**Hurst Horticultural & Cottage Garden Society – AGM 24th April 2024**

**Minutes**

**Chair**: Frank Whittaker **Minutes**: Chantal Roberts

**Location & Time**: The Castle Inn 19:30

**Attendance:**

Frank Whittaker, Sheila Whittaker, Fiona Piper, Chantal Roberts, Heather Howarth, David Howarth, Andrew Stephens, Karen Dearman, Peter Lee, Hilary Reed, Jo Penney, Janet Larkin, Ann Newman, Martin Newman, John & Anne-Marie Vimpany,

**1. Apologies for absence**

Simon Roberts, Chris & Val Bowman, Pippa Boyd, Annette Drake, Naomi & David Bassett, Keith and Julie Attfield, Don from the EMC Jazz Band, Stewart Brydie, John Penney, Howard Dearman, Eric and Sue Rockall.

**2. Minutes of the last AGM on 25th April 2023**

Frank asked for any comments from last year`s minutes. There was one point from last year with regards to donations to charities. For clarity, Frank read out this section from last year`s minutes with regards to a £500 donation being given to 4 different charities. It was agreed that these minutes were a fair representation of the meeting.

**3. Secretary`s report**

The 2023 show was a great success and what was particularly pleasing was the amount of positive comments, congratulations and thank you`s from entrants, visitors and local media.

The common theme once again seems to have been about the relaxed atmosphere and friendliness of the whole event and what an interesting and pleasant way to spend a summer`s afternoon.

One comment on Facebook noted: “It was a very Darling Buds of May, my daughter and I had a lovely time with church bells ringing out in the background” I`d throw in a sprinkling of The Archers, but without the bickering, and here we have the Hurst Horticultural Show, a traditional English village summer`s afternoon.

These days the show is much broader than pure horticulture with at least half of the entries spread amongst cooking, baking, preserves, handicrafts, art, photography, and scarecrows. It`s more broadly based as well with many entries from Wokingham, Bracknell, Maidenhead, Winnersh and Twyford as well as Hurst.

Visitor numbers were good and revenue was up on our previous show and the whole show seemed to run smoothly, even the weather was our friend.

The use of cashless payments, the new show entry and results system, walky-talky radios, new website and social media campaigns were all significant contributors.

Income from stalls was £180, show entries £279, gate entry £766, teas £311, plant sales £597, raffle £598, bar £498 produce auction £218 and Chris Bowman donated £150 being the profit he made from his metal craft stall.

As a result, we made a surplus of just over £1,558 and this surplus has allowed us to once again give a generous donation to charity to add to the list of previous recipients: Alexander Devine, Hurst 1st Air Scouts, NHS Local First Responders, Thames Valley Air Ambulance, Chelsea Royal Hospital and Twyford Age Concern, Headway Thames Valley, The Cowshed, ARC Counselling and Camp Mohawk.

The recipient from the 2023 show will be discussed and voted on in the General Planning Meeting held immediately following this AGM.

The show organisation team meets regularly and acts in the same way as the previous committee structure acted, making decisions about show plans but bringing key decisions such as donations of money to charity back to our general membership for the decision to be made.

**4. Treasurer`s report**

Andrew shared paper copies of the Treasurer’s report which he walked through with the meeting attendees. The total society funds in the bank are £8092.40 (before deduction of the £1,000 donation to charity).

**5. Election of officers**

Frank discussed there was a planning team meeting held a few weeks back. All existing planning members have agreed to carry on for 2024. He also asked those present if they or anyone they knew of wished to be considered for one of these roles, none was forthcoming.

Andrew Stephens advised that regretfully, he will be resigning as the Treasurer due to his other commitments. He is happy to continue to see this year through and will handover to a successor once appointed.

Discussion with regards to whether it is essential for a chair to be appointed at this time. Frank is happy to perform this role in addition to his role as Secretary in the absence of the right person being identified and appointed. All to keep their eyes and ears open for potential candidates for chair.

**Review of Roles**:

The role of the chair person should be discussed at a future meeting.

