

Annual General Meeting Nominees



Simon Butlin

Biography

Simon achieved a 1st class masters degree in theoretical physics before switching trajectory and deploying his mathematical abilities to that of actuarial science, qualifying as an actuary in 2002. Enjoying a career of 25 years as a leader in financial services, Simon has benefited from diverse experiences including: investment strategy; risk management; governance; corporate transactions; and the determination of financial viability for insurance and asset management groups.

Simon enjoys deploying the skills developed in one sphere for advancement in another. Since 2018 Simon has taken on responsibility for safeguarding thousands of people's financial security in retirement through being a trustee of a large pension scheme. Having found this role rewarding, Simon is embarking on a new career in trusteeship where he can have further positive impact on people and causes. Simon is excited about the opportunity to achieve this ambition in the context of wildlife conservation, playing a role in pursuing RZSS's vision.

Simon and family enjoy Stirlingshire countryside living and share their home with a dog, a cat, chickens and three horses. Life often revolves around the care and enjoyment of these cherished animals but Simon also enjoys archery. Inspired by the growing field of quantum biology, Simon is also seeking to rekindle some of his scientific abilities so that he might better understand this intriguing topic. Who knows whether this will lead Simon down a new avenue in the future but, as someone who loves learning and alternative applications of knowledge, he is keen to find out.

Supporting Statement

My financial services and trusteeship careers have allowed me to accumulate skills and experiences which would provide valuable diversity to the board's collective capabilities. Relevant skills include: risk assessment; effective challenge; judgement; and strategic focus. These skills, and others, have been acquired through experiences including: trustee responsibility for a £3bn pension scheme; providing advice to boards on risk exposures from corporate transactions, strategies and business activities; and advising on, and executing, corporate governance.

John Fitzgerald

Biography

After finishing school, I decided to follow my childhood fascination with wildlife and did a B.Sc. Honours degree in Zoology at University College Dublin, followed by five years post-graduate research into fish physiology at Dunstaffnage Marine Laboratory. My fascination with animals continues, sharing my house with two cats and a 30 year old snake.

I moved to Scotland in 1989 and to Edinburgh in 1993. For the last quarter century, I have worked in Financial Services, with over 20 of those years spent in Human Resources progressing to Head of Reward roles managing pay, bonus and incentive arrangements for employees globally, and being Director on several company boards. I gained my post-graduate qualification in HR from Napier University and am a Chartered Fellow of the Institute of Personnel & Development.

I was elected to the RZSS Board in 2012. In the twelve years since, I have always tried to make a positive contribution while never shying away from holding an 'alternative' view. I am on the Nomination & Remuneration Committee, as well as the Finance, Audit & Risk Committee and the Animal Welfare & Ethics Group.



Outwith RZSS, I also sit as a member on the Saola Working Group.

My commitment to RZSS remains as strong as ever. I've been a member since 2003, a patron since 2010, and a Life Member since 2015. I am married to Natalie who volunteers with the Zoo's Gardens Team and we are frequent visitors to both the Zoo and HWP.

Supporting Statement

My background has taught me to analyse complex issues, work with stakeholders and reach informed strategic decisions within an appropriate governance framework. I'm passionate about RZSS and excited by its revitalised mission. It would be a privilege to serve another term on the Board and I'd continue to work committedly to ensure RZSS remains a centre of excellence, and that its Parks are ethical and financially successful attractions that support our research and conservation work.

Malcolm Fitzpatrick

Biography

Malcolm began his career in zoos over 30 years ago as an animal keeper at London Zoo, before progressing to section manager and curator roles across both ZSL London and Whipsnade Zoos.

He now fulfils a key Zoological Society of London leadership role as an experienced and highly motivated Chief Zoological Officer, with a prominent profile in the global zoological community. As ZSL's most senior zoological expert, he represents ZSL across a number of forums and often takes the lead as their media spokesperson on matters relating to the zoos.

