

FRIENDS OF CRESCENT GARDEN

MINUTES OF THE 28th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held in St Mary's Parish Centre, Alverstoke on Saturday 26th February 2022

1 Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed all and thanked them for taking the time to join us today on our 28th AGM.

She also welcomed The Worshipful Mayor of Gosport, Councillor Mark Hook, Councillor Alan Scard and Councillor Phillip Raffaelli and Mr & Mrs Ian Gallett.

2. Apologies

Dame Caroline Dineage, Mrs Lynn Hook, Mrs Judy Scard, Mrs Fiona Raffaelli, Mrs Diane Furlong, Mrs Jackie Askew, Tricia Coombes, Richard McNulty, Annie Sayle and Nicola Smith

3. Acceptance of Minutes of last AGM held on 23rd February 2019. Since this was 2 years ago it was agreed that these were not relevant any longer.

4. Chairman's Report – Elaine Martin

She commented on what a strange two years we have all had and how wonderful it was to be all back together again for our first proper AGM since 2019.

We haven't held many events in Crescent Gardens over these last 2 years. In the first Lock Down none at all!

Rita sold plants at her gate in Crescent Road over the first May Bank Holiday – lovely weather, if you remember and Sarah, Sharon and Ginny managed to sell the plants they had grown. Amazingly, between them, they did very well and we were able to send a cheque to the National Garden Scheme for their NHS charities. Very worthwhile then and now!

Last year, 2021, we managed a socially distanced Plant Sale at the end of May, when restrictions started to lift. No tea and cakes sadly, but a highly successful day just the same.

We gave up on the Garden Party last year as Covid restrictions would only allow a gathering of 21 people outside. The restrictions continued through to July and beyond and although we changed the date twice, changes of rules kept on coming and we ran out of summer!

We still managed to win 2 surprise Green Flags for 2020 and 2021 which pleased us all greatly, and the garden (even though we had to give up gardening for the summer due to restrictions) did its stuff! It was amazing to us all how much the Gosport community used the garden during lock downs with picnics, quizzes, games and quiet times just to sit and enjoy the beautiful roses. Although, to us, the garden looked overgrown and a bit neglected, it still had a certain "blousy beauty" of its own and the roses were Stunning!

When things started to improve, we started to garden again on a Wednesday morning, albeit socially distanced and bringing our own coffee and biscuits.

The Head Gardeners, Irene, Sharon and Stef and the Green Team have all been fantastic. They were all back working as soon as they were allowed and in no time at all the garden looked super! They have carried out lots of new projects – the eastern end, new planting, irrigation and box hedge spraying. You will see all of this in their presentation which will follow.

On a sadder note, we lost a lot of our older members (about 15). Notably for us, dear David Merritt, our Hon secretary for many years, who most of you will remember and Pam Dimmock, who was a loyal committee member. They were both volunteer gardeners and staunch members of the Green Team. Sadly, although we knew they were very poorly, we were unable to visit them due to COVID restrictions.

We struggled to have our Newsletters printed, but we tried to keep in touch with you all with letters and Christmas Cards. I must take time to thank Rita, Ginny, Cynthia and all the “posties” for sometimes using their daily walks to deliver these.

Sadly again, our Head Gardeners are stepping down today – I will not say stepping away, as hopefully they will stay gardening with us for a long, long time.

Before I hand over to our temporary treasurer, Pam Mawby, I must inform you that our long time treasurer, Trish Kelly, is stepping down today, as we are hoping to put some of the accounts on line. Things have been very difficult using cheques and cash during COVID. Trish has been amazing over the past 10 years. A brilliant friend and supporter for me and Pam before me. She isn’t going far and hopefully will help at our events and enjoy Crescent Garden without the worry of keeping the books!! Tony Morrell will be taking us forward after the AGM. Pam has been wonderful laying out the accounts ready for the AGM and for On-line banking afterwards.

One last thing, I am giving 1 years notice. I have been chairman for nearly 6 years now and feel that I must give someone else a chance – new blood – new ideas.

She gave a final thank you to everyone for turning out for the AGM and for everyone’s loyal support.

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Treasurer’s Report (Acting Treasurer Pam Mawby)

_ Good Afternoon

How wonderful to be presenting the accounts in person, to you here in the hall as usual after two very trying years.

First, I have to apologise for a typing error in the account sheet. Please note that in the income section the figures for the Plant Sale and Council Trainee Grant have been transposed.

We were fortunate enough to receive a Grant of £4400 from the Hampshire County Council. This Grant has been used to renovate the East End of the Garden.

You will see that we have received a bequest of £5000 from the Estate of Gill Comrie who died last year. Gill was an active supporter of the Garden for many years and her generosity to us has been greatly appreciated.

You will also see, at the bottom of the page, that the balance of the Business Instant Account has increased by £10,000. This reflects two bequests one from John Hervey, the first Chairman of the Friends, and the other from Gill Comrie that we have received during the past two years.

We are very fortunate to be in such a strong financial position as the bank balances indicate. The income from the Plant Sales during the past two years has been amazing – amazing that they happened at all, but also because of the huge amount of hard work and effort by the Green Team. Growing the plants and taking care of them is a whole year

commitment, hours of work sorting and pricing them ready for the sale as well – thank you Green Team for raising so much money for the Garden.

We should also be most grateful that the Membership numbers have maintained, and actually slightly increased during the Pandemic. Thank you all for this support, it enables us to continue to maintain our lovely Garden.

(the financial statement will be associated as an independent document Annex 1))

. **Head Gardeners' Report** – Irene Buggle, Sharon Miles and Stepanie Fisher

\see our website for PowerPoint presentation.

Election of Officers

The results of the election was as follows:

Re-elected: Chairman, Elaine Martin, proposed Gina Rowe, seconded Ginny Whelan

Secretary, Gina Rowe, proposed Irene Buggle, seconded Maureen Bell

Treasurer, Tony Morrell, proposed Phillip Raffaelli, seconded Ian Gallett

Re-elected

Ginny Whelan – Membership Secretary*

Rita Rundle - Committee Member*

Trevor Barker – Committee Member*

*** denotes proposed by Sarah Palmer**

Rosemary Harrison – Committee Member*

seconded by Philip Raffaelli

Maureen Bell – Committee Member*

Ginny Day – Committee Member*

Nominations Guy Sitwell proposed Rosemary Harrison, seconded Caroline Wright

Tony Morrell proposed Maureen Bell, seconded Kevin Casey

Tony Billing proposed Phillip Raffaelli, seconded Alan Scard

9. Invitation to the Mayor to Speak – Mark Hook

The Mayor spoke of the Garden as very special and a great community project bringing people together. He thanked Elaine for the fabulous job that everyone did and said how pleased he was that it was used by the whole community and run as a community project. He mentioned that the garden is only one of two in the country run as a Regency Heritage Garden citing The Garden in Brighton Pavilion as the other..

11. AOB

The plans for the celebration of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee in Alverstoke was mentioned. This is to be a community picnic on Alverstoke Village Green where everyone brings their own picnic and joins together to celebrate.