

FRIENDS OF CRESCENT GARDEN

MINUTES OF THE 30th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held in St Mary's Parish Centre, Alverstoke on Saturday 24th February 2024

1 Welcome from the Chairman

The Chairman welcomed all and thanked them for taking the time to join us today on our 30th AGM.

She also welcomed The Worshipful Mayor of Gosport, Martin Pepper and his Consort Suzanne, Cllrs Alan Scard and Philip Raffaelli. Mr and Mrs Ian Gallet.

2. Apologies

Terry Crean, Caroline Wright, Maggie Flowitt, Richard and Dante Thorne, John and Nell Rimington, Gilly and Peter Jones, Lynne and Peter Galloway, David Palmer, Annie Sayle, Rosemary Long, Rosemary Harrison, Elizabeth Haughton, Kevin Stacey and Louise Cooper.

3. Acceptance of Minutes of last AGM held on 25th February 2023. These were passed by James Sykes, Trevor Barker and Maureen Bell.

4. Chairman's Report – Elaine Martin

The Chairman reported as follows :-

If you look at the top of today's Agenda, you will see that today is our 30th AGM.

Friends of Crescent Garden was founded in 1991 and a couple of years afterwards became a Friends Society.

I thought that it would be appropriate today to remember some of the movers and shakers over the past 30 plus years.

Wendy Osbourne of course was the force behind the beginnings of the garden who with her late husband Julian, worked with many of the previous chairmen and volunteers until she retired from gardening.

The garden, as you know, was laid out using the the footprint of the Bathhouse as the central feature,

We later added the charming fountain in the middle.

For the main plan of the garden Wendy used Thomas Ellis Owen's grand design for the terrace -strictly adhering to proper Regency planting - which we still use today.

The first Chairman was Adm. John Hervey. He was a charming man and with his wife Elizabeth were members of Crescent Garden from almost the beginning. The committee about that time started having fund raising events to finance the plants and bulbs. Sadly, both John and Elizabeth have passed away a good time ago.

The second Chairman was Surg Capt. Andrew Rintoul my dear neighbour – he was chairman for not so many years as his wife Helen was very poorly at that time and needed constant treatment. They moved 3 years ago to Keynsham near Bath to be closer to their family, Andrew is still well – Helen not so good.

Because he had to step down from the chairmanship quickly – Helen was very poorly at the time - Andrew handed over chairmanship to Don Cripps. I didn't know Don so well as I joined the friends about that time. I wish that I had known him better but sadly he passed way last year.

I joined the committee at the same AGM as Pam Mawby became chairman t. She soon became a firm friend and a super chairman for 7 years. We got lots done – the sheds, tents, websites, newsletters – I think Pam took it all up another level.

I'm not saying through all these years it's been wonderful all the time! There have been fallings out, arguments, vandalism and mistakes in the planting! But we're still here!

The garden today is there because of all our many efforts. Still going strong!

Last year was one of our most successful. We won a gold medal in the South & Southeast in bloom, another Green Flag – our 19th, plus, the Gosport Mayor award for the best Neighbourhood Garden at the Gosport in Bloom competition. We were absolutely surprised and delighted to win!

Our events in 2023 were terrific. Thanks to good weather and your support both the plant sale and Garden Party were a great success! In fact, at the Garden Party, we ran out of Pimms! First time ever and that's saying something!

We did four full historical and botanical tours of the garden for Gosport HODs. Lovely weather again – thank you Rita, Annie and Irene. The atmosphere was lifted by two Regency ladies strolling along the terrace with their parasols. Thanks Ginny and Gina.

In September we set up again for the Michaelmas Fayre - exhausting but very worthwhile. A very long day!

This year we're going to major on Crescent Garden being a true Regency Garden- very unique and special. Martina has set up our new Facebook page '*Gosports Regency Garden*' Please share and follow. Many thanks to Martina, she has done a great job!

Every penny we make is spent on the garden and it's amazing how much it all takes to keep it going for now and the future.

All the previous Gardeners, Chairmen Committee members have made the garden the wonderful place it is today.

Not forgetting the support of the council and its successful involvement with us over all these thirty years. We are all so grateful for all their support.

We have a wonderful Committee and Green Team volunteers – they are all here helping as usual. Thank you all.

Thank you all for coming today and supporting us today.

Thank you.

.Treasurer's Report

Presented by our Treasurer Tony Morrall. See at Annex 1

Head Gardeners' Report – Ginny Whelan and Irene Buggle,

\see our website for PowerPoint presentation.

Election of Officers

The results of the election was as follows:

Re-elected: Chairman, Elaine Martin, proposed Sarah Cooke, seconded Trevor Barker

Secretary, Gina Rowe, proposed Cynthia , seconded Ian Gallett

Treasurer, Tony Morrall, proposed Tony Billings, - seconded Maureen Bell

Re-elected

Guy Sitwell – Membership Secretary. Proposed Sarah Cooke. Seconded Trevor Barker

Rita Rundle - Committee Member*

Trevor Barker – Committee Member*

* denotes proposed by Ian Gallett

Ginny Whelan – Committee Member*

seconded by Philip Raffaelli

Maureen Bell – Committee Member*

Ginny Day – Committee Member*

Irene Buggle - Committee Member*

Tony Bollings - Committee Member*

Nominations Martina Geeson proposed Trevor Barker, seconded Maureen Bell

9. Invitation to the Mayor to Speak – Martin Pepper

The Mayor spoke of the Garden as very special and a great community project bringing people together. He thanked Elaine, the Green Team volunteers and the FOCG Committee for looking after the gardens so well. He mentioned that the events in the Gardens such as the Annual Plant Sale and the Garden Party have become a traditional part of the Gosport Calendar. He also said how very pleased he was to award his own Mayor's prize at the annual Gosport Gardens awards in recognition of our excellent work.

11. AOB

a. Rita Rundell put in a plea for contributions for the Plant Sale of cakes and also food for the Garden Party.

Annex 1

Treasurer's Report for 2023

The Treasurer presented the financial statement for 2023 for the year ending on 31 December 2023.

This past year has been a very successful as far as our finances are concerned; our operating income exceeding expenditure by £760. The membership of the Friends has been maintained and provided an income of £1,327.

The Friend's main fund-raising activities, namely, the Plant Sale, Garden Party, and Michaelmas Fayre, raised £3,555; Gosport Borough Council gave us a generous Gardener Grant of £2,910, for each of the last two years. Other sources of income included donations, and the interest from our deposit account. The total income for this year was £10,853.

The largest expenses for this year were for garden expenditure (£5,771), which includes the professional gardener, plants, equipment, electricity, and garden maintenance. Our administration cost came to £2,920 and the total expenditure for this year was £10,093.

The income therefore exceeded expenditure by £760. This surplus suggests that without similar levels of income in future years, the current account might result in deficits and become less sustainable to support the Garden. However, our finances remain in a good state with significant reserves in the Bank for any future financial or operational risks for the Garden.

In summary, 2023 was a very successful year financially, thanks to the support of the Friends and Gosport Borough Council. The Treasurer looked forward to another successful year for 2024 with an increase in membership and even more public support for our events.

The Treasurer thanked Ian Gallett for auditing the accounts, and thanked the Chairman, Membership Secretary, Committee, and the Green Team, for all their support during the last year. Members were also thanked for their continuing support in helping us to maintain our award-winning garden.

Tony Morrall - 22 February 2024