



Blofield & District Gardening Club

Draft Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held in the Margaret Harker Hall, Yarmouth Road, Blofield,

on Wednesday, 11th March, 2020, from 7.30 p.m.

The meeting was attended by 33 members of the club including the President, Chair, Treasurer and Secretary.

Some apologies for absence had been forwarded but were not formally recorded.

1 Welcome to the AGM: the President, Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe, warmly welcomed so many club members to the meeting, looking forward to hearing plans for talks during the year, details of the revised show schedule, and inviting all to stay on after the meeting for a quiz and light supper.

2 Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 12th March, 2019: these had been made available to attendees at the meeting, and were proposed as accurate by Mrs S Ashford, seconded by Mrs P. Thomas and signed as such by the President.

3 Matters arising therefrom: there were no matters arising from the previous Minutes.

4 Treasurer's Report: Treasurer Alan Drake had circulated the statement of accounts for the year ending 31st December 2019 to attendees, and described a fairly good year financially, but with an unfortunate expenditure deficit during the year of £41.33. The closing balance stood at £1,245.89. Mr Drake outlined the club's income deriving from four sources:

- i) **Membership subscriptions plus visitors' fees:** there were 56 full members of the club in 2019, which unfortunately was fewer than in previous years.
- ii) **Income from raffle:** this provides very useful income for the club, helping towards speakers' fees, hire of hall, etc. All those involved in organising the raffle, supplying prizes and buying tickets were warmly thanked.
- iii) **The annual show:** it was felt that the show is essential to the club's well-being as well as providing income for expenses. All are encouraged to support the show, by entering classes and attending and encouraging the social aspects on the day.
- iv) **Donation by the Garden Equipment repair and sharpening Service:** Mr Drake kindly gave a 20% contribution to club funds for all tools he had repaired and/or sharpened during the year, for which the club is most grateful. He is continuing to offer this service in 2020 – details on the club notice board.

Although the closing balance in the bank is reasonable, Mr Drake had concerns about the increase in expenditure in 2020. He therefore proposed that the membership fee, which had been £7 for several years, should be increased to £8 per annum from this April, with visitors being charged £2.50 per meeting rather than £2. He concluded by encouraging members to recruit more people to visit and join the club, bring along tools for sharpening or repair, and then thanking Mr Douglas Clark for his assistance in the presentation of the accounts and for reviewing and signing them as the independent financial examiner. A copy of the accounts was available for members to view.

The adoption of the Treasurer's Report was proposed by Mrs B. Podd and seconded by Mrs C Goodwin.

5 Chair's Report: Mrs June Drake firstly thanked all those who attended club meetings, and helped in so many ways, whether a member of the committee or not, by organising and running the raffle, bringing along and making refreshments, setting out and putting away the chairs, organising the competition and 10% stall and generally helping to make the club such a successful venture. Mrs Drake confirmed that the current committee was willing to stand for a further year, with the addition of a new member. Mrs Lynda Hunt had kindly offered to act as Programme Secretary, taking over from Mrs Rowe, who had undertaken that role for several years, in addition to being club secretary.

Mrs Drake felt that there had been a good selection of speakers and topics during 2019 and generally meetings were well attended. However for some reason, the quiz offered by Simon White of Peter Beales Roses did not attract many members, which was a shame as it was fun and the winning table was presented with roses!

She looked forward to the 2020 programme, though expressed concern at the drop in membership numbers, and encouraged all to try to bring a friend or neighbour with them this year. She wished to thank Mrs Marion Barnett for organising refreshments over the past few years, and will present her with a little gift to show the club's gratitude. Mrs Maureen Willsher has kindly agreed to take over responsibility for refreshments in 2020.

Mrs Drake reiterated the importance of the Annual Summer Show, highlighting the standards which members attain, bringing in visitors for a pleasant social event, and in fact being the main fund raiser for the club. She particularly wished to thank Mesdames Marion Barnett and Chloe Veale for the wonderful array of cakes they had made, and for running the refreshment area.

