

## **Reports for the AGM 16 March 2023**

### **1 President's address Monique Pasche**

### **2 Apologies for absence Margaret Genender**

Have been received from: Suzy Fry, Philippa Grier, Myrtle Pacey,

### **3. Minutes of the AGM 17 March 2022 were approved**

### **4 Election of Chair Officers and Committee for 2023/24**

**4.1** The proposal to allow the President, Monique Pasche to continue in post beyond the 5 years stipulated in paragraph 4 of the 2019 Constitution was approved by a show of hands.

**4.2** Officers and Committee members standing for election.

Following the completion of Margaret Genender's term as Chair, nominations had been invited for this position. One has been received – Tim Gale who is nominated by Margaret Genender and seconded by Anne Bark. Tim Gale was elected as Chairman by a show of hands.

The remainder of the Committee were standing for election in the case of Anne Bark who has taken on the role of Show Co-ordinator and Vikki Jeffrey, Monthly talks; or re-election in other cases. The Committee were elected by a show of hands.

### **5 Chairperson's report Margaret Genender**

Our new show co-ordinator, Anne Bark and new monthly talks organiser, Vikki Jeffrey are in post and have put energy and enthusiasm into their roles. Outings, as you will have read, will see a change, and our current membership secretary, Maggie Postle will bow out in 2024. These two posts require attendance at committee, but there are other vital jobs which do not mean committee attendance.

#### **MONTHLY TALKS**

More volunteers please, to help Vikki, arrange furniture, manage the screen and lights, take care of and introduce the speaker, then ensure a vote of thanks and finally leave the hall tidy.

#### **SHOWS**

There are many ways of helping to bring these to fruition, planning schedules, stewarding, selling plants, serving refreshments and number crunching. Come to the show, talk to Anne and get swept up by the occasion.

#### **OUTINGS**

Sibyl & Tim are relinquishing these duties. Ideally two or more people working together and covering for each other will ensure a continuation of these popular days out into 2024.

#### **MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY**

Have you got a head for figures? This person will hold the data base, issue membership cards, and oversee the delivery of newsletters. A full job description is available. This is mostly a desk-based job and is vital to the running of the club.

6.0 Treasurer's report – Susan Solomon

**BRIDPORT & DISTRICT GARDENING CLUB**

**Financial Statements for the year ended 31 December 2022**

	Total 2022 £	Total 2021 £
<b>Receipts and Payments Accounts</b>		
<b>Receipts</b>		
Subscriptions	3250	3360
Raffles	243	106
Christmas tree donations	85	61
Outings	4685	1745
Christmas Lunch	1167	706
Garage Rent	386	370
Shows	1207	0
Donations	10	70
Plant sales	623	0
<b>Total Receipts</b>	<b><u>11656</u></b>	<b><u>6418</u></b>
<b>Payments</b>		
Subscription refunds	10	10
Meetings	1043	720
Shows	1188	0
Donations	1395	308
Fees	172	299
Outings	3164	1761
Christmas Lunch	1148	765
Garage Rent	771	760
Miscellaneous	20	11
Postage & stationery	1007	526
Honoraria	0	0
Bank charges	169	7
Raffle	17	0
Insurance	160	
Xmas Tree festival	28	
<b>Total Payments</b>	<b><u>10292</u></b>	<b><u>5167</u></b>
Excess of receipts over payments	1364	1251
Cash at bank 01/01/2022	4206	3020
Adjustments for uncleared cheques	-108	-65
Cash at bank 31/12/2022	<b><u>5462</u></b>	<b><u>4222</u></b>
<b>Statement of Assets</b>		
Bank current account	5418	4206
Cash	44	
Bank savings account	2170	2168
	<b><u>7632</u></b>	<b><u>6374</u></b>
Cups and trophies held by the club	2500	2500

I confirm that accounts and records are accurate for the year ended 31 December 2022

Alan Genender Hon. Auditor

  
20<sup>th</sup> FEB 2023

## **Item 7.1 Membership - Maggie Postle**

The membership in March 2023 is 333 households.

In the calendar year 2022, 44 members left the Club and 40 joined. Two more joined in 2023.

“Public” events attracted 18 new members: Charter Fair: 4; Melplash Show: 6; Late Summer Show: 8.

Apart from the main Membership List, all records are now kept on Excel which means that individual lists for distributors can be easily printed, and membership lists for other committee members (Outings and Shows) can be provided in any format.

Up to this year around 30 local clubs are getting a discount from Groves. Each club printed their own membership cards and because they use various designs and year endings it causes difficulties with Groves staff at checkouts. From this year, Groves are printing the cards which have a common year ending. As we are the largest Club who qualify for a discount, Groves have kindly allowed us to retain the same year ending.

I would like to thank our 29 volunteer distributors for their valuable work for the Club.

I will be standing down at or before the next AGM, and a Job Description will be circulated to all members.

## **7.2 Website activities – Chris Senior**

I continue to input material as it is given to me usually within a couple of hours of receiving it.

Bridport in Bloom has performed its function and members have not contributed photographs since November 2022.

The number of visitors to the site has reduced during the last 12 months e.g. on 30th May it was 360 on 9th March it was 16. The most visited pages being, in descending order Home page. Meetings, Shows, Join Us, Outings. The most popular platform is overwhelmingly Windows desktop computers using Chrome or Firefox browsers.

In July we changed hosting company from TSOHost to our website designer, Jane Taubman (RJT Services) and paid her £50 for hosting the site for 12 months plus £25 for various technical admin tasks which are beyond my skills. Jane continues to respond promptly to any queries I have.

## **7.3 Shows – Anne Bark.**

A year ago I responded the Gardening Club’s request for help at the Spring Show. I was given the responsibility of welcoming people as they entered the hall and I was glad to be of use. I was able to see at first hand what goes into making a successful show and how many helpers there are on the day beavering away.

Before that, I was a member who used the 10% off Groves card and went on the occasional outing and I didn’t really appreciate the dedication the committee and the many helpers gave to allow members to enjoy the talks, outings and the shows.

So when I was asked by Monique to join the committee and take on the organisation of the two shows, I was only too pleased to accept. Our small group consists of Monique, Sue Baker and Gill FitzJohn. It’s a hard working but fun group and we have met many times since September to prepare for the Spring and Harvest Show.

To start with, we drew up the schedules for the two shows. Gill is an IT whiz and she quickly transferred out ideas for all the classes into print. You will have noticed that both schedules are in a new format this year and our thanks go to Tim and Sibyl who designed it. We also trialed asking a few organisations to sponsor the schedules this year. We hope you like it and any feedback is welcomed so we can discuss comments at our meeting post shows.

You may have also noticed that we have decided not to award money prizes for winners of each class. Costs are rising to put on the show and we hope the honour of winning will suffice. Again, comments are welcomed.

This year, we are borrowing cake covers from the Melplash Show to protect the cake entries. We hope visitors will be able to see the produce more clearly than using plastic bags. We want the show to use as little single use plastic as possible.

Many thanks to Celia for organising the plant sale outside the hall on show days for many years. She has taken a break this year and we have been fortunate to have found a swift replacement. Margaret Genender volunteered to take over the responsibility of running the stall and I hope many of you will bring plants, seedlings and small tools to sell for charity. This year, we are raising funds for the Community Soup Kitchen held at the Beacon Church.

Finally, I'd like to encourage you to join our merry band in some form or other. I never dreamt I'd be in this position last year, but I've enjoyed it. The committee members are a very supportive bunch and I'm pleased to give back to the club something I took for granted before.

#### **7.4 Outings - Sibyl Gale**

In 2022 the Club returned to a full programme of visits. The year started with a visit to Forde Abbey in March, a little too early for their amazing tulip displays but nevertheless plenty of signs of spring were in the air.

By April the appetite for garden visits was taking hold and there were full coaches for the majority of places: Castle Drogo (41); Hinton Ampner (42); RHS Rosemoor (53); Burrow Farm & East Lambrook (23); American Museum (38) Montecute & Tintinhul (31). I will not talk about each visit but I will encourage anyone with access to the internet to visit the Gardening Club website ([www.bridportgardeningclub.co.uk](http://www.bridportgardeningclub.co.uk)) and search in the "News" section for some wonderful descriptions and photographs of most of the 2022 outings. On that note I would like to extend a huge "Thank You" to Sarah Herring who valiantly took on the task to capture the essence of our Club outings. She has provided those of us who were on the visits to recall some wonderful moments and to share them with anyone who couldn't join us.

As we stated in the Winter Newsletter our regular coach company Seward's had to make the difficult decision to wind back their business this year. The company has looked after the Club on outings and holidays for many years and I'm sure you will join me in wishing the family and drivers all the best for the future. The March trip to the Hardy Plant Society Spring Fair at Yeo Valley will sadly be our last coach trip with them. This unforeseen event delayed the distribution of the Club visits 2023 programme while we rejigged the schedule. A very big thank you to Maggie and her team of distributors for taking on this extra delivery. Hopefully everyone has now received their list of outings. If anyone hasn't and needs a programme, we have a few copies here tonight and details are on the website.

We are trying 2 new coach companies for 2023. Stamps of Honiton and Bluebird of Weymouth. Going forward all coach companies we have contacted and researched are more expensive than Seward's. This naturally has an impact on the price of the outings.

Currently any of the outings are full for a 33 seater coach but don't let that deter anyone. Waiting lists will be started and if viable we will book larger coaches depending on how flexible the new coach companies are and what they have available.

