

**30 October 2023 at 7.30 pm (doors open at 7.15 pm)**

**CHICHESTER ORGANIC GARDENING SOCIETY AGM**

**AGENDA**

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Adoption of minutes of last AGM
3. Matters arising
4. Adoption of Accounts
5. Election of Officers
6. Election of Committee
7. AOB

**The AGM will be followed by:**

The Harvest Supper

**The Society has the following posts**

<b>Position</b>	<b>Committee Mbr in 2022-2023</b>	<b>Held by in 2022 – 2023</b>	<b>Standing for re-election in 2022 – 2024</b>
Chair		<b>Vacant</b>	
Secretary	Yes	Penelope Johnstone	
Treasurer	Yes	Liz Campling	
Membership Secretary	Yes	Stephanie Carn	
Future Events		Vacancy	
Publicity	Yes	Vacancy	
Newsletter	Yes	Liz Campling	
Committee Member	Yes	Pat Alderton	
Committee Member	Yes	Gina Scott	
Committee Member	Yes	Diana Morgan	

**Whether we continue as a Society depends on the outcome of this meeting**

## Chichester Organic Gardening Society

### Annual General Meeting held on 31st October 2022

**Apologies** were received from Pat Alderton, Diana Morgan, Stephanie Carn (Committee) and from Irene Wood

**Minutes** of the Annual General Meeting 2021: proposed Rob Campling, seconded Terry Timblick, and accepted as an accurate account.

**Accounts:** presented by Liz Campling. We have a deficit of £133. If this is compared to the last normal year ending at 31 August 2019, when we more or less broke even, a number of problems emerge. Speakers are getting more expensive and numbers at meetings, on average, smaller, so entry and raffle money is less. Membership was down by £36 and income from other sources such as shows and plant sales was much less. None of these sums are huge but we are a small organisation and margins are narrow.

For 2023 the Spring Fling has been moved from May to April, when fewer young plants should have been planted out and thus be available for swapping. The main problem, though, is 'demographic' – we are not attracting younger members. Alexander Damper suggested that younger people are more interested in house plants and suggested a possible contact with the University or College. As a start Maggie Haynes talk for November has been publicised by posters and flyers at the university and COGS had a stall at the University Green Fair on 28th November. Disappointingly no students came but a seed may have been sown. The University is committed to looking after the mental health of its students and this might be something we could follow up, as would a speaker on houseplants.

Accounts: proposed Monica Greenham, seconded Ben Harding, accepted.

**Election of Officers:** Liz Campling Treasurer, Penelope Johnstone Secretary, Stephanie Carn Membership Secretary. Proposed Christine Timblick, seconded Ben Harding.

**Election of Committee:** Pat Alderton, Diana Morgan, Gina Scott: proposed Ben, seconded Susan Maguire.

**Any Other Business:** (a) There have been requests for more information on soil, and Mark Hobson has offered to give a talk; he will be invited for the February 2023 meeting.

(b) **Memorial Tree:** this has been selected, and permission given to plant it near the New Park Centre; CDC will dig the hole on Friday 11 November, and will supply a water 'pipe' for it. Plaque will be done by Alexander and by Timpsons.

(c) Ben pointed out that some speakers go on for a rather long time; the average attention span is said to be 20 minutes. We should give a speaker a specific length, giving a sharper focus, maximum 40 minutes with time for questions. We shall consider this.

The meeting ended at 8.20 and was followed by the Harvest Supper.

## Committee's Report for the year ending October 2023

With activities getting back to normal we began the season in **September 2022** with an excellent talk from David Standing, former head gardener of Selborne, who after retirement had continued to research the history of the garden. Much of this was based on the diaries of Rev Gilbert White from the 1750s to the 1770s, and brought up to date with plants cultivated then which are still grown in the garden today.

**October** we held the usual AGM and Harvest Supper. Low attendance was symptomatic of the financial situation outlined by our Treasurer: falling numbers and rising costs. This will be discussed at the 2023 AGM when serious decisions will have to be made.

**November** our long-time friend Maggie Haynes brought us up to date with developments at Tuppenny Barn, with their horticultural therapy sessions, school visits, and in general opportunities for the local community.

On **November 10th**, a group of us met on the grass outside the New Park Centre, to plant in memory of David Scott, our late Treasurer, a crab apple tree supplied by Paul Barnett. The tree is flourishing and blossomed well this year. In spring 2023 a plaque was added, commemorating David, 'a friend of the environment'.

**January 2023** brought us Brian Henham of the Manhood Wildlife Group. His in-depth study of the local area has made him sensitive to changes in weather patterns and the flowering seasons, affecting insects and birds.

**February** Mark Hobson of Transition Chichester, who runs a local smallholding and small orchard, stressed the importance of maintaining a healthy soil. Members brought samples from their own allotments and gardens, making this a particularly relevant and useful evening.

In **March** we welcomed Julia Sander, a COGS member and co-founder of Transition Chichester, who told us about the development and current activities of the Bishops Palace vegetable garden. This has grown into a flourishing TC enterprise, with regular volunteers and a weekly session of therapeutic gardening supervised by Ed Bowring.

**April**, we held the Plant Swop and Spring Fling. We decided on the earlier date because in 2022 the very hot weather had meant that plants were not suitable. By contrast, this year the colder weather had slowed development, and again only one person brought any plants. However, a very pleasant evening for the small number attending.

The **June** event was much more successful. On a very sunny afternoon ten members came for a picnic in the Bishops Palace Garden, under the trees. We were particularly glad to see members who are no longer able to come to evening meetings.

During the summer break, on August 10th four of us went to Woolbeding Gardens near Midhurst, as a follow-up to the talk given by Paul Gallivan in September 2022.

In **September** we started the new season with Melanie Oxley from Petersfield Climate Action Network, her subject resilience in our gardens in changing weather conditions.

As we prepare for the **October AGM** we have to face up to our situation and take decisions for the future. Does COGS continue, and if so, in what form? Organic Gardening is now accepted as normal, and continues to grow, whatever happens to COGS.