

LEIGH & DISTRICT COTTAGE GARDEN SOCIETY

President Mr Peter Worlidge



Established 1891

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Monday 20th November 2023 at Leigh Village Hall, RH2 8NP

Present: Mr & Mrs C Saunders, Mr & Mrs D Holmes, Mrs J Parker, Mrs S Frost, Mr J Scott, Mr K Bryant, Mr G Everest, Ms M Neil, Mr & Mrs B Boustred, Mr & Mrs S Ames, Mr & Mrs D Gwynne, Dr & Mrs Vere Hodge, Mr B Lambert, Mr D Dobell, Miss R Dobell, Mr & Mrs P Johnson, Mrs J Bartley, Ms V Newman, Mr D Clarke, Mr P Scroggins.

Committee: Mr M Dobell, Ms H Taneborne, Ms P Taneborne, Ms H Hill, Mrs P Brockwell, Mr D Frost, Mrs K Scroggins

Mark Dobell welcomed everyone to the AGM and introduced Peter Worlidge who had become President of the Society after Jean Griffin had stepped down earlier in the year.

President's address.

Peter said he was very honoured to be asked to be President of such a lovely society and to succeed Jean Griffin whose remarkable knowledge and support he could never hope to match. The Society owes her a great debt of gratitude for all the time she has given to the society over the past many years.

Peter would give his wholehearted support to the much-admired asset of Leigh without interfering with the running of the committee whom he said were also owed tremendous thanks for all their hard work throughout the year. The Summer Show in particular with its numerous helpers was an amazing success in spite of the atrocious weather.

Peter felt one of his main challenges was to increase the membership of both members and patrons. It has often been said that membership is great value. To really emphasise this he pointed out that membership costs no more than the cost of one child's portion of fish and chips! Surely everyone in the village should be a member. As for being a patron, the cost of that is less than the cost of one grownups portion of fish and chips!

Peter encouraged everyone to support the society in such a wonderful village surrounded by such beautiful countryside. He then reminded everyone by reading out the **3 Purposes** of our **Constitution**, the third being particularly relevant, headed **Community Participation**, which would hopefully encourage social cohesion within the community.

If re elected Peter hoped to continue the Society's excellent ethos.

Chairman's address.

I would like to start by saying that after 9 or 10 months or so organising & despite the awful weather; this year's Flower Show & Country Fayre was a great success. There are a huge number of people who rely on us in providing the Show, with very many small local and cottage businesses coming with their stalls, along with a number of charities too and I am confident that the day also supports the

cricket club. I would like to extend our grateful thanks to all the helpers who turned up both on the day and the two days prior to the show, we certainly had more help this year than the previous year. By way of showing our gratitude we held a thank you evening for the helpers on the 10th of November, where a delicious supper was served, for which I would like to thank Kerry and Paul Scroggins for organising and providing a homemade supper; desert, and also a thank you to Helen Hill, Graham Brockwell and Jo Willoughby for helping in the kitchen.

A number of talks were held during the year along with a visit to an Alstroemeria cut flower nursery, an open garden at Orchard Cottage and MSSL grounds in Holmbury St Mary in all around 7 events, unfortunately we had low numbers attend most talks, and if we are to continue giving talks we really need the members and guests to support us. If you have any ideas as to what talks you would like to have please speak to Penny Taneborne and give her your ideas.

It is without doubt that you have a strong committee and to that end I would like to thank Paula Brockwell for all her hard work with the Secretarial duties and her excellent skill in booking up some amazing entertainments for the Show, including the fantastic Rock Choir which I believe we are having back for 2024. My thanks also to Douglas, he has kept us on our toes on keeping within a set budget, Helen Taneborne has done her usual fantastic job of Show Secretary which is no easy task, Kerry needs thanks for among other things running a superb tea tent raising much needed funds, and Penny who has organised the talks for the year along with putting our newsletters together, and a new committee member Helen Hill who has joined the committee recently with great enthusiasm, and last but not least Adria Kinloch who has run the membership website and sent out our e newsletters. Sadly Adria has decided to stand down for personal reasons, however is going to keep doing her role off committee until we find someone else to take on one or more of her tasks. There are also other people i would like to thank. Michael Knight who has supported us with the Tombola for very many years, and Clive & Hazel who have supported us with their plant stall for more years than perhaps they would like to say and of course, a thank you to all of our members who without there would be no Leigh Garden club.

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Martin & Irene Needham, Jean Griffin, Adria Kinloch and Graham Brockwell.

2. Agreement of Minutes from 7th November 2022

Dr Vere Hodge mentioned that he had NOT agreed with the survey being carried out at the Helper's Supper as per the minutes 7th November 2022 Agenda item 10 AOB page 5 paragraph 13. This was noted and amended.

The minutes were taken as read. Proposer Mr S Ames, Seconded Mrs J Bartley and signed by the Chairman Mr M Dobell.

3. Matters arising

There were no matters arising.

Reports

4. Treasurer's Report

I am pleased to report that the Society achieved a surplus of £982.39, an increase of £659 from 2022. Our income was slightly down by £170 due to not receiving £250 from Leigh Residents Association and a reduction in profit on our sales of compost. However, these were made up by profits of £322 on the Quiz night at The Plough and an increase in the surplus from the Summer Show. Expenditure fell by £829 due there being no charges for electricity at the Cricket Club,

purchase of tables or the Autumn Show. In addition, the lower depreciation charge, due to Capex being totally written off. Two items added to the expenditure, a new event, the Helpers Supper and an increase in the cost of Society talks. The Summer Show produced a surplus of £929 which was an outstanding result considering the appalling weather. Although the attendance was naturally down the high quality of the attractions and the stalls guaranteed the success of the event. Our reserves have increased to £10,768 and I remain confident that the Society can look forward to a successful future.

