

LONG ASHTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held at the Jubilee Pavilion, Long Ashton Village Hall
Long Ashton on 19 November 2013 at 7.30pm

Present: The President, Mr Ted Baker
The Chairman, Kate Anthony Wilkinson
Members of the Committee and 10 other members of the Society

Apologies: Tabatha Newman; Sarah Lloyd and Robert Bassett.

Kate Anthony Wilkinson took the Chair and welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. Minutes from the 2012 AGM

The Minutes from the AGM held on 14 November 2012 were approved.

2. Matters Arising

(a) Engraving of cups

The Chairman reported that following the last AGM, the Committee had discussed the issue of cup engraving and had decided to continue with engraving provided the adult recipients contributed £5 towards the cost. Engraving of children's cups would continue to be paid for by the Society. This had been implemented at the Flower Show and no adverse comment received; almost all cups had once more been engraved.

(b) Membership categories

Consideration had also been given to members' feedback at the previous AGM on proposals to have different categories of membership and this had resulted in membership staying the same for the time being but with the option for members to pay more than the £5 membership fee by way of additional donation.

3. Chairman's Report

The Chairman presented her report for the year. The Plant Sale had once more been very successful and generated £246 for the Society to assist with the staging of the Flower Show. The next Plant Sale would be in May 2014. The Plant Clinic had been replaced with a publicity stall at the Village Hall in March highlighting the Society to the market visitors and this was repeated in June with a stall aimed at publicising entry to the Flower Show and providing starter sunflower kits for children. This had been well received and the consensus was to repeat this format next year. Thanks were extended to Jim Exon and Julia Peak for organising this and to Cynthia Griffiths and Sarah Lloyd-Davis for the scarecrow which was produced for the June market. The Chairman also commented that the scarecrow placed at the entry to the Village was a great way of publicising the Flower Show and it was extremely disappointing that after the Show this had been vandalised.

As promised last year, the Society now had a website – www.lahortsoc.co.uk – which had information about the Society, notices, newsletters and photos of the Flower Show. It also had a copy of the Show Schedule. More information would be posted over the year. Thanks were extended to Tabatha Newman for putting this together and to Jim Exon and Bill Roberts for their help. All members were encouraged to view the website.

The Society had been run by a wonderfully enthusiastic and proactive Committee during the year resulting in the smooth staging of the events and the Flower Show and lots of new ideas. The Chairman thanked the whole Committee for their contribution and commented that everyone had worked well together as a team which had resulted in a most enjoyable year. It was noted that Mark Hessey, Sarah Triggles-Wells and Clare Sheahan had stood down during the year and the Chairman extended thanks to them for their contributions.

4. Show Secretary's Report

The Chairman presented the Show Secretary's report. The 88th annual Flower Show had been a great success. The weather on the day had been good which had encourage plenty of visitors, and with a much improved growing season, the entry levels were once more up resulting in a wonderful array of exhibits. Apples and fruit were once more in abundance, although the poor previous year for apples had resulted in fewer entries for cider. The bumper apple crop this year boded well for next year's cider entries. The number of exhibits and the number of exhibitors were both up on the previous year. There had been 603 entries over 172 classes. The new classes which had been introduced had been extremely popular. The scarecrow class had attracted plenty of superb entries from both children and adults, with a great entry from the Lampton House residents. The sunflower class had attracted sunflowers of epic proportions which gave a fabulous backdrop to the exhibits in the Sports Hall. The new egg class attracted 12 entries with beautiful local eggs. The baking and preserve classes all had a good level of entries and there were plenty of children taking part.

The refreshments were of the usual high standard and the raffle run by Laura and India was a great success with some super prizes donated by local businesses. The atmosphere at the Show was very relaxed and many positive comments had been received from visitors.

Thanks were extended to all the Committee for all the hard work which went into the Show, to the Judges, friends and helpers without whom the Show would not have been possible and to all exhibitors and visitors to the Show, without whom there would be no Show. Particular thanks were given to Ann Bassett for her great organisation of people and jobs to ensure that everything was covered.

The members were invited to comment on the Show. Positive comments were received from the floor. The scarecrows were considered a humorous addition and the eggs and the pollinator friendly plants classes were well received. All agreed that a microphone would have been useful and it as noted that its absence was due to the Hall caretaker been away on the day. This would be addressed in advance for next year.

There was discussion on concern that the Judges may be too strict in their judging of certain classes, but others felt that it was important to retain standards. It was agreed that it was important to ensure that the class criteria was met and if it was not then the entry could not win a prize. The Chairman agreed to consider the comments regarding criteria and judging at the next Committee meeting.

