainian colleagues.

## **Education**

I'd like to thank Ian Self for chairing the Education Committee previously and Sebastian Nogas stepping into the position currently. Head of Education, Claire Vinten and team have been progressing 2 major projects: CPD 2.0, as well as putting in place a learning management system, both will ensure that BSAVA CPD continues to be standard that other providers follow.

Vet Nurse Merit Awards continue to be popular, with 2 offerings of ECC Anaesthesia and Behaviour. For post-graduate certificates, assessments were delivered in all 5 programmes.

## **PetSavers**

PetSavers Management committee is led by Rosie Godfrey and we are grateful that she has agreed to continue on for another year. Likewise, we are equally grateful that Jeremy Kirk has agreed to helm the grant-awarding committee for an additional year. Alison Selby took up position as Fundraising Manager to work with Sarah Williams. 2024 marked PetSavers' 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, and an impact report was produced which highlighted not only 2024's activities, but the incredible way that PetSavers nurtured veterinary research over the 50 years. In 2024, eight grants were awarded including one joint-funded PhD project to investigate feline chronic kidney disease, one Masters degree, as well as student research projects and clinical research projects. 11 peer-reviewed publications were the output in 2024. Many thanks to all those who have donated and fundraised to allow this vital work. Special mention to Rosie and David Godfrey for undertaking the Thames Challenge in aid of PetSavers, as well as our President Julian's attempt to emulate Tom Cruise by wing-walking. Maybe it was easy compared to the high-wire act of BSAVA president.

## **Sustainability**

Sustainability remains a priority with the sustainability working group developing and overseeing strategy to become carbon neutral. As a result of work in 2024, solar panels have been installed on the roof of Woodrow House, meaning that much of our electricity usage is solar with the possibility of a small contribution from Julian's shirts.

That concludes my report. Dr Hoad asked for a seconder.

Secunder Prof I K Ramsey

Carried unanimously

## **25.07 Honorary Treasurer's Report**

### **Financial Review, FY23 (January 2024 – December 2024)**

#### **Background**

The financial year to 31 December 2024 (FY24) saw the Association continue to face some significant operational challenges and this is reflected in the results for the year.

And I am pleased to say that the audit process, conducted again by WR Partners who we appointed last year, was successfully completed and the Association given a clean financial bill of health.

We are indebted as ever to Anthony Welsh, the Association's finance manager and his team of Donna and David, who coped admirably during his temporary absence.

#### **Financial review for year to 31 December 2024**

The audited Association accounts for the financial year ending December 2024 disclose an operating deficit of £1.644m. (see table below) and year end cash holdings of £601K.



Gains from our investment portfolio (managed by RBC Brewin Dolphin) amounted to £918K, only £230K down on the prior year despite the drawdown of £1.25m in cash from the portfolio. The gains in the portfolio improved the overall operating result to a deficit to £725K.

As suggested at the AGM in May 2023, the Board of Trustees approved the engagement of external consultants (Consorticon) to work with the Association to provide expertise and insight into a programme of change (PoC) to revitalise the BSAVA. The costs incurred in that programme during 2024 of £684K contributed to the operating deficit for the year but were covered by Designated Reserves set aside for this purpose. The contract with Consorticon was ended at the end of 2023 but Board and the Leadership team continued to work with third parties that were originally engaged through Consorticon, and that association continues this year. The Programme of Change was expected to improve revenue levels during 2024 but it is now anticipated that the operating results for the Association should begin to return to positive territory during 2026 as a result of the changes that are implemented during 2025.

The Association is fortunate to retain significant Reserves to protect against the deficit in 2024 and the likely deficit during 2025 as we work through the PoC. Of the total Reserve of £12.432m, £399K is restricted for PetSavers while a further £3.106m is designated by the Board of Trustees for various projects, including the PoC. This leaves General reserves of £8.927m which will allow the Association to continue to operate in an uncertain environment and to weather any changes over the next few years.

#### Financial Review post 31 December 2024

The Association budget for 2025 reflected our opinion that the business environment would remain challenging but removing the anticipated costs for the Programme of Change, an effective operating deficit of approx. £914K would be achieved.

The decision to retire Congress was made after the preparation of this report. This decision should impact the forecast for 2026 in a positive way, but the budget for 2026 will rather depend on exactly what new initiatives might be in the pipeline as we look forwards.

The result to the end of April 2025 is an operating deficit of £598K against our budget projection for the same period of £676K. This result is exacerbated by the investment portfolio, which has taken a downturn.

During the first 2 months of 2025, our investment portfolio had made significant gains but then was adversely affected by the election of the USA President and the implementation of his policies. The result has been global market instability leading to a decline in the value of the BSAVA portfolio, which ended the period to April 2025 at a value of £10.409m. But investment is a long term view and a recovery is predicted by our investment managers, RBC Brewin Dolphin, as the markets settle down.

This concludes my report. Dr Hoad asked for a seconder.

Secunder: Dr P Higgins

Carried unanimously

#### **25.08 Changes to the Articles of Association**

Following a recent governance review, the latest guidance recommends that the CEO should not serve as a trustee, in order to avoid potential conflicts of interest arising from their role as a

staff member. As a result, the Articles have been amended to remove the CEO as a trustee (clause 23.1). To implement this change, related clauses concerning the minimum and maximum number of trustees (23.4.1), as well as quorum requirements (23.4.2), were also revised. The current Articles of the Association are available on the BSAVA website and the amended version was circulated with the notice of the AGM.

