

**Minutes of the  
Chiswick Horticultural and Allotments Society  
Annual General Meeting  
held on Sunday 8 June 2014 at 3.00pm at  
the CHS Trading Hut, Staveley Road, London W4**

**In attendance:**

President and Committee/Trustees

Felicity Barwood, President  
Henry Gewanter, Chairman  
Mike Flinders, Show Secretary  
John Gill, Membership Secretary  
Benjamin Jones, Secretary  
Jill Morris, Joint Trading Hut Secretary  
Andrew Steele, Allotments Secretary  
Catherine Steele, Treasurer

Society Members

Lillian Baker	Dawn Heuston	Chris Race
Brian Boothby	Graham Hughes	Sandra Shepherd
Daphne Boothby	Peter Isaac	Edward Thomas
Rita Chesney	Yvette Isaac	Georgina Tritton
Keith Dickson	Noreen Jones	Dawn Walsh
Louise Di Duca	Paula Leyburn	
Lizzie Drake	Aileen Murphy	
Sue Gewanter	Grace Phillipson	
Anne Ka Glommi	Brian Pow	
Iris Graham	Jo Rabin	

Members present by proxy

Angela Brown	Andrew Heath	Lou Spencer
David Burton	Jo Heath	Fred Wakeling
Sandra Burton	Helen Lawrence	Geraldine Wakeling
Vivien Cantor	Pamela Mayorcas	Everard Whitehouse
Caroline Gill	David Rust	Kate Wilson

**1. Welcome**

The Chairman, Henry Gewanter (HG), welcomed Society members to the meeting and handed out copies of the agenda, 2013 AGM minutes and/or annual report to members needing them.

**2. Apologies for Absence**

Paul Lynch, Vice President

Society Members

Patricia Blackwell	Alastair Britten	Leslie Hoover
Valerie Pancic	Dharma Tamang	Carolyn Valder

### **3. Minutes of the 2013 AGM**

Copies of the minutes of the 2013 Annual General Meeting were available at the meeting and had also been posted on the CHS website.

Louise Di Duca asked that the spelling of her name be corrected.

The Minutes of the 2013 AGM were then approved unanimously. No matters arising.

### **4. Chairman and Committee's Report and Outlook for the Society**

The Chairman noted that the formal purpose of this meeting is to review the year just passed and take care of certain formalities but that he would welcome suggestions as to where we should be going and what we might do differently.

Several of our members have passed away during the year – e.g. John Beveridge, Gillian Reilly, June McNaughton and Dr. Patricia Mary Harry - who will all be sorely missed.

Catherine Steele, who has worked tirelessly as Treasurer (and before that as Secretary), is stepping down and will, subject to members' approval, be replaced by David Burton. The Chairman indicated his thanks to Catherine for all her hard work all these years and to say how much her cheerful approach at committee meetings would be missed. The members joined him in a round of applause.

He welcomed a new member of the team, Everard Whitehouse, who has offered to help out with events – so suggested we expect great things on that front in the year ahead.

He then handed over to John Gill for a review of membership.

#### **Membership - John Gill, Membership Secretary**

John indicated members eligible to vote at this meeting are:

53 full price members;

58 household full price members;

121 concessions (individual);

94 household concessions, for a total of 326 members as of the meeting.

55 new members have signed up so far this year.

John noted the new dark green membership flyer we produced this year and asked if members could distribute it. He asks if members would each try to recruit at least one new member.

He extended his thanks to the volunteer members who sign up new and renewal members on Sunday mornings.

#### **Events – Henry Gewanter**

Henry recounted the many events which the Society organised this year:

Seeds of Italy talk

Fullers Brewery tour

Tour to Malvern Show

Beekeeping talks

## Summer & Autumn Shows

### Summer and Christmas Parties

He noted that next year is the Society's centenary and that we are thinking about how it might be celebrated. He then handed the floor over to Jill Morris.

### **Trading Hut and Newsletter - Jill Morris, Trading Hut Secretary**

Jill introduced herself as Trading Hut Secretary jointly with Alastair Britten, who is away.