Treasurer (committee) - Vacant

Secretary Frank & Sheila Whittaker (committee, joint secretaries) - Agreed

Horticultural Secretary (committee) Janet Larkin– Agreed

Home Industries Secretary (committee) Karen Dearman – Agreed

Simon & Chantal Roberts (non-committee) – Agreed

Fiona Piper (non-committee) – Agreed

Heather Howarth (non-committee) - Agreed

**6. Questions**

There being no questions, Frank closed the AGM and thanked everyone present for their continued interest in the society.

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**General Planning Meeting**

**Minutes**

**1. Minutes of the last General Planning Meeting on 25th April 2023.**

Donation to charity. It was agreed that £1,000 would be donated to charity. From the email request to all supporters to submit suggestions for charities for consideration, Frank only received one suggestion. The planning team considered this carefully, it was for Cancer Research UK. Since a number of people very closely associated with the show have been impacted directly by cancer, it was agreed during the planning team meeting all were comfortable to support this as the charity for the 2023 show donation.

Some meeting attendees advised they had not picked up that nominations were due to be submitted within a period of time. Frank advised he would look at opportunities to improve how this will be communicated for the next year so that all are clear about the process and have the opportunity to nominate charities.

All agreed to Cancer Research UK being the recipient of the 2023 £1,000 charitable donation.

**2. 2023 Show Finances**

The 2023 show made a surplus of £1,557.82, the treasurer’s report was used to support this. No comments were made.

**3. 2024 Show Planning:**

***a) Horticultural***: Schedule completed with some minor changes, judges confirmed.

***b) Home Industries***: Schedule completed with some new categories this year. New art display boards and tablecloths purchased. Judges confirmed.

***c) Printed schedule, Banners and Posters***: Keith and Fiona have been developing the printed schedule which should mirror the website design. The winning picture from 2023 will be incorporated into the printed schedule. The front cover is now being progressed with the banners and poster to follow. Timescale for delivery of the printed schedules is 1st week in July, immediately after the `big show`. Janet agreed to coordinate the schedule deliveries once again and will need additional assistance.

***d) Stallholders and cashless payments***: Chantal discussed the list of confirmed stallholders, there had been considerable interest and all but one had been confirmed and paid for with some very interesting new ones this year. Chantal will seek to borrow the `Sum-Up` machines once more to facilitate cashless payments.

***e) Online entries and results***: It is planned to make online entries available from 1st July using the same system as last year which worked well. Simon and Chantal will once again manage this whole process with Simon gathering all the results behind the scenes in the Scout Hut.

***f) Website, social media and mailings***: Fiona has already updated the website and will soon upload this year`s schedules for general viewing. Social media will be used incorporating Facebook (Hurst, Twyford, Wokingham and Winnersh), Instagram and Twitter. The email list of supporters has been updated, incorporating all entries from last year which has increased our total list to 240.

***g) Refreshments – bar and teas*** : Martin said he will run the bar again with the help of Ann and three other members of his bar team. He has already had discussions with Loddon Brewery. Sheila will run the teas again and will seek extra help this year. She will also arrange the ice-cream vendor.

***h) Music arrangements:*** EMC Jazz Band booked and confirmed.

***i) Plant stall***: Heather said the plant stall team are already active rearing many varieties of plants. Eric has his bean plants ready for early sales with other plants coming along.

***j) Cups and trophies***: Collection and cleaning process; Sheila has performed this task historically but would like to hand this over to another person after this show. No volunteers during the meeting.

***k) Risk Assessment/safety plan***: Simon Roberts will review the Risk Assessment and Safety Plan.

***l) Raffle***: Fiona will run the raffle and this year, to avoid confusion, the time of the draw will be better publicised and also purchasers of tickets will be encouraged to write their phone numbers on the back of ticket stubs.

***4) Other topics***: The presenter of the cups and prizes will be Wayne Smith.

Chris James will be asked to auction the produce.

Jo Penney will ask John Penney to arrange the PA system.

Frank closed the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and stated The Society is well placed to deliver another successful show.