Malcolm is responsible for developing and implementing strategies that ensure ZSL is a globally recognised centre of excellence for species care, science, and conservation impact. His zoo teams are actively working on conservation projects across the UK and around the world, including initiatives in the Philippines, Vietnam, Thailand, Indonesia, Mexico and India.

His role also involves training international ex-situ and in-situ conservation professionals, veterinarians and students through zoos and in range countries. His teams are leading on the delivery of multiple training courses for overseas wildlife ranger service, as well as teaching on courses for veterinary graduates.

Malcolm's professional roles and responsibilities include sitting on the EAZA council, member of the BIAZA Elephant Taskforce and as WAZA Sumatran tiger GSMP Convenor. He has a number of peer-reviewed publications on the care and welfare of animals in zoos and recently participated in a panel discussion on the role of zoos in 2050 at the EAZA Directors conference.

Supporting Statement

I was raised on a small farm in the north east of Scotland and have fond memories of frequent visits to the Highland Wildlife Park and Edinburgh Zoo. In my career, I have accumulated extensive zoological experience and wish for an opportunity to contribute further to the sector. With the RZSS's significant standing in the global zoo community, it is an organisation that I would be proud to support as a member of the board.

Edward Jones

Biography

I grew up on and later jointly owned small holdings in Warwickshire and Wales. Amongst our various animals, we kept Ostriches, Llamas, three Rheas, several Vietnamese pot-bellied pigs, some black cattle known as Dexters, two ponies, some goats, many geese and chickens, and a large number of sheep. Our animals were always treated more like pets than livestock. There were always jobs to do on the farm and I've done many of the tasks you might

associate with such a venture. On at least one occasion, whilst my parents were at a dinner party, I helped with the delivery of a lamb.

I'm a regular visitor to Edinburgh Zoo and have been a member of many years. I've also adopted various animals including the Wolverines and Tapirs over years. On occasion, I've given adoption as gifts to family and friends.

I'm currently an Associate Professor of Finance at Heriot-Watt University. I teach Corporate Governance and Sustainability at Heriot-Watt and have done so for most of the last 27 years. My expertise in this field extends to board composition and dynamics, stakeholder conflicts, organisational target-setting and executive remuneration. I also published a number of relevant papers on governance and sustainability issues in my career. My primary research has been on company investment decision-making which might also be useful in the role of trustee of the society. I have written several recent papers on the issue of sustainable investment decision-making. And I have excellent contacts with the top experts in the UK investment sector.

Supporting Statement

After a career teaching and researching, corporate governance and stakeholder engagement, I feel well positioned to assist the society with financial and governance decision-making, including strategic planning and target setting, ethical decision-making, board composition and dynamics, stakeholder conflicts, and executive remuneration. I would also be able to contribute on board committees such as the Nominations and Remuneration Committee, the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, the Business Advisory Committee and the Education and Communities Advisory Committee.

Deirdre (Dee) McIntosh

Biography

Dee McIntosh grew up in Dundee, known for its jute, jam and journalism - her father worked in jute, and after graduating in History from Stirling University Dee started her BBC career in news journalism in London, notably on the flagship programme Newsnight.

Dee then put her years in journalism to good use at Director level in the not-for-profit sector.

She managed the media in high performance sports including at the Sydney Olympics and 2003 Rugby World Cup. By 2007 she was Director of Public Affairs at Scottish Rugby where her engagement with the Scottish Government led to the overturning of a 25 year ban on Scotland's licensing regulations at Murrayfield, with immediate commercial and sponsorship benefits for Scottish Rugby.

Dee then followed her passion for nature conservation, our natural heritage and landscapes by joining Scotland's largest membership charity, the National Trust for Scotland, as its Director of Policy & Communications. Dee led all policy responses to consultations, including on sustainability, regeneration and biodiversity.

Dee returned to London to spend 9 years as an award-winning Director for the companion animal welfare charity Battersea, where she delivered transformational brand growth, positioning Battersea in the UK's top 10 best known charities; led a campaign that changed legislation on cruelty to dogs and cats; and she secured the ITV Paul O'Grady TV series, which boosted Battersea's supporter base and legacy income.

Dee is a consultant for the Commonwealth War Graves Commission, pitching documentaries on its iconic work to Commissioners at major TV channels.

Supporting Statement

I have extensive experience as an executive Director in the not-for-profit sector and have also served as a Non-executive Director for a UK Charitable Foundation.

I have in-depth knowledge of working in companion animal welfare and in conservation.

I am a strategic thinker and I specialise in reputation management and crisis communications.

I engage and influence at both Westminster and Holyrood.
I have worked in large membership organisations where volunteers make an invaluable contribution.

Mark Tate

Biography

For 10 years I have lived in the Cairngorms National Park, 4 miles from the Highland Wildlife Park. The Cairngorms is a special place that I am passionate about sharing, protecting and enhancing.

Before establishing my own business in 2024 I spent 8 years leading the Cairngorms Business Partnership, a private sector chamber of commerce and destination management organisation (VisitCairngorms) with over 400 business members, including RZSS, and over 150,000 engaged social media followers. I have a deep understanding of the visitor economy, the challenges and opportunities businesses face and the importance of inspiring our visitors to enjoy and care for nature in a sustainable way.

I have an excellent network of connections locally and across Scotland, in the tourism sector and beyond.

Prior to moving to the Cairngorms I spent 20 years working globally for HSBC Bank. In my last two roles I was country head of HSBC's corporate operations in Kazakhstan and Scotland. This involved executive responsibility including for risk and balance sheet management; sales; public relations and business growth.

Since 2016 I have been an independent director of High Life Highland, the past two years as board chair. High Life is a charity formed by Highland Council to develop and promote opportunities in culture, learning, sport, leisure, health and wellbeing throughout the Highlands. I would love the opportunity to join the board of RZSS and believe I have the skills and experience to help achieve the vision for a world that protects, values and loves nature.

Supporting Statement

I am passionate about engaging and inspiring people to protect, value and love nature.

Through VisitCairngorms I have evidenced skills in inspiring people to engage with and care for nature in a sustainable way. I have a deep understanding and network of connections in the tourism industry in Scotland, with particular expertise operating in protected areas.

As chair of a large charity I understand good governance and the need for commercialisation to support charitable objectives.

David Windmill

Biography

I have a first class degree in Biological Sciences and spent 3 years carrying out PhD research in insect physiology.

I spent 7 years developing and managing animal and crop projects in Africa which involved considerable interaction with local communities and governmental organisations.

I spent 18 years in a leading role in the rapidly growing Scottish aquaculture industry ending up as MD of its largest company, Marine Harvest. As part of this I worked for 2 years in Chile. Salmon farming involved the introduction of a technically sophisticated industry into remote communities and environments in Scotland and elsewhere which required an understanding of and sensitivity toward the many stakeholders in the establishment of a new industry.



From 2000 to 2010 | was Chief Executive of RZSS. Whilst RZSS (& Edinburgh Zoo) was a well-regarded institution by its peers in the UK and beyond it faced significant challenges. Many zoos were having to demonstrate their relevance to the public at large who were increasingly concerned about the conservation of threatened species of plants and animals around the world. In response we developed working relationships with universities, research bodies, conservation organisations etc and developed the skills of RZSS staff to support real and meaningful conservation work 'in the field'. We raised RZSS's profile as a serious conservation organisation.

From 2007 -2017 | was a trustee of the Great Steward of Scotland's Dumfries House Trust

From 2008 - 2022 | was Honorary Consul General for Norway in Scotland.

From 2010 - 2022 | was Chair of the Scottish Seabird Centre in North Berwick.

Supporting Statement

From my time as CEO | have a detailed understanding of and love for RZSS. In my view the role of the Board is to a) set the strategic direction of the Society b) determine the risk appetite for achieving that strategy c) ensure the necessary financial resources are in place and monitor the executive team in achieving the strategy.

Based on my skills and experience | believe | can contribute constructively to the Board's discussions.