She reported that the Trading Hut had a busy year. The philosophy is to keep prices competitive, and perhaps a bit below competition, and to allow customers to purchase products in quantities they can use. It is an important source of income for the Society, enabling it to subsidise other activities. She appealed for new helpers on Sunday mornings, especially younger volunteers to help customers lift heavy bags. She offered all our thanks to Matthew Britten and Andrew Steele for fixing the leak in the Hut roof at a cost we could afford. The plant sale was held a bit later than usual this year due to weather conditions but followed last year's successful practice of beginning on a Friday evening. She offered her thanks to the people who staff the Trading Hut on Sunday mornings and to the greenhouse team.

Ashley Petherick, our beekeeper at the wildlife allotment, is moving to Bracknell and taking his hives with him, which means no beekeeping talks for the moment. We need a replacement beekeeper on the wildlife allotment.

As Jill also writes the weekly newsletter, which has become the easiest and quickest way to get information to members, so she reminded members to forward to her any information they would like to share with members.

A point was then raised for discussion: whether we should require members to show a valid membership card when shopping at the hut. The advantage of doing so would be to identify those members who had not yet renewed, and those who should join. The disadvantage is the inconvenience of having to bring a card for each visit. A show of hands was taken and the majority preferred us to continue with our current informal approach.

### **Shows - Mike Flinders, Show Secretary**

Mike reported that we had approx. 460 entries in both shows. He thanked all those who participated. He said our intention is to make participation easy.

31 people went on the Society's tour to the Malvern Show and we are hoping for a similar number to go to the Loseley show on 20 July.

The Summer Show is shaping up well with Phyllis Logan of Downton Abbey having agreed to hand out the prizes and the Society cookbook set to be launched then.

### **Allotments - Andrew Steele, Allotments Secretary**

Andrew noted that he looks after the allotments in Chiswick along with the allotment representatives – Philip York at Thames Road, Cluny Wells and Ben Jones at Dukes Meadow, Lilian Baker at Burial Ground, Sandy Shepherd and Jenny Jenks at Promenade, Roger Morsley-Smith at Staveley Road and Andrew himself at Chertsey Road. Security issues have been down this last year thanks to their help.

A major success during the year was persuading Jim Buchan from Carillion to arrange for pick up of green waste from the allotment sites. Allotment holders

should bag it up and leave it at the end of the plots nearest the internal pathway so it can be easily picked up.

Henry noted the Society's thanks to Andrew for arranging this.

#### **5. Treasurer's report and adoption of 2013 Report and Financial Statement**

The 2013 Report and Financial Statement for the Society had been circulated to the members prior to the meeting for their perusal. The Financial Statement had been examined and signed by an Independent Examiner.

Catherine Steele, the Treasurer, reported on the financial statement.

It was not a bad year – income and expense roughly equal, though expenditure looks larger due to depreciation. The previous year we had extraordinary income due to Gift Aid on the forgiveness of a loan.

She noted a grant from the Hounslow Community Initiative Partnership this year for our roof of £500.

Catherine noted that our independent examiner Rebecca Bower has been doing the job for us since 2006. She has retired from her job as Director of Finance at RBG Kew (Kew Gardens) and is now standing down, as they are moving to Devon. She asked that we give Rebecca a huge vote of thanks for her work for us.

Dawn Walsh proposing and Felicity Barwood seconding, the annual report and financial statements were unanimously approved.

#### **6. Election of Committee members for 2014/2015**

**Re-election:** All existing Committee members (except Catherine Steele) had put themselves forward for re-election. Those present were asked to approve the re-election of Committee members for the next twelve months. This approval was duly given by a unanimous vote.

Those thus re-elected were Alastair Britten, David Burton, Mike Flinders, Henry Gewanter, John Gill, Benjamin Jones, Jill Morris and Andrew Steele.

**New members:** a nomination to stand as a committee member had been made for Everard Whitehouse by Henry Gewanter, seconded by Ben Jones. His election to the Committee was duly given by unanimous vote.

