

DRAFT Minutes of the Blofield and District Gardening Club 2016 Annual General Meeting held in the Margaret Harker Hall on Wednesday, 9th March, 2016, from 7.30 p.m.

1) **President's welcome:** In the absence of a President, Gillian Stansfield, acting as the chairperson for the meeting, welcomed members of the Club to the AGM, pleased to see so many people attending.

2) **Minutes of the last meeting – 11th March, 2015** – had been made available to all. These were reviewed and with no-one suggesting any changes, proposed by Sylvia Nelthorpe and seconded by Susan Brown, then signed by the acting Chairman, as an accurate account of the 2015 meeting.

3) **Matters arising:** there were no matters arising from the Minutes.

4) **Treasurer's Report:** the Treasurer, June Drake, had circulated a copy of the Accounts for the year ending 31st December, 2015. There were 80 members of the club during the year and all were exhorted to try to encourage new people to join, as the club has much to offer people with an interest in gardening at all levels. However unfortunately the club had a deficit over the year of £196.87 and Mrs Drake proposed that to try to remedy the shortfall, the membership fee should rise by £2.00 to £7.00 per year, which equates to £1.00 per meeting. The cost to visitors would remain at £2.00 per meeting. This proposal was put to the membership by Mrs Drake, seconded by Sylvia Nelthorpe and agreed by the meeting.

No queries about the accounts were raised by Club members, and Mrs Drake confirmed that the accounts, that had been signed by Douglas Clark, the Examiner, were available for inspection. The adoption of the Accounts and report was proposed by Chloe Veale, seconded and unanimously agreed by the meeting.

Members' subscriptions for the 2016 year fall due in April and all wishing to join were asked to put £7.00 in an envelope marked with their name, address and 'phone number and bring to the April meeting.

Mrs Drake also proposed that members cut out and collect the EDP Community Chest vouchers which appear on the back page of each edition. The EDP scheme requires 500 vouchers be collected each month and early in the succeeding month, a charity or group can forward details to the EDP panel about what they would like to purchase with the funding, if successful.

Mrs Drake proposed collecting sufficient vouchers and applying for funding to purchase a new projector screen for the club. Members were asked to bring along any vouchers they could collect to club meetings and/or give them to committee members towards the end of each month. It was confirmed that vouchers are only valid for the month in which they are collected, and any application for funding has to be made within the first week of the subsequent month.

5) **President's message:** the retiring President, Mrs Pat Thomas, was unable to attend the meeting, but had sent a letter outlining her various roles within the club over the last 40 years but explaining that due to increasing health problems, she now felt unable to continue in the post. She sent her very best wishes to all members, which were reciprocated and all agreed she will be much missed.

6) **Chairman's report:** the Chairman, Peter Mackness, had sent his apologies for absence at this meeting and had forwarded a report, which Gillian Stansfield read and is attached to these Minutes. The meeting wished to record their thanks to Peter and Valerie Mackness for all their hard work and enthusiasm over the years.

7) **Election of officers and committee:** in view of the many changes taking place, including the retirement of the chairman and Mrs Mackness, the meeting was asked if anyone would like to be nominated for any committee role. In the absence of any volunteers, June Drake proposed that Sylvia Nelthorpe be offered the post of Chairman, which Mrs Nelthorpe accepted conditionally for one year. This was seconded and unanimously agreed by the meeting. Other committee members had agreed to continue so the committee stands as:

Chairman	Sylvia Nelthorpe	Treasurer	June Drake
Show Secretary	Sylvia Nelthorpe	Deputy treasurer / deputy show secretary	Gillian Stansfield
Committee members:		Secretary and programme secretary	Susan Rowe
Sue Brown	Chloe Veale		

The election of the above committee was proposed by Colin Green and seconded.

Club members were encouraged to consider joining the committee, as the duties are not onerous, and support would be given to anyone interested. The committee meets just three times a year to discuss the summer show schedule, speakers for the year, and the AGM. New ideas and extra help would be much appreciated.