Dr Hoad proposed the adoption of this change and asked for a seconder.

Secunder: Mr M J Johnston

Carried unanimously

#### **25.09 Election of Officers 2025 – 2026**

The following nominations have been received for the election of Officer for the association year 2025 – 26.

President	Dr D Godfrey
Senior Vice President	Dr J Hoad
Vice President	Dr S Little
Junior Vice President	Dr N Connell
Honorary Treasurer	Mrs J Megarity
Honorary Secretary	Dr A Gow
Co-opted Board Member	Mr P Graham
Non-Executive Director	Mr S Spill

In the absence of any other nominations, Dr Hoad asked for someone from the floor to propose that these nominations be accepted “en bloc”.

Proposer: Dr P Lhermette

Dr Hoad asked for a seconder.

Secunder: Dr A Speakman

Carried unanimously

#### **25.10 Appointment of Representative on BVA Council**

The representative on BVA Council for 2025 – 2026 will be Dr D Godfrey. Dr Hoad asked if this was the wish of the meeting and the meeting confirmed it was.

#### **25.11 Appointment of Auditors**

Following consideration the recommendation of the Board is that the Association should appoint as its auditors, WR Partners for the forthcoming year.

Dr Hoad asked for a seconder.

Secunder: Mr J Dalton

Carried unanimously

## **25.12 Presentation of Life Membership**

Dr J Hoad invited Fergus Allerton to come forward and receive his Award.

## **25.13 Presentation to the incoming Treasurer**

Dr J Hughes asked Jo Megarity to come forward to accept the presentation of the Treasurer Tray, inaugurated by Sheldon Middleton in his year as Treasurer, this tray is presented at the start of the Honorary Treasurer's tenure.

## **25.14 Induction of new President**

And now for my final act...

It is my great pleasure to introduce our incoming President, David Godfrey.

David qualified from the RVC in 1988 and has had a career largely in practice but this has been varied. Starting in small animal practice, including a year in Canada; he, and his wife Rosie, started the first feline-only practice in England and now David has ended up an AP small animal dermatologist. Along the way there have been diversions into being a clinical pathologist for a commercial lab, some property development, having a TB tester agency, a hearing testing service, and running an Echinococcus granulosus eradication programme (sadly unsuccessful).

This interesting journey has included picking up post-graduate qualifications in small animal dermatology and medicine, becoming board certified in feline practice, and an (old-fashioned) RCVS Fellowship on feline osteoarthritis. Part of his work on feline osteoarthritis resulted in a JSAP paper with over 200 citations and which won the BSAVA Dunkin award.

Speaking of BSAVA, David responded to an email from someone called Carole Haile and went straight into being treasurer for the old Midlands Region. Then he became the first West Midlands Chair, Chair of Regions, Honorary Treasurer, then joined the Presidential ladder, and so we end up here...

And, finally, another quote, this one to end on - I promise:

"Το μυστικό της αλλαγής είναι να συγκεντρώνεις όλη σου την ενέργεια όχι στον αγώνα με το παλιό, αλλά στην κατασκευή του νέου."

And, in English for those who prefer:

'The secret of change is to focus all of your energy not on fighting the old, but building the new.'  
— Socrates

Over to you, David.

Fellow BSAVA members, colleagues and staff. Thank you, Julian. And thank you to the membership for electing me to this position. I am humbled by your faith in me to help lead the Association in this next stage of evolution. This is a time of significant change for BSAVA. Evolution is a process that fits a structure to its current environment. Sometimes evolution

happens slowly and at times there are leaps. We are seeing leaps forward at the moment but they are being taken with care and with due consideration; and they are necessary leaps forward. BSAVA acknowledges the successes of the past, and uses the strengths of the present to achieve the triumphs of the future.

But, please indulge me in a little looking back. I need to thank Julian for his dedicated work as President. He has had some difficult paths to steer and he has, of course, shone during this navigation. In fact, sunglasses have often been needed. I am so glad to be having Julian continuing to light the way ahead for us all over the next 12 months as Senior Vice President. I would also like to thank the trustees who have stepped down today, Carl and Jim. I think of our times together volunteering in BSAVA's regions and for those interesting years in the boardroom. Thank you for all your hard work. But I would particularly like to mention Carl's support in our making BSAVA's membership fair for all members of the professions, and his vision and energy driving sustainability. Leaving BSAVA with an RVN trustee sitting in a building powered by sunshine.

Back to the future. One thing I foresee is that this will not be an easy time to lead in the veterinary professions. As Julian has said, there is a lot going on. But our professions have strengths. And, one of the strengths, that the whole of the veterinary professions is lucky to have, is the strength of the BSAVA. BSAVA has a robust team; and I greatly look forward to be working with all of this team: with the trustees evolving BSAVA's governance, with all the staff to help ensure BSAVA operates so very well, and with members and volunteers to ensure their voice is heard - and that is both within BSAVA and within the professions more widely.

In conclusion; it is an honour being BSAVA President for 2025-2026, but this next year will not be about me. It will be about renewal of BSAVA, it will hear us shouting out with an ever-increasing voice about the most exciting innovations and I promise to do my very best.

#### **25.45 Date, time and place of next meeting**

Dr A Gow advised that the date of the next meeting is yet to be set and that this would be advised in due course. There being no other business the meeting concluded.