D.F 16.11.23

There was 1 comment from a member.

In the past visitors to the Summer Show had been able to walk through the entrances without paying due to lack of helpers. This year’s event seems to have rectified this.

All accepted the report for this year Proposer Barry Lambert, Seconded Desmond Gwynn.

5. Show Secretary’s Report.

Summer Show

We are finding it harder to track down equipment suppliers and judges. It is always unsettling as you need take a chance with a new supplier even if they come with recommendations.

We had a bit of luck this year when the marquee company wished to put the show tent during the week, so it meant we had all day on the Friday to set up. A great help and it made it easier for marking out the field.

The frame tent with “cathedral windows” lets in more light and allows us to look out at what is happening on the showground. We had bad luck with the weather, but more visitors were encouraged inside to avoid the heavy rain. I understand that the bar and tea tent were also very well supported!

We were delighted that North Downs School felt able to send in entries from all three bases. Entries numbers generally were encouraging with some new exhibitors including children, but more are always welcome so that we can return to pre covid figures. Horticultural entries remain encouraging but there is a distinct reduction in the handicraft and homecraft sections. Autumn Show – No show in 2023 but we will look at the figures and it might be back in 2025.

Yes, we must start planning early and some judges are already booked.

Summer	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Exhibitors	72	64			49	54
Junior entries	15				11	13
Exhibits	295	374			189	420
School entries	218	221				65
Borders	8/20	3/9				
Total Exhibits	<u>533</u>	<u>604</u>			<u>189</u>	<u>485</u>

Autumn	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
Exhibitors	12	14		26	12	
Exhibits	113	191		204	89	

We are most grateful to all our supporters - those that exhibit, those that help and those that come and see what Leigh has to offer.

We had a very successful helpers supper 10 days ago with plenty of delicious food provided by Kerry and her husband Paul and the wine flowed.

Should you have any suggestion for subjects or show classes you wish to see, contact me or

the Society Secretary. Details are on the website and in the Leigh Post.
HRT 17/11/23

All accepted the report for this year Proposer Brian Boustred, Seconded David Clarke.

6. Membership Report

Last year I reported on the 2022 membership figures and was happy to report that they were back to pre-COVID levels. Looking back on 2023 we have seen a small drop in members from 110 to 103 but overall, the society is lucky to have loyal and supportive members, not only in Leigh but in the surrounding areas.

Once again, the committee has taken the decision not to increase the cost of membership, which remains at £8 for membership and £15 to become a patron. There are lots of membership benefits – a varied and interesting programme of talks, garden visits to private gardens only open to members, as well as the discount on entering the Summer Show.

And we continue to offer discounts at a number of outlets, including the excellent Buckland Nurseries which always offer a great range of plants, the Hope Nursery in Wheelers Lane, Brockham, Bettahomes in Woodhatch for all your household needs, and Paul Scroggin's local dog walking service.

So do please tell your friends and neighbours about us and encourage them to join.

Since 2022 we have offered more flexible ways of renewing your membership including online payment which is increasingly popular – just visit our website!

Adria Kinloch
18/11/23

Talks throughout 2022/23

Nov 22	17 years of purgatory with the National Trust.
Feb 23	A kinder way to garden.
March 23	A talk on Alstroemeria and the UK cut flower industry.
April 23	A talk by Hever Castle's Head Gardener
May 23	Open Garden Orchard Cottage, Mynthurst.
Aug 23	Visit to Crosslands Alstroemeria Nursery.
Oct 23	Gin Kitchen talk and sample tasters Cancelled
Nov 23	Helpers thankyou evening, with an invitation to Members

7. Presentations

Firstly, our retired President Jean Griffin who has given us an enormous amount of experience in the horticultural world, along with her extensive connections, we are giving her a token of our appreciation.

Secondly, we are giving Adria who joined the committee in 2020, a token of our appreciation for all the hard work she has put into running our website, sending out e newsletters and being our membership officer. Adria has decided to step down from the committee and although Adria has said she will continue with these posts off committee we cannot expect her to go on more than in the short term.

Many thanks to both Jean and Adria. If anyone would like to offer help with any of Adria's roles, we would be very grateful for your support.

8. Election of President, Chairman, Officers and Committee Members

Mr Peter Worlidge **President, Proposed Dr Vere-Hodge, Seconded Mrs Clare Gwynn.**

The Chairman handed the meeting over to the President.

All committee members with the exception of Adria Kinloch have agreed to stand again for re-election.

- Mark Dobell - **Chairman**
- Helen Taneborne - **Show Secretary**
- Douglas Frost - **Treasurer**
- Penny Taneborne - **Events Secretary**
- Paula Brockwell - **Secretary**
- Kerry Scroggins- **Committee Member**
- Helen Hill - **Committee Member**

**Proposed by Mrs Judy Bartley
Seconded by Mr Simon Ames**

The meeting returned to the Chairman.

9. AOB

- Dr Vere Hodge had circulated a proposal around the meeting. Due to the lateness of receiving the proposal it was agreed that the Committee would discuss it at their next committee meeting in January 2024. Dr Vere Hodge did agree however that all he wanted was to encourage the committee to plan for the future.
- Penny Taneborne asked those present if talks during the day would be preferred to evening ones. This may encourage members to attend. Those present said they would still prefer evening talks. Saturday talks in winter was a possibility but the cost of hiring the village hall would have to be taken into consideration.
- Penny mentioned that members may be able to be collected for evening talks if driving was an issue.
- Derek Holmes suggested talks by the Members could be a possibility and would be looked into by the committee.

The chairman thanked everyone for attending and drew the meeting to a close.

10. Date of the next AGM

This would be discussed at the next committee meeting due to a clash of dates for next years AGM. It would be posted on the website once agreed.

Signed

Dated