8) Summer Show Schedule – Saturday, 16th July, 2016: Show secretary Sylvia Nelthorpe thanked all who had entered the Show last year and confirmed that the number of entries had increased. She also confirmed that she was proposing that the majority of the Schedule for the 2016 show remain the same as last year, though some changes had been proposed by the committee, including two classes for children/young people aged 16 and under, which were outlined. The meeting was asked to agree the amended Schedule for the 2016 Summer Show and it was proposed by Brenda and seconded by Chloe Veale.

9) Club Programme 2016: Programme Secretary, Susan Rowe, outlined the proposed 2016 programme, also confirming the titles of the competitions to be held at each meeting.

10) Seed Order Scheme: Sylvia Nelthorpe confirmed that the scheme supplier would remain as Mr Fothergill's Seeds for the year. Members' orders had been processed very efficiently and 50% discount received on seeds. Postage costs for non-seed items had been reduced by purchasing all requirements on one order rather than individually. Overall £300+ had been saved by members.

11) Proposed revisions to the wording of the Constitution of the Blofield & District Gardening Club Sylvia Nelthorpe explained that the club's constitution had been reviewed by the committee as it had been realised that no provision had been made should the club need to be wound up, for example in the event of no-one standing on the committee. A copy of the constitution with the proposed revisions emphasised in bold type had been circulated to all members at the meeting and after consideration and explanation it was proposed by Barbara Hardy and seconded by Colin Green that the revised constitution be accepted. This was carried unanimously by the meeting.

12) Any other business

a) **Membership secretary:** Alan Drake had kindly agreed to act as membership/registration secretary at meetings and members were asked to sign themselves in with him at each meeting.

b) **Raffle organisers:** After many years organising raffles at monthly meetings and the summer show, Irene Negus and Roy Foster had decided to step down from this role, and were warmly thanked by all at the meeting for their work over the years and given a gift in gratitude for all they had achieved.

The question of the cost of raffle tickets had been raised by Irene and discussed at committee and it was put to the meeting that the raffle helped to defray the costs of hall hire and speakers' fees, so an increase in ticket price would be helpful. The choice was to increase the cost of a strip of 5 tickets from 50p to £1 or to pay 50p for one ticket. Other proposals were made and eventually the vote was that tickets should be sold at a strip of 5 for £1.00. Volunteers were requested to run the raffle in future and Christine Goodwin and Jan Saunt kindly agreed to undertake this role. Members were also asked to consider donating gifts for the raffles.

c) **Date of summer show:** a member proposed that the usual mid-July date of the summer show was rather too early for some vegetable presentation, and proposed that the show date be moved by a few weeks. This led to some discussion and it was agreed that the committee would discuss this proposal and report back in due course.

13) Date of next meeting: The next Annual General Meeting will take place on Wednesday, 8th March, 2017, from 7.30 p.m. at The Margaret Harker Hall

Gillian Stansfield thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and invited all to stay for light refreshments. The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman's Report – for 2015

given at the Garden Club AGM 9th March 2016

Before presenting the Chairman's Report, I apologise for not being here this evening: however I did mention at the last AGM that it is a rather special week for Valerie and myself and that we would be away this evening.

It has been another good year for the Club, with well attended meetings and a wide range of interesting speakers. The Summer Show was, as usual, a most enjoyable event, well supported by members despite a difficult Spring for gardeners.

Towards the end of 2015 Pat Thomas, our President for many years, indicated that she would need to step down from that role. I would like to thank Pat for her strong support for the Club, especially many years ago when its future was in doubt. Thanks to her work, we have today a strong and successful garden club.

Your committee has put together another programme of interesting speakers for the year and we shall be hearing about this shortly. The Schedule for the July show will also be presented shortly and I am pleased to say that, as well as the traditional competition favourites, we have put forward some new classes to appeal to younger gardeners.

Our Raffle continues to be popular and I would thank Irene and Roy for their hard work in making it so successful – it makes an important contribution to our funds, which allows us to attract interesting speakers. Irene has proposed some minor changes to the Raffle which the committee has been happy to agree.

I am pleased to report that the committee has been joined by a new member and I am confident that the future of the club is in good hands and will continue to thrive.

Finally, as most members know, this is my last report as your Chairman, so I would like to thank all the Committee for their work and their support over the years; we have a successful club and this is due in no small part to the work that goes on behind the scenes. It has been a real pleasure being Chairman and I look forward to supporting the club for many more years.

Peter Mackness

23rd February 2016