

LONG ASHTON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

held at the Jubilee Pavilion, Long Ashton Village Hall
Long Ashton on 11 November 2014 at 7.30pm

Present: The Chairman, Kate Anthony Wilkinson
15 members of the Committee and of the Society

Apologies: Ted and Sheila Baker; Di Chadwick; Bill Roberts; and Robert Bassett.

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

1. **Minutes from the 2013 AGM**

The Minutes from the AGM held on 19 November 2013 were approved.

2. **Matters Arising**

There were none.

3. **Chairman's Report**

The Chairman presented her report for the year. It had once more been a busy year, starting in March with a stall at the Village Market to raise the profile of the Society and introduce more people to the Flower Show. Many people visited to buy the Poppy seeds which had been advertised. In May there was another successful Plant Sale which as usual generated a healthy sum to support the Flower Show. In June the Society was once more at the Village Market to advertise the Flower Show. Then it was all speed ahead to the Flower Show. Thanks were extended to everyone who had provided plants for the Plant Sale and who had helped out at both the Village Markets and the Plant Sale.

The Poppy seed project spearheaded by Jim Exon had been hugely successful with many people and organisations in the Village requesting seeds throughout the year. They had been available at the Village markets and the Plant Sale and packets had also been delivered to the local schools for planting. In total over 1.6 million seeds had been sold raising £370.35 for the British Legion and patches of red poppies could be seen throughout the Village. Thanks were extended to Jim Exon for organising and to Julia Peak and Mary Lord and others who had carefully put teaspoon amounts of seeds into envelopes for distribution.

The website – www.lahortsoc.co.uk - was up and running and members could see information, newsletters, photos and articles on it as well as the Schedule for the Flower Show. Members were encouraged to visit the website.

The Society had purchased a new large banner to advertise the Flower Show which was hung opposite the Co-Op in the run up to Show day. The cost of this had been covered by a grant for £100 from the Parish Council. The Chairman considered that this had greatly increased visibility of the Show and together with the signs at both ends of the Village made it quite difficult not to

notice that the Show was on. She thanked Julia Peak for securing the grant and Peter and Cynthia Griffiths for getting the banner produced.

The Chairman thanked all the Committee for their dedication and hard work over the course of the year and expressed her view that the Society was in very good shape to ensure the continuation of the Flower Show for a good more number of years.

4. Show Secretary's Report

The Chairman presented the Show Secretary's report. The 89th annual Flower Show had been a great success. There had been 143 individual exhibitors which was the same as 2013 (although different people) but higher than 2012, but there had been a significant increase in exhibits, rising to 652 exhibits compared to 618 in 2013 and 474 in 2012. This was an extremely good sign and suggested that the introduction of new classes and revision of existing classes was attracting more entries.

Standards remained very high. Disappointingly there were fewer entries this year for scarecrows and sunflowers, but there had been an increase in the children's art and craft entries, more entries in the drinks section and a huge number of entries in baking, preserves and art. The new teenage baking class had attracted 5 entries and the egg class was once more well supported.

As usual the refreshments and raffle were very successful and thanks were extended to Josh Peak and Mary Lord for selling a record number of raffle tickets and to the team in the kitchen for keeping up with the demands for tea and cake.

The publicity for the Show had been superb throughout the year, with articles and regular Show reminders in all the local publications as well as posters and the new signs and banners around the Village. The great efforts of Sarah Wiseman (nee Lloyd-Davis) and Cynthia Griffiths had ensured that more villagers were aware of the Show and once more people had attended the Show for the first time.

The Chairman thanked Ann Basset, Show Secretary, for organising the team with their roles and duties and to all the Committee, friends and helpers who contributed to the entry inputting process, setting up, running of the day or the clearing away. Having now run the Show as a team for a couple of years it was clear that a smooth process was now in place, any problems were dealt with quickly and effectively and Show day ran well and without problems. The Chairman was extremely pleased with the outcome and recognised the great team effort from all the Committee; it would not have been possible without them all. Next year would be the 90th Flower Show, and consideration was already being given to the event.

The members were invited to comment on the Show. Positive comments were received from the floor. The entries were considered to be of high quality, especially the children's entries. There was a "buzz" about the Show and people clearly enjoyed visiting.

It was suggested that there could be a class for schools with a trophy being awarded to the winning school which might encourage additional entries from children, although it was noted that the timing of the Show was always difficult, coming at the end of the summer holidays often before the schools were full back. The Show was always advertised in the school newsletters.

It was suggested that there could be a non-competitive element and people encouraged to bring along produce of which they were proud or which were unusual, just for showing and sharing. The Chairman also suggested that there could be a photo board for villagers to display photographs of their gardens. This could in the future lead to an informal series of open gardens.

There was general agreement that the refreshment prices should be increased, and noted that a number of people were buying cakes to take away.

There was unanimous agreement that the Show had been very successful.

