

BUXTED HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2025

Meeting held Tuesday 18th February 2025 at The Buxted Inn, High Street, Buxted, TN22 4LA.
At 7 00 pm.

PRESENT: Stephen Povey (Treasurer) (SP), Kirsten Brown (Secretary) (KB), Sheila Bartholomew (Events Coordinator)(SB), Sarah Ferguson (SF), Victoria Taberman-Pichler (VTP), Julie Taylor (JT)

7 visitors/members

APOLOGIES: Lisa Ayling, Karin Freer, Susan Pearson, Susan Thompson

AGENDA

Welcome by Secretary following which:

1. Minutes of the Annual Meeting 2024 had previously been circulated to the Committee members and were available on request. There were no matters arising and the Minutes, having been agreed, were signed in the absence of a Chair by Sheila Bartholomew (Events Coordinator).
2. CHAIR'S REPORT: In the absence of a Chair, Sheila Bartholomew as Events Coordinator, gave a report on Society Events in 2024.

Annual Report of Activities

Spring Show

The year began with the Spring Show, that showcased the community's gardening expertise while battling with the changing climate. Quite how we managed to show any daffodils is little short of miraculous! It was pleasing to see an increase in entries for the craft and domestic classes. In all a very successful start to the year.

Visit to the Beeches Garden

Members enjoyed a delightful visit to the Beeches Garden, Barcombe. The lovely walled garden displayed some unusual and exciting planting. The guided tour offered insights into the creative planting schemes and meticulous care that go into maintaining such a garden. We also enjoyed delicious teas and cakes in the warm summer sun. Members left with a wealth of inspiration and tips to try in their own gardens.

Plant Stall at the Summer Fair

The Summer Fair featured a bustling plant stall. Members contributed a variety of plants, from vibrant annuals to sturdy perennials. The stall not only provided an opportunity to purchase unique plants but also served as a platform for sharing gardening knowledge. It

was a great success, raising funds and fostering a sense of community among gardening enthusiasts.

Autumn Show

The Autumn Show celebrated the rich colours and bountiful harvests of the season. Exhibits included an impressive array of fruits, vegetables, and late-blooming flowers. The 'Posy in a Jam Jar' drew lots of entries which made a wonderful display. We were delighted to welcome The East Hoathly and Halland Community Garden to our show exhibiting in both horticultural and domestic classes. The Autumn Show successfully encouraged new exhibitors which is promising for future events.

Flower Arranging Evening with Cheese and Wine

The year's activities culminated in a flower arranging evening accompanied by cheese and wine. We used a new venue, The Football Club, which proved a very pleasant venue and one we shall use again but perhaps in spring and early autumn when the evenings are lighter. Beautiful arrangements were created, combining seasonal flowers with creative flair by a renowned flower arranger while enjoying a fine selection of cheeses and wine. In conclusion, the year's activities were marked by a series of successful events that not only highlighted the members' love for gardening but also increased our membership, which puts the Society on a firm footing for the future.

This Report was approved by all those present. The Committee were thanked for providing such an enjoyable series of events for members and the wider community to enjoy.

3. **TREASURER'S REPORT:** In his Report Stephen Povey (SP) Treasurer referred to the Financial Statements 2024 – Comparatives 2023 and 2022
Financial Statements 2024 - Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet copies of which had been circulated to those present.
In summary SP commented that with an increase in membership subscriptions and donations together with an enhanced grant from Buxted Parish Council, the surplus/(Deficit) of income over expenditure had increased to £633.
SP further explained that Donations had been received from an anonymous member of £50 to go towards enabling someone to attend an event that would otherwise have been unable to do so, together with that of £156 towards the cost of Hall Hire and an additional £141 raised by the Raffle at the Flower Arranging Evening. The latter amount had subsequently been donated to St Wilfrid's Hospice in memory of Sue Nichols, a former Committee Member and valued friend.
SP further commented that the Total Reserves of £7,342 as reflected in the Financial Statements showed current assets of Cash at bank Current Account of £7,430 with £166 cash in hand and £254 held in credit. This left the Society on a firm financial footing at Financial Year End 31/12/24 which would enable the Committee to further build on last year's success with Shows and other Events already planned for 2025.

A visitor (Oliver Bangham) asked what the Committee intended to do with the Total

Reserves. SP replied that it was regarded as an investment as part of it had come from a savings account inherited from the previous Committee. The present Committee were fully aware that they needed to spend BHS Funds in a careful and measured way. It was apparent that our visitors/members enjoy quality, and the aim was to further build on the vibrancy of the shows and events, making them more inviting to the wider community.

Sheila Bartholomew proposed adoption of the Treasurer's Report, seconded by Kirsten Brown, and approved by all those present.