Lastly Mrs Drake thanked all those on the committee for the various tasks undertaken during the year, and encouraged members to think about offering to join the committee – only 3 meetings per year. Also if members had suggestions for topics or speakers or places to visit, do please discuss them with a committee member.

6 Election of officers and committee: The current officers and committee members had agreed to continue in their roles in 2020, with the addition of Mrs Lynda Hunt as Programme Secretary. Their re-election *en bloc* was proposed by Mrs C Howe and seconded by Mrs P Thomas.

Office	Name proposed and agreed
Chair	Mrs June Drake
Treasurer	Mr Alan Drake
Assistant Treasurer	-
Secretary	Mrs Susan Rowe
Programme Secretary	Mrs Lynda Hunt
Show Secretary and Seed Order Scheme organiser	Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe
Assistant Show Secretary	Mrs Sue Brown
Committee members	Mrs Jacky Heath, Mrs Joanna Wicks and Mrs Maureen Willsher

7 Summer Show Schedule for Saturday, 11th July, 2020: Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe thanked all those involved in organising and supporting the show. Some changes to the schedule were discussed and the revised Show Schedule, entry form, cake recipe and plug plant will be available to club members on payment of subscriptions at the April meeting. It was pointed out that there had been few entries for the larger flower arranging classes recently, and should this continue then the committee may decide to withdraw this class from the schedule. Members were also encouraged to pick up posters that Mrs Veale had kindly compiled, and display them in the local area. Trifold leaflets will be available shortly.

8 Club Programme for 2020 including competition titles: Mrs Susan Rowe outlined the topics and speakers organised for the current year, also detailing the members' competition titles. Members were encouraged to take part in the monthly competitions as well as suggest speakers or topics for future meetings. For various reasons there is some uncertainty about the speakers for the September and November meetings, but members will be informed once clarification has been received. Meeting dates, topics, speakers and competition titles will be printed on membership cards, available at the April meeting, and on the publicity posters and tri-fold leaflets.

In view of national concerns regarding the Coronavirus which might affect club meetings being held, it was confirmed that e-mails would be sent to those who had agreed to receive messages from the club, should a meeting be cancelled. Efforts would be made to contact others by telephone. **Action: committee**

9 Seed Order Scheme: Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe confirmed that although fewer members had requested seeds from the Mr Fothergill catalogue, the 50% discount had just been achieved. She encouraged members to consider joining the scheme, as the quality of seeds and other items was consistently high and the discount helpful.

10 Any other business

- i) **Encouraging membership:** all were asked to try to recruit new members to the club, as numbers had fallen from 80 a few years ago to 56 last year. Committee member Mrs Wicks had posted a leaflet to all new home owners in the Strumpshaw area recently, something which could usefully be done on the new estates in other local areas.
- ii) **Gardening Equipment Repair and Sharpening Service:** thanks were offered to Alan Drake for offering this service and giving 20% of income to club funds. Similarly gratitude was expressed to Mrs Chloe Veale for composing such lovely posters.
- iii) **Annual Summer Show:** Mrs Sylvia Nelthorpe confirmed that she enjoyed organising and managing the summer show, but would very much appreciate a deputy, who would learn the basics of organising and running the show and would be able to step in as and when needed, and in the future.
- iv) **Norfolk & Norwich Horticultural Society Spring Show:** this will take place on Sunday, 29th March (10 am – 4 pm) at the Costessey Centre. Further details on the NNHS website.
- v) **Flower Festival at Blofield, Hemblington and North Burlingham churches on 19th and 20th September:** Mrs Drake had agreed to organise a floral arrangement in the porch of Blofield Church, on the theme of "Norfolk". She may request accoutrements to help with the arrangement.
- vi) **Refreshments and quiz:** all were encouraged to stay on to try the quiz that Mrs Drake had compiled and enjoy refreshments kindly provided by the committee.

11) Date of next Annual General Meeting – Wednesday, 10th March, 2021