5. Treasurer's Report

Julia Peak circulated copies of the Society's accounts for the year ended 31 October 2014. The accounts showed that the net cost of holding the Flower Show was £455.59 (£445.88 last year) so virtually the same as the previous year. Show income had been £828.51 (last year £809.77) helped by an increase in raffle ticket sales. Door takings were similar to last year. Show expenses had been £1,284.10 (last year £1,255.65) the increasing mainly being due to an increase in judges expenses. The main expenses continued to be the hire of the hall and tables and the printing costs. It was noted that 50p had been charged for printed Schedules although they were still provided free to members and to anyone who had entered the previous year. A few objections had been received about charging and therefore it was proposed that they revert to being free next year, but fewer copies would be printed in order to reduce the printing costs. A copy would continue to be available at the Library to consult and it would be on the Society's website.

Total other income for the year was £974.20 (last year £983.20) and total expenses for the year were £781.28 (last year £692.09). The Treasurer explained that she had made some adjustments to the way in which membership subs were shown in the accounts. Now all subs received prior to 31 October were accounted for in the current year. She had adjusted the previous 2 years figures to be consistent with this policy. The Plant Sale had raised £253.20 which was a little up on last year (£222). Membership subs and Plant Sale takings were therefore necessary to cover the shortfall in the cost of putting on the Show. In total the Society had made a profit of £192.92, which although less than last year's adjusted figure, was considerably better than 2011/12 when there had been an overall loss. The Society had therefore been profitable for the last 2 years.

Total assets therefore stood at £2,027.19 which would ensure the continuation of the Show for the foreseeable future.

The Chairman commented that the Society continued to look for ways to manage the costs of the Show and thanked the Treasurer for her hard work and diligence at managing the financial affairs of the Society. The members unanimously approved the Accounts for the year ended 31 October 2014 produced to the Meeting.

6. Membership Secretary Report

Bill Roberts had sent his apologies and so the Chairman read his written report. Subs had been collected from 63 members since the Show as compared to 76 people last year. £70 had been received in additional donations from members over and above the £5 subscription fee.

Mr Roberts' report said that he had enjoyed being Membership Secretary of the Society since 2008 but it was time for him to stand down from the Committee. He would however be proud to continue being a part of the team at the Flower Show – as far as he was aware it was the biggest

single event in the village year. Mary Lord had kindly agreed to take over the role of Membership Secretary and Mr Roberts would give her support whilst she became familiar with the role. Mr Roberts extended his best wishes to the Committee.

The Chairman thanked Mr Roberts for all his work as a member of the Committee and as Membership Secretary and thanked Mary Lord for agreeing to take on the role.

9. Election of Officers

The following were nominated, seconded and unanimously agreed.

President	Ted Baker
Chairman	Kate Anthony Wilkinson
Minutes Secretary	Jim Exon
Membership Secretary	Mary Lord
Treasurer	Julia Peak
Publicity Secretary	Cynthia Griffiths and Sarah Wiseman
Show Secretary	Ann Bassett and all members of the Committee
Show Schedule Secretary	Peter Griffiths
Cups	Sue Gorwyn
Other Committee members:	Barbara Hinch; Jane Hicks
Show day helper:	Bill Roberts

New members were also welcome to come along to Committee meetings and lend a hand where they felt able to do so. Jane Hicks was welcomed to the team.

7. Any Other Business

(a) Probus trip to Malvern – The Chairman reported that the Long Ashton Probus club was organising a trip to the RHS Garden Show at Malvern on 8 May 2015 and members of the Society were invited to join the trip which would include coach travel and entrance fee. Details would be in the Spring newsletter.

(b) Sponsorship of classes – The Chairman explained that there had been discussion on whether to invite members and non-members to sponsor a class at the Show and cover the prize money. This had happened in the past and had resulted in some classes carrying prize winnings of more than the standard £1 / 60p / 40p. The onion class was the only class currently sponsored and the sponsor had requested prize winnings of £5 / £3 / £2 which equated to £100 sponsorship fee for 10 years. There was general discussion on the concept and the amounts. Some members thought prize money was not the incentive to exhibitors who would prefer a trophy rather than greater cash winnings; others felt that a winnings which were 2 x the standard prize money would be more appropriate (£2 / £1.20 / 80p = £40 for 10 years). There was comment that perhaps sponsorship for 5 years would be more appropriate. Mr Roberts had commented by email that the introduction of sponsorship might result in fewer membership donations instead. There was discussion on whether business might be asked to sponsor a class, but it was felt that this could discourage the giving of raffle prizes which were needed. The general consensus was that a small trophy (without the engraving of winner's name) might be a better option. The Chairman agreed that the Committee would discuss this further with the view to making a variety of options available for sponsorship (trophy; trophy plus prize money; increased prize money) which would then be sent out with the newsletter. The Chairman confirmed that currently engraving of the

silver cups was possible for adults (assuming there was space) where they made a £5 contribution to the engraving costs; children's silver cups were engraved for free; all winners were recorded in the Winners Book which also included photos of the cups and the names of all winners even if the names were not engraved or there was no longer room for additional names to be engraved. This would act as a record of winners. However future trophies should be similar to the new Onion class trophy which did not provide space for engraving.

(c) 90th Flower Show – ideas were requested for anything which might make the 90th Show unique.

8. **A few words from our President**

Unfortunately the President, Mr Ted Baker, was unable to attend but had sent his best wishes to the Society's members.

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 8.30 pm

.....
Chairman

The Meeting was followed by the enjoyment of mulled wine (courtesy of Robert Bassett) and mince pies provided by the Committee.