

**Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Friday 2 December 2016 18.30 – 19.45 at Green Pastures Nursery & Farm Shop, Mill Road, Bergh Apton, Norwich, NR15 1BQ**

We started late due to traffic problems, providing an opportunity for members to do a bit of networking. Members were welcomed by Chairman Martyn Davey, who said it was good to have our AGM at Green Pastures again.

- 1. Apologies:** Ray & Pauline Martin, Phill Webdale, John Castro
- 2. Minutes of the last meeting:** minutes of the 2015 AGM on the website since February 2016. No matters arising. Acceptance was proposed by Ian Roofe, seconded by Cathryn Waldron and agreed by those present.
- 3. Accounts for the year ended 30 September 2016:** Frances Howard introduced the accounts. An abbreviated version was issued to attendees, with the full accounts available for inspection. Frances had taken on the role halfway through the year. Income was £16,714, with the main source of income being the Royal Norfolk Show. Membership appeared to be falling slightly. Expenditure was £17,756 with the main expenses being for our shows. Excess of expenditure over income for the year was £1042. Committee are actively reviewing expenditure. There is no longer the need to have an audit or Independent Examination because our income is under £25k. Anne Bridge queried the expenditure in respect of affiliations. Frances advised that as this was the first time she had done these accounts it was possible she had misanalysed this category. Martyn confirmed we are still affiliated to the same societies. Julian Woodrow queried judges, prizes and helpers' expenditure. Frances advised the accounts had been prepared with different headings, with show expenses now broken down differently. Martyn also advised that in future payments would not be made to volunteer helpers at shows, in line with Charities Commission guidance. Julian queried why we are still paying prize money when no such awards are made at national level. Martyn advised this and entry fees would be looked at as part of the show schedule review. Committee are undertaking a full review of expenditure and our reserves have gone down less this year than in other years. Frances advised that the amount of £8,876 under the heading of debtors was mainly in respect of a payment due to us for the 2016 summer show. We have already paid deposits on some show accommodation for 2017. Acceptance of the accounts was proposed by Anne Bridge, seconded by Simon Gaches and accepted by those present. Anne congratulated Frances for doing a fine job after taking over with no handover.
- 4. Chairman's report:** because of the late start Martyn Davey said he would put his full written report in the next edition of the Norfolk Gardener. He thanked everyone for their input and support over the year. The one subject that did need to be talked about was our Summer Show within the Royal Norfolk Show. Ian Roofe had managed this for us for the last six years and 2017 would be his last year. The society needed someone to take on the role, preferably working with Ian over the coming year. The Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association (RNAA) need to cut show costs, which in our case means cutting our budget by 50%. We are currently looking for sponsors, large and small. The Flower & Garden Show is sponsored £2k by Norfolk & Suffolk Magazine. The overall cost is £20k of which £10k is the cost of the marquee. Committee have agreed that we will look at the issue of passes to exhibitors and are proposing that six entries will be required to get a pass in 2017. We wish to continue within the Royal Norfolk Show and RNAA wish to keep us. Members were asked to advise if they had ideas about sponsors. Anne Bridge suggested that we could do away with prize money, which is not awarded at national Flower Shows. This will be considered and RNAA are reviewing trade stand prize money. All options are being considered.
- 5. General Secretary's Report:** Lesley Webdale that she had spent her first year getting to know the role, which involved a lot of co-ordinating. It had been a steep learning curve for both her and committee. Apologies for anything that hadn't gone quite right this year. Committee consists of a group of unpaid volunteers who are currently learning how to work together as a team and share roles. Lesley said there was a need for some more volunteers to help, particularly with various show duties. Use of social media and event advertising had been increased and the website updated. We supported the Peter Beales Rose Fair and the Orchid Conference, recruiting members at both. Lesley enjoyed meeting members and potential members

at our events. There is a lot of work to do with our affiliated societies and various supporting documents were under review. Collection of Gift Aid Declarations had started. Lesley had increased the size and scope of the society stall at events, with second-hand books and home produce proving popular with visitors. Overall it had been an interesting year and she was looking forward to 2017. Martyn said he appreciated Lesley's support and that her stall had generated a large amount of income for the society.

6. **Social Report:** Ian Roofe said he too would also put a full report in the next Norfolk Gardener. Thanks to everyone who supports social events, helping to provide a small amount of income for society funds in the process. This year had included visits to Thenford, Myddleton Manor, Capel Hall, Raveningham Hall, and Manor Farm, Coston. We had a last minute change of speaker for the Autumn Lecture which had worked out well. In 2017 we would be having a Spring Lecture by Johnny Walkers, visits to Narborough Hall and Gissing, plus a holiday and Autumn Lecture. Martyn thanked Ian for all his hard work.
7. **Retiring President's address:** Lady Bacon was unable to attend the AGM and had sent a written report stating that she had enjoyed her time as our President and welcoming us to Raveningham Hall in July.
8. **Election of officers and committee for 2016/17:** Laura Hemming stood down as Membership Secretary. Committee had agreed to merge membership back with the General Secretary role. The following were willing to stand for re-election and were elected as a group (Proposed by Robin McDonald, seconded by John Easton and agreed by those present):

Chairperson	Martyn Davey
Vice Chairperson	Kristopher Harper
General Secretary	Lesley Webdale
Social Secretary	Ian Roofe
Committee	Simon Gaches, Cynthia Young, Cathryn Waldron

9. **Election of President and Vice President:** Martyn invited Charlotte Carter to be President for the coming year and she was duly elected. Charlotte said that she was delighted to become our President, would bring a lot of enthusiasm to the role, and was sure that she would be more knowledgeable at the end of her term. She was looking forward to hosting the President's Garden Party – but a bit nervous about the inspection of her garden! The President's badge and chain of office was handed over. Committee proposed that Simon White, long term employee of Peter Beales Roses, be invited to take on the Vice President role. This was formally proposed by Anne Bridge, seconded by Cathryn Waldron and agreed by those present.
10. **AGM formally closed at 19:30.** In response to a question from Julian Woodrow, members were advised that there is no "Any other business" at the AGM. Anyone wishing to make a proposal needs to put it in writing to the General Secretary a minimum of 28 days before the date of the AGM.
11. **President's Medal:** this is an award considered by committee and awarded to people who have given long and loyal support. This year's recipient was Pauline Harper who has completed many roles for the society over a large number of years.
12. **Presentation of trophies to overall show winners for 2016:** President, Charlotte Carter, presented annually awarded trophies as follows:

JA Christie Cup, greatest number of points in open classes at all shows	Pauline Harper
John Wyatt Membership	Robin McDonald
JE Moxey Cup, Best Pot Plant	Robin McDonald
Lord Lieutenant's Challenge Cup, most meritorious amateur exhibit	Trevor Last
HWT Empson, greatest number of points in flower arranging classes	Amanda Seales
May & Baker Cup, most first prizes in vegetable classes	Pauline Harper
E Harradine Shield, most points in cacti & succulent classes	Robin McDonald
Lombe-Taylor Trophy, best vegetable exhibit	Trevor Last
HP Neave – most promising newcomer	Belle Jones
Drayton Shield, affiliated society with most points	Shipdham Garden Club & Horticultural Society
RHS Grenfell Medal, highest number of points for flower arranging	Amanda Seales