

## Grundisburgh, Burgh & Culpho Horticultural Society

Minutes of AGM held on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2023, 7.30pm in the Committee Room,

Grundisburgh Village Hall

**Present:** Georgie Keates, Bryan Laxton, Catherine Laxton, Liz Hodges, Chris Doorly, Lou & Steve O’Kane, Kathy Turner, Paul Whittingham, Gill & David Twissell, Sheila Caryer, Brenda Garrett, Alistair Leech, Chris Shemmings, Rosemary Digby, Iain Langdon, Adrian Shield, Ally/Debbie Barrett,

	Items	Action
	Georgie Keates welcomed everyone and asked Bryan Laxton to chair the meeting.	
1	<b>Apologies for Absence:</b> Gill Leech, Heather Langdon, Jo Lawrence, Richard & Chris Garnham.	
2	<b>Minutes of Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> September 2022</b> Approved. Proposed by Chris Shemmings; seconded by Liz Hodges.	
3	<b>Matters Arising</b> None.	
4	<b>Vice-Chair’s Report</b> attached. Georgie presented Brenda with a gift to thank her for 60 years on the Committee.	
5	<b>Treasurer’s Report</b> attached. Next year’s Village Show to be more family orientated (following survey carried out at this year’s Show). Working group to be set up for the VS with the aim to make a smaller loss in 2024. Bryan answered Iain Langdon’s queries re Trips and Patrons.	
6	<b>Adoption of Accounts for the year 2022/23</b> Approved. Proposed by Iain Langdon; seconded by Gill Twissell.	
7	<b>Approval of appointment of independent third party to review accounts for 2023/24</b> Ben Hobby was thanked for reviewing this year’s accounts and his appointment for next year was approved.	
8	<b>Appointment of President</b> Nicola Hobbs was appointed for a second year. Proposed by Brenda Garrett; seconded by Catherine Laxton.	

9	<p><b>Proposed Amendments to the Constitution</b></p> <p>The draft was amended to state that the Society will <i>endeavour</i> to have Officers in the four positions (Chair, Vice-Chair, Treasurer &amp; Secretary). Proposed by Lou O’Kane; seconded by Kathy Turner.</p>	
10	<p><b>Donation from surplus funds</b></p> <p>It was agreed to retain a bank balance of £10,000 leaving a surplus of £2,500 for donations. It was agreed to donate £1,000 to the First Responders (Otley) on behalf of the Air Ambulance. Proposed by Gill Twissell; seconded by Liz Hodges. £1,500 to be set aside for allocation at a later stage, to be decided by the committee. Proposed by Lou O’Kane; seconded by Adrian Shield.</p>	
11	<p><b>Election of Committee</b></p> <p>The whole committee was elected. Proposed by Iain Langdon; seconded by Rosemary Digby.</p>	
12	<p><b>Election of new Chair</b></p> <p>Paul Whittingham was elected. Proposed by Georgie Keates; seconded by Bryan Laxton. Paul said he would like the Hort Soc to be inclusive and thanked all for their support. He would like the Village Show to have an enhanced offering and for the financial loss to be reduced.</p>	
13	<p><b>Election of Officers</b></p> <p>Bryan Laxton (Treasurer) and Georgie Keates (Vice Chair) were elected. Proposed by Lou O’Kane; seconded by Adrian Shield. There were no nominations for Secretary.</p>	
14	<p><b>Events for 2024</b></p> <p>Hidden Gardens 8/9 June Village Show 13 July Trips to Bressingham, Helmingham Hall and Place for Plants to be confirmed.</p>	
15	<p><b>AOB</b></p> <p>Iain Langdon suggested the VS programme could be restyled? To liaise with Nicola/Sally re graphics. Brenda Garrett confirmed all judges have been booked for 2024. Class lists to collated Dec/Jan. Lou O’Kane gave copy of the Orford Flower Show prog to Georgie/Iain. Lou O’Kane thanked the Officers for all their hard work.</p>	
	Meeting closed at 8.20pm.	

## VICE-CHAIR'S REPORT

I am sure many of you will be aware that Martin stepped down as Chair after the Village Show this year and so it falls to me as Vice-Chair to give an overview of the Horticultural Society's year and we look forward to later on this evening when you will be invited to vote in our new Chair.

Firstly, I would like to extend mine, Bryan's and the Committee Members' grateful thanks to Martin who did a sterling job as Chair for seven years. He put an enormous amount of effort into matters Hort Soc in particular the Village Show ensuring its continued success. Thanks also extend to Sharon for her time as Secretary.

The year began as usual with Hidden Gardens, brilliantly organised by Catherine Laxton and her team of volunteers. My thanks to them all. It was a wonderfully hot sunny weekend – almost too hot on the Sunday! – the event was very well attended. 22 gardens opened – we are indebted to our gardeners who agree to open. It is very much appreciated. There was the usual cake stall and plant stall on the Village Green, FOGS doing teas in the Parish Room, The Dog, Deli and Williams Store all welcoming our visitors. This year we went from the Hedgehog Hunt to the Bee Line. Entries were slow to come in but on the day there were several impressive and varied entries for Chris Doorly and Elizabeth Stephenson to judge. My thanks to them both for organising and judging. Visiting families enjoyed seeing the creations.

