

## **Chairman's address to the members.**

Having got organising well underway for the 2020 Flower show and Fayre, we were thwarted by the pandemic and lockdown at the end of March 2020, everything came to a sudden standstill and normal life was robbed from us, however we were looking at ways to carry on providing a service to members and villagers, and on recognising a difficulty in getting compost due to the garden centres closing, we found a supplier where we could get compost and initially we delivered any ordered by members, followed by collection days from Adria's home in Leigh.

Over the following months we struggled to get to grips with lockdown, eventually we tackled the zoom boom and held several zoom talks, and we decided to invite other garden clubs to join in, again to spread support across the surrounding district.

Then with seeing the light at the end of the tunnel with the vaccination program into 2021, we began to wonder if we might be able to have a summer show and fayre for 2021, in the meantime we offered compost again to members and villagers with two collection dates during the spring, again from Adria's home.

So was a 2021 summer show and fayre to be? Well as you all know we did not have the summer Show and Fayre, the reason for this is it normally takes 10 months or so to organise, and by the time we could make a covid confident decision it was too late to cobble a decent show together.

However we decided to hold a village picnic around the date we would have had a summer show, with free ice creams to celebrate end of lockdown, this was attended by around 100 people.

Next was an enhanced Autumn show, whereby we had stalls and a quartet of musicians and teas served along with the apple pressing team, to the outside world the event was indeed very successful, however both the picnic and Autumn show raised some grave concerns.

Which brings us to a very important point in that the committee is lacking physically active members, there is an ageing number of helpers who understandably have retired from the help list, and too much of the organising left on the shoulders of two committee members.

This situation is totally unsustainable and therefore i decided to stand down from the chair, to allow myself to become a more active committee member, but this alone is not the answer we do need to fill three posts on the committee if we are to survive and flourish.

On top of this we also need to encourage and find new helpers for the two main events particularly the summer Show and fayre.

So what has the current committee and myself been doing toward the outlook for 2022?

We are looking at ways to enhance our presence via social media.  
members more benefits.  
helpers.

Giving our  
Finding ways to get fresh new

We are looking at ways to attract volunteers, and have already joined the Central Surrey Voluntary Action who help find volunteers.

We are seriously considering uniting with the RHS Sustainability strategy on improving biodiversity, going peat free, being water neutral, eliminating single use plastic, by 2025

Changing the name of the garden society to encourage new members to join, and possibly echo the RHS strategy possibly by way of a competition to find a suitable name.

### **Treasurer's Report for year ending 30/9/2021**

This year has shown an improvement reflecting the lessening effects of Covid. The loss for the year was only £126.84, significantly better than 2020, and in fact our cash reserves increased to £9,351.62.

As you will know we did not charge subscriptions for members who paid during the previous year so this item is made up of existing members who failed to pay during the previous year and new members. We also received income from the Plant Sale and sale of compost. The highlight was the enhanced Autumn Show which made a profit of £307 rather than the normal deficit of £150. The recurring expenditure was very similar to previous years but we avoided items of discretionary expenditure.

Our shows and other events remain popular but the society is very dependent on attracting volunteer helpers in the future. Fortunately our financial position continues to be strong and this should enable us to look forward to a successful year in 2022.

Douglas Frost

22.11.2021

### **Show Secretary Report 2021**

#### ***I opened my 2019 report with the words -***

*We are all getting older – it is a fact of life – and the world has changed drastically in the last 100 years and the last 10 has been way beyond anything dreamt up in science fiction.*

*Family life is so very different, and we have to accept this but it is hard.*

Well times have certainly changed with the recent hiatus.

Autumn Show – competitor numbers were up (back to 2013 numbers) and with 12 new exhibitors this is very encouraging but it was the first show for 18 months and we had the added attractions on the recreation ground. We had lost some regular exhibitors through retirement and relocation. The 4 junior exhibitors were encouraging but all but 1 showed in the adult classes only and one even won the merit award in the Fruit & Vegetable section.

Family life has changed, often with both parents working but they could spend time encouraging their children to broaden their horizons and I was surprised that lock down did not produce any extra entries in the Junior Section.

	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
<b>Autumn</b>									
<i>Exhibitors</i>	25	16	18	11	15	12	14	N/A	26
<i>Exhibits</i>	176	128	132	61	137	113	191	N/A	204

I was delighted that Peter Baker came to the Autumn Show as our guest. He and his late wife Brenda have helped over the years both exhibiting, helping on the stalls and also giving advice. Peter also ran a mean auction!