Those present were asked to approve the appointment of the Chairman (Henry Gewanter), Secretary (Benjamin Jones) and Treasurer (David Burton). Each were approved unanimously.

#### **7. Election of President and Vice Presidents for 2014/2015**

Those present were asked to approve the election of President and Vice Presidents for 2014/2015. This approval was duly given.

Felicity Barwood, President

Kurt Berger, Vice President

Paul Lynch, Vice President

Dawn Walsh, Vice President

#### **8. Appointment of Independent Examiner for 2013/2014**

Members were advised that Wayne Hirst, who is a qualified accountant with experience in charity accounts, has agreed to serve as our independent examiner. Henry noted that Mr. Hirst is highly recommended by our new Treasurer, David Burton. He was unanimously elected by those present.

## 9. Any Other Business

HG indicated that he would be proposing changes to the Society's articles next year to reduce the quorum for general meetings from the present 35 minimum to 20. Wording expressly authorising use of proxies to attend and vote at general meetings, which is permitted by the Companies Act but not yet specifically covered in the articles, would also be added to facilitate management of meetings in the future. He also proposes to offer attending members free wine! No objections were voiced.

HG asked for the members to consider helping the society with PR/publicity, whether as a Committee member or not. Anyone willing should let him know or perhaps ask around to find others who might be willing to help with this.

Peter Isaacs spoke on allotment holders' concerns about the new standpipes which have recently been fitted on the allotment sites. He asked members to consider a resolution which he has drafted, as follows:

“RESOLVED: the Chiswick Horticultural and Allotment Society considers that the Edwards standpipes fitted with non concussive bib taps installed on Chiswick allotments do not meet the needs of the elderly and those with mobility, bending and lifting difficulties and therefore calls upon the Chiswick Horticultural and Allotments Society to write to the appropriate officers and councillors of the London Borough of Hounslow to inform them that the Chiswick Horticultural and Allotments Society is of the opinion that by installing such standpipes the London Borough of Hounslow could be seen to be acting in a discriminatory manner (because it did not meet the needs of the elderly and those with mobility, bending and lifting difficulties) and that the Chiswick Horticultural and Allotments Society members wish to meet with them to seek a solution to the problems caused by the Edwards standpipes.”

Peter believes the system can be adapted but, as it stands, is forcing people to give up allotments because they can't water. It disregards special needs people. All people object to carrying water.

One member asks that allotment holders be allowed use of hosepipes, though another felt hosepipes had been abused (e.g. use of sprinklers). Yet another felt it would be hard to get the Council to change as they have been long concerned about the abuse of hosepipes. Some people suggested the springs on the taps, which are very hard to press and hold in, should be loosened.

Peter responded that our main purpose as a Society was to help allotment holders. Generally use of water on allotments to grow crops is a good use of water. The new system is discriminatory. He wants the people responsible for the allotments to meet with us and discuss how to improve the water supply. He suggests putting in more standpipes to make the supply closer to individual allotments.

The motion was carried.

Yvette Isaacs, on behalf of Lou Spencer, questioned why the AGM was so late. Catherine apologised for the delay and said it was due to press of work. HG said he would speak to the new Treasurer about trying to hold it earlier next year.

Louise Di Duca complained that the Dukes Meadow allotment gate is often unlocked. It was agreed all allotment holders should be encouraged to lock the gates after themselves in all cases and to watch for people not doing it.

Chris Race from Promenade noted that many allotments near his were abandoned and should be reallocated. HG said to report it to the allotment rep who will pass it on to Andrew.

One member asked about plans to extend the Chiswick new Cemetery into the adjacent allotments (those on the back south end of the Staveley Road allotments). Apparently the leases for these allotments contain a covenant allowing this to be done if necessary. Andrew confirmed that this is planned but no details are yet known. Peter Isaacs suggested the Secretary write to the council and ask about any plans. Someone asked about a rumour housing is to be built on the site. HG said that the rumour was bogus and has been denied by the Council.

Finally, the members in attendance were thanked for coming to the AGM and there being no further business, the meeting was called to a close.

Ben Jones

12 June 2014