Our next event, the Village Show, despite windy conditions, was a great day with a record number of visitors entering the marquee and one of our highest ever numbers of high quality exhibits entered. This wonderful show could not take place without the help of our team of volunteers, our main Sponsor Homestyle Windows, our Patrons, and companies and individuals who advertise in the Show Schedule and sponsor classes. From talking to visitors at the Show there was a general consensus that it would be good if more stalls could be provided, in particular for children as it is very much a family day out. This is something the Committee is looking into. Also charging stall holders a small fee in advance is being considered. I would like to give grateful thanks to all mentioned above and to our President Nicola Hobbs for presenting the trophies.

The grand marquee was the venue for the Dance on the night of the Show. This was very well organised by Ben and Mandy Cook with live music from our Village Band Larkside. This year ticket prices were reduced with revellers bringing their own food and drink. This proved to be very successful. Thanks to Ben and Mandy.

The Garden Party in August was held in the gorgeous garden of David and Gill Twissell. The forecast was not good on the day but the decision was made to go ahead. Extra gazebos were obtained, one of which collapsed in the torrential downpour a couple of hours before the event! My grateful thanks go to Gill and David for agreeing to stick to the plan despite the weather and having their kitchen as well as their garden taken over! Thankfully it remained fine during the party and a good time was had by all. Many thanks also to the Committee, volunteers and to those providing prizes for the Raffle.

The Trips throughout the year have been very successful. Visits have been made to East Ruston, Bressingham and then Chippenham Park for the snowdrops in February plus Elton Hall in May. A big thank you to Catherine for organising.

I would also like to personally thank my fellow Officer, our Treasurer Bryan, who has supported me and gone above and beyond being Treasurer over the past couple of months. Thank you Bryan.

Thanks go to our valued Committee Members.

And finally, I would like to say a special thank you to Brenda Garrett. Brenda has served on the Hort Soc Committee for 60 years having been invited to join after entering a spider plant in the show the year before. For three years she served as Chairman and for many more years organised the catering for fundraising events and feeding the hard working people running the show. Her interest in shows led her to training as a judge and then judging other shows around Suffolk which she enjoys. She is a valued member of the Committee and we look forward to her continuing expertise.

So in recognition of this achievement I would like to present Brenda with a gift from the Hort Soc Committee which has to include a spider plant!!

Georgie Keates, Vice-Chair

## **Grundisburgh, Burgh & Culpho Horticultural Society**

### **Hon Treasurer's report 2023**

**[2022 numbers in brackets]**

#### **Summary**

Overall, we had income of £13,288 [£13,979] expenditure of £13,003 [£14,377] and therefore a surplus of £285 [loss of £398]. Details of the various elements are explained below.

We started the year with cash at the bank of £12,605 [£13,004] and ended the year with £13,538 [£12,605]. However, of this closing balance, £648 is not reported in the 2022/3 Accounts as it related to a Hyde Hall trip which took place after the year end and so the income has been reversed out of the accounts so that the income and expenditure for this trip are both in the 2023/4 year.

We received £2,325 [£1,375] from 24 [19] Patrons (some couples, some individuals), a significant step up from last year.

We have 44 [40] Members at £5 per member totalling £220 [£200].

We had general expenses, unallocated to any specific event of £859 [£552]. The largest part of this (£216) was our up-front payment of 3 years' monies for our website domain.

#### **Village Show**

This year we made a loss of £2,287 [loss of £1,371]. There is no average for the Village Show, as there is always something different every time, but this is the largest loss in the 8 years I have been Treasurer. The biggest single cost by a huge margin is the Marquee, which this year cost us almost £3,700. This year suffered particularly from the lack of a Tombola/Raffle which in the past has added almost £700 to our income.

The loss comes despite the generosity of HomeStyle as major sponsors and our prizes being covered by kind sponsorship organised by Georgie Keates, plus advertising to help towards the cost of the Show Programme. Ben and Mandy Cook ran a dance in the evening which generated a surplus of £680 [£330] – our largest in the last 8 years.

We had one of our highest number of entries (700) to the various classes and a record equalling 735 people who paid 50p to go into the marquee to see the exhibits. It is clear that the activity in the marquee remains ever popular, but we do need to focus more on generating income from other activities outside the marquee to avoid our continued losses.

The direct loss needs to be put into context. There are a number of other entities who benefit from not only the publicity and engagement of having a stall, but some also make notable profits from their activities on the day such as FOGS who ran the tea stand and they made around £750 and the Football Club who made money on the bar and the BBQ (but have declined to tell me how much). The financial benefit to the overall community needs to be borne in mind when looking at the net cost to us of running the very popular Show.

### **Hidden Gardens**

Hidden Gardens was another enormous success. We made a surplus of £2,588 [£2,606] over the weekend with almost 521 [600] programmes sold. We had 22 gardens open this year. FOGS made around £750 by running the teas on both days.

### **Garden Party**

We had our Garden Party which 76 people attended and we made a surplus of £888. The rain struck again but did not dampen the enthusiasm or the enjoyment of the evening.

### **Trips & Talks**

We held no talks but we did organise 4 trips. A total of 117 people attended the events and they made a modest surplus of £330.

Our accounts for 2022/3 do not take into account the income for the Hyde Hall trip of £648 as this took place in the year 2023/4.

### **Donations**

We were very pleased to play an important part in providing much needed support to local good causes again.

A total of almost £2,000 was donated to local good causes in the Grundisburgh and surrounding area, in particular just over £1,000 for Bags for Food via the Church and also £400 towards the Grundisburgh Lunch Club.

This brings our total donations over the last 8 years to more than £14,000.

### **Bryan Laxton**

Hon Treasurer