Tim and I are stepping down as Outings Coordinators at the end of the 2023 season. It is time for fresh blood to take over. We are also adding to our commitments within the Committee and the Club activities generally and there are only so many hours in our day. I will be happy to work with whoever takes over (for a limited period) or act as a safety net during the first year. A written outline of what the role entails will be available at the end of this meeting or just give me a call (01308 458329) or email to

bridportgardeningclub@gmail.com and I'll be happy to discuss the role further. It was something I took on with some trepidation, but I needn't have feared. So far I haven't lost anybody or picked up any strangers from other coach parties...but there's still time! It is a great way of getting to know other members of the club and enjoying days out without any hassle of driving or parking...it's even better when you can decide where to go! So please give it a try.  
Thank you to everyone for supporting the garden visits.

### **7.5 Monthly meetings report – Vikki Jeffrey**

We have had a number of varied and high-quality speakers since I joined the Gardening Club last March.

Derek Dexter gave us an interesting talk on the many different types of fuchsias in April and in May Martin Young talked about gardening on clay soils which was especially useful for many of us in Bridport. Colin Varndell talked about the hedgehog predicament in June.

Gwynne Davies talked about the history and development of the daffodil in September and in October Charles Chesshire provided a talk on the development of his garden at Symondsburry and also talked about his career in gardening. Paul Atterbury provided an interesting talk in November on the development of his garden at his home the railway carriages at Eype.

At the start of this year Margie Hoffnung's talk on Gardening in Britain had to be postponed because of the weather and is now due to take place in June 2024.

Colin Varndell provided another interesting talk on his passion Garden Birds in February and this was very well attended with over 60 people coming to see him.

We have a number of interesting talks booked for the rest of 2023 including a talk on Bedding Plants in April, Dorset a Calendar of Colour in July should be interesting, and Charles Chesshire is coming to speak to us again about Japanese Gardens in October. The final talk of the year in November will be on the subject of Gardening for Climate Change.

Finally the subject of the timing of the meetings has been raised several times with some members advising of the difficulty of getting to meetings in the evening in the dark winter months. We have not come to a resolution on this subject as yet so if any members have views on this please feel free to let us know.

Thanks to all who help arrange the room and put away the chairs led by Geoff Pullman.

### **7.6 Publicity – Lyn Streeter**

Information about the monthly meetings are sent to

- The Bridge
- The Diary
- The Marshwood
- West Dorset magazine
- Country Gardener

The week before and the week of the meeting information is sent to the Bridport News

The Bridge Diary and Marshwood regularly add the information but the West Dorset and the Country Gardener is a bit hit and miss.

### **7.7 Secretary – Tim Gale**

I would like to add my thanks to Margaret Genender for her calm but active chairing of our Club over four and a half difficult years that included lockdown and five Honorary Secretaries. Thank you Margaret and I know you will be there to give friendly advice to me when needed.

We have continued our campaign to recruit members and from our membership to encourage volunteers to help with the various events and activities that we come together to enjoy.

Its worth reminding ourselves of the Aims of the Club as set out in the Constitution, they are:

to promote, encourage and assist Members with the cultivation and enjoyment of their gardens by:

1. The provision of a forum for discussion of gardening matters
2. The organization of visits to places and events of gardening and horticultural interest
3. The provision of talks and presentations by guest speakers on gardening themes
4. The holding of plant and produce shows and/or sales

I would add a fifth aim of engaging with our community here in Bridport by bringing our particular knowledge and enthusiasms to improve the enjoyment and liveability of our town.

In the past year we have participated in Mayor Ian Bark's Charter Fair where we held a very successful plant sale and with the support of Groves, a group of us have planted 1500 daffodils in Riverside gardens near the Bridge House hotel and distributed a further 800 to local groups at Lower Walditch, Watton, Wellfields and Coneygar. We are already signed up for this year's Charter Fair where Margaret will be inviting participation in a tombola and I hope that we will repeat the bulb planting initiative on another site in Riverside Gardens and donations to local community groups. There is still work to do in looking after the planters on East, West and South Streets. In particular the planter labelled "Bridport Gardening Club" outside Spa needs care and attention. Perhaps some of our members who live on or near those streets would take this on.

Maggie has signalled her retirement from the Committee after 18 years latterly in the role of Membership Secretary, this will leave a huge gap in the smooth working of the club behind the scenes so we are looking for somebody to work with Maggie in the next 12 months prior to taking on the role solo.

We have also attempted to unify and update the appearance of all our Newsletters etc with the application of the new logo based on a flax flower on our Website, Facebook page and all documents. We developed a small flyer to use for recruiting new members and gave 50 copies to each of the Estate Agents in the town.

So, if you are already involved as many of you are, Thank you. If not, please consider how you could help and what ideas you might have for the Club to develop this coming year.

The meeting closed at 20:40