



Annual General Meeting – Wednesday, 18 March 2020

CHAIR'S REPORT

This is a report of the gardening club's activities since the last AGM in March 2019.

During 2019 we provided a full programme of activities including the Scarecrow trail for the Hailey Festival; the ever-popular Plant Sale and the Village Show.

We continued to maintain our links and support for the horticultural students at Wood Green School. On 14 November, 3 Committee Members and 4 other members were given a guided tour by the horticultural teacher, Jaimie Bunting, and his Year 10 students.

The events

A summary of HGC's events is set out below:

- **February – Cogges Manor Farm Talk** - Colin Shone, the Chief Executive, gave a very interesting talk about the history and development of this historic farm and manor house on the edge of Witney and how it is run today as by a charitable trust.
- **March – Labour Saving Gardening Talk** – Philip Aubury gave a fascinating talk on taking some of the hard slog out of gardening. He brought along a range of tools and explained how best to use these to make gardening easier.
- **April – Our third talk Peppers, Potatoes, Petunias and Poisons** given by Paul Williams demonstrated the links across this group of plants known as the Solanaceae family.
- **May – The Plant Sale** continues to generate a lot of interest, with significant numbers of plants being purchased and a fair number being donated. Early arrival was again demonstrated to be very important if buyers wanted to get a bargain.
- **June – Scarecrow Trail** – Forty-three entrants registered for the gardening club's contribution to the Hailey Festival. Although 2 withdrew, we had a fantastic display representing a wide range of films. Sadly, the weather was very wet during the two weeks of the competition, which rather reduced the number of people who went out on the scarecrow trail.
- **August – Visit to Kiftsgate Court Gardens** – The Committee and a small number of members spent a very pleasant afternoon viewing the gardens and

grounds of this wonderful garden high up in the Cotswolds near Chipping Camden very close to Hidcote.

- **September – Village Show** – The show continues to be successful drawing in people from inside and outside the village. Overall, the number of exhibits and the finances were higher than in 2018, although entries to some classes were lower.
- **October – History of Gardening Talk** – Sheena Marsh of Oxford Garden Design, who lives in the village, gave a very interesting talk on the history and development of gardening over the centuries, supported by a collection of lovely photographs of a wide range of gardens. **Apple Pressing Day** – In spite of the preparations for this event, it had to be cancelled at short notice as the weather had been so wet.
- **November – Deck the Halls** – Again, this event was held in the main hall and was well-attended by members as well as some non-members and proves to be a popular way for people to get together just before Christmas.

Programme for 2020

We have already embarked on our programme for this year with a talk in February. Three further talks were planned but with the outbreak of the Covid19 virus hitting the country as I write this, at least one talk has now been cancelled to protect the speaker and potential audience members, who are largely older people and, therefore, in the vulnerable group at risk if they are infected by the virus. The programme has been published in the Hailey Herald so that it is available to members and non-members. The Show Schedule is currently being distributed. In addition to four talks, this year, scarecrows are due to make an appearance in June with the theme this year being “Celebrities”. The Committee and any interested members are hoping to visit a garden in August.

HGC’s Accounts

Our Treasurer, Graham Knaggs, has produced the Club’s accounts for the year and, in accordance with the AGM agenda, these will be accepted by the Committee on behalf of the Club. These have been audited and will be available, together with this report, on the gardening club page of the village website.

Communication

We continue to increase our use of email to inform or remind our members about our events, whilst maintaining compliance with GDPR and our own Privacy Policy, which is available from the Secretary and is also on the gardening club page of the village website – <https://haileywestoxon.org/hailey-garden-club>.

Our events are published in the Hailey Herald, on our Facebook page, and on the village website and Hailey Village Facebook page.

Membership

The Club's membership during 2019 was 167, 10 of whom were new members. Members continue to receive the benefit of discount from a number of local garden centres and nurseries, as well as free admission to all gardening club talks and events in the village.

Subscriptions are now collected in September each year.

The volunteers

As in previous years, we are very grateful to all our volunteers who continue to support HGC. The Club's Committee is small, so we rely heavily on the services of our volunteers who bake cakes, wash-up, set up tables, grow and sell plants and in innumerable ways contribute to the success of our events. Their help is very much appreciated.

The Committee

I am standing down from the Committee at the 2020 AGM after nine and a half years as Chair. I would like to thank all the Committee Members - Dawn Franklin, Graham Franklin, Martyn Clark, and the Officers - Judith Knaggs (Secretary) and Graham Knaggs who have all worked tirelessly to build Hailey and District Gardening Club into one of the most active organisations contributing to village life. It has been a great pleasure to work alongside them all.

We meet around 6 times a year, focussing on planning the programme and ensuring that everything is in place to deliver what we've agreed.

The club is urgently seeking new Committee members to strengthen the team so that the Club will be able to continue in future years to offer the wide range of activities that form the current programme.

Ann Gibson, Chair

March 2020