

Cost and other issues discussed at National Group meeting

1. The cost cutting exercise at National has led to a reduction in expenditure in phone and broadband for the Administrator, committee meeting travel expenses, show expenses and additional travel expenses.
2. The accountant has all the documentation to prepare the financial statement. Payments over receipts for 2011/2012 total just under £13,500, a great improvement over the previous year. This is without adjustment of money allocated from the Kenneth Black fund.
3. No additional merchandise has been purchased to date but bags with the CGS logo are being investigated. One problem is the number of bags that need to be purchased to be able to buy in at a reasonable price. Additionally the cost of postage and packing to send orders out will most probably make it non viable through our web site. One option would be to have them for sale at shows and other public events and possibly for Groups to order for collection at the AGM or from a committee member. General sales to the public brings added complications of Corporation Tax.
4. New cards were trailed at Wisley but very few sold. These were sold singularly so again not feasible for the web site. One idea is to get a selection of cards, e.g. a pack of 6, with pictures of member's gardens. Would any member have a suitable picture that we could use?
5. The thorny problem of group members being members of the National continues. The RHS is now insisting that all helpers at shows are members of the National so that they are covered by our insurance. We are reliant on Groups to help with this.
6. Use of Direct Debits is still in hand and I attended a meeting at RHS Wisley last Tuesday 13th November. There is both a set up cost and an ongoing cost involved so it would be very helpful if members could indicate if they would be willing to pay their subscriptions by DD. If Groups could collect this information it would be a great help since few people respond to articles in the magazine.
7. The CGS will be present at both Tatton and GWL in 2013. This will not be the usual display garden but hopefully an interesting more interactive display for the public, including a small planted area. This should significantly reduce the cost since set up will be reduced to one day and hopefully most plants will be grown by members. 'Seeds of knowledge' is the theme that the RHS have set for GWL so this is what we are trying to implement.