The 2022 schedule is already being worked on so you still have time to make requests or comments on what you would like to see included or what you think is "old hat" and should be removed or updated.

For 2020 we had reduced the number of classes in the Junior Section but will consult with the schools to ask what they would like included. We have always received tremendous support from the North Downs School but as it is federated the three bases must have the same classes and opportunities. Judging 126 painting in one class is very daunting and this year we are looking to change the system of judging.

The biggest problem we face is that we are missing the families ALL joining in. I looked back over old entry books and we had mothers (and some fathers) along with their children entering all manner of classes -- not just in the junior section.

Where would we be without our supporters – those that exhibit, those that help and those that come and see what Leigh and the local parishes have to offer but saying this we need new blood!

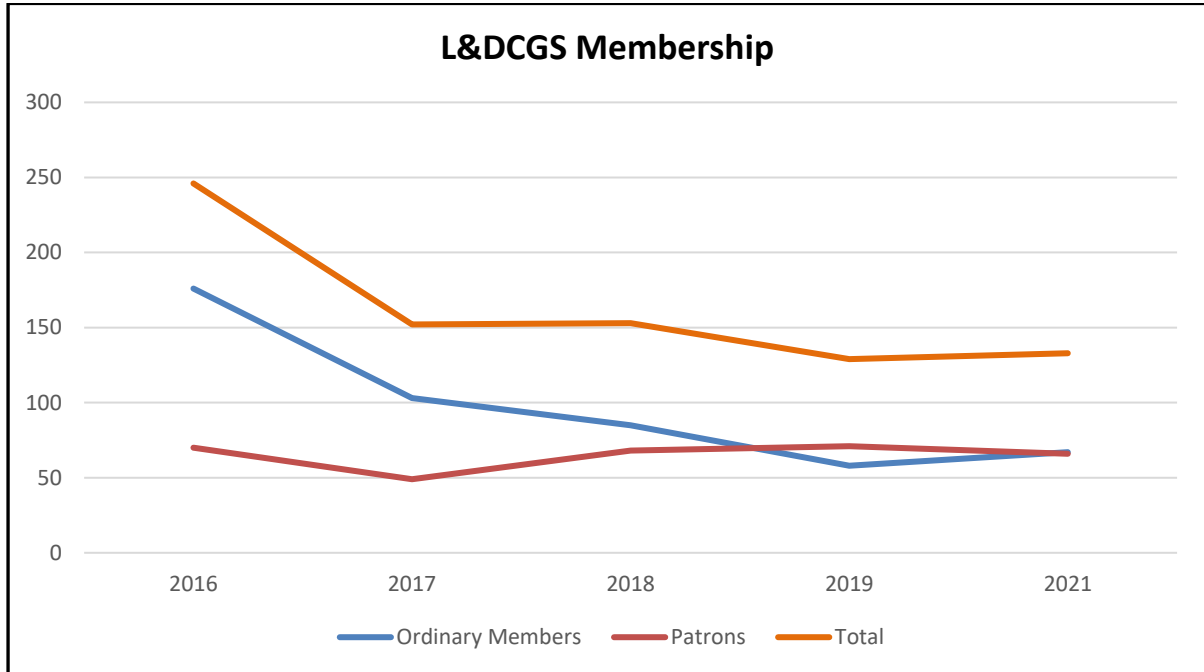
It is a challenge, but we refuse to lose heart.

HRT 22/11/21

## LDCGS Membership Report 2021

	Ordinary Members	Change %	Patrons	Change %	Total Membership	Change %
<b>2016</b>	176	N/A	70	N/A	246	N/A
<b>2017</b>	103	-41.5	49	-30.0	152	-38.2
<b>2018</b>	85	-17.5	68	+38.8	153	+0.6
<b>2019</b>	58	-31.8	71	+4.4	129	-15.7

<b>2021</b>	67	+15.5%	66	-7.0%	133	+3.1%
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LDCGS membership offers excellent value, compared to neighbouring societies, who charge around £15 per year for a much slimmer programme of events.

Obviously, the world has changed since March 2020, when the initial Covid lockdown started. The programme of Zoom talks and presentations kept the membership engaged during Autumn, Winter (2020) and Spring this year, until more typical meetings were able to resume in a limited way.

We tried to 'grow' the membership with a flier in Leigh Post but this only met with limited success. I believe that we should be asking members' help to recruit new members. However, our profile is improving in the village, through initiatives such as Crocus planting and S&SE in Bloom. If we can just keep doing what we're doing then I feel membership will increase gradually.