5. **Treasurer's Report**

Julia Peak circulated copies of the Society's accounts for the year ended 31 October 2013. The accounts showed that the cost of holding the Flower Show was £489.55 (last year £667.86). This was considerably lower than last year, primarily due to the contribution from cup recipients towards the cost of engraving, the reduction in prize money where there was no class sponsorship and the charging of 50p for Schedules. It was noted that Schedules were still provided free to members and to anyone who had entered the previous year. A copy was also available at the Library to consult and on the Society's website. There had been a few adverse comments about charging 50p for Schedules, but it was noted that this still did not cover the cost of printing and other Shows charged considerably more. The consensus from the members attending the AGM was that this should continue. Total expenses for the year were £692.09 against £908.77 last year.

In terms of Show income, this was up at £766.10 (£557.39 last year) due to more entries and visitors to the Show. The refreshments and the raffle had once more generated good levels of profit and exceeded those from last year.

Hall hire fees had continued to be kept at a reduced level as committee meetings were being held at Ann Bassett's house. The Plant Sale had generated a reduced income of £246 (£379 last year) due to not having seeds to sell and fewer plants. However it had been a good event and had helped towards covering the Flower Show costs. Membership fees had also increased thanks to Bill Roberts efforts at collection.

Total income for the year was £970 (cf £737 in 2012 and £625 in 2011) with total costs for the year were £692 (cf £908 in 2011 and £1046 in 2010). As a result the Society had made a small profit for the first time in a number of years of £278 (cf loss of -£171 in 2012 and -£421 in 2011). Total assets therefore stood at £1,834 which was an encouraging position. Mrs Peak reported that an adjustment had been made to the previous year's Total Assets figure due to a number of uncashed cheques, the restated figure being £1,499. This meant that the Total Assets at the end of the current year was an improvement on the previous year. This would ensure the Flower Show could continue to be held.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Peak for her hard work in managing the finances of the Society and commented that the steps taken during the last 2 years to control costs were now paying off.

6. **Membership Secretary Report**

Bill Reports presented the Membership Secretary Report. The membership fee was currently £5 and there were 83 paid up members for September 2012- August 2013 with 82 having paid for the new year (2013/14). In addition £115 had been received as 'additional donations' which had considerably assisted towards the costs of the Flower Show.

There was a suggestion from the floor that the membership fee could be increased. This was noted but was not considered necessary at present.

It was noted that more members had now provided email address which mean that communication with them was both easier and cheaper.

The Chairman thanked Mr Roberts for all his work.

6. Poppies

Jim Exton explained that August 2014 would be the centenary of the start of World War I and the Real Poppy Campaign had been established to encourage the planting of poppies in order to provide a visual remembrance targeted for August. The Society had received 500gm of free poppy seeds which equated to 3.5-5 million seeds and the intention was that these would be distributed to village residents, groups and schools (in return for a donation to the Poppy Appeal) to sow between April and July around the Long Ashton area. It was noted that agricultural areas and those of special scientific interest should be avoided, but verges, gardens and open spaces were ideal for poppies. They would also encourage wildlife. Mr Exton confirmed that he was already in discussion with the Parish Council and North Somerset on the issue and had received the support of the Long Ashton British Legion. Mr Clifford Moss of the Long Ashton British Legion was introduced to the Meeting and Mr Moss explained the purpose of the British Legion and the how the local Long Ashton British Legion club fitted in. He explained that 37 million people died during WW1 of which 10 million were British servicemen. He supported the Society's initiative with the poppies in Long Ashton. Mr Moss also encouraged members to use and support the Long Ashton Club and highlighted the events which were held there.

There was general discussion on the project and it was noted that the seeds would need to be sown on earth which had been raked. It was proposed to issue instructions with the seeds. The project received support from the members attending the AGM. More information would be available in the Spring and members were encouraged to look for details on the website and support the project.

9. Election of Officers

The following were nominated, seconded and agreed.

President	Ted Baker
Chairman	Kate Anthony Wilkinson
Minutes Secretary	Jim Exon
Membership Secretary	Bill Roberts
Treasurer	Julia Peak
Publicity Secretary	Cynthia Griffiths and Sarah Lloyd
Show Secretary	Ann Bassett and all members of the Committee
Show Schedule Secretary	Ann Bassett
Web Manager	Tabatha Newman
Cups	Sue Gorwyn

Other Committee members: Peter Griffiths; Mary Lord; Barbara Hinch

New members were also welcome to come along to Committee meetings and lend a hand where they felt able to do so.

7. Any Other Business

There was none.

8. A few words from our President

The President, Mr Ted Baker, said a few words to the meeting, commented that the Committee had put on a great Show. He felt that the Village Hall could do with improve microphone coverage especially in the Sports Hall and he would take this up with the Village Hall committee.

He was encouraged to see more members on the Society's Committee and to hear that the Society's finances had improved. He wished the Committee and the Society a good year.

8. **Close**

The Chairman thanked the members who had attended and invited them to stay for refreshments. There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20 pm

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Chairman

The Meeting was followed by the enjoyment of mulled wine and mince pies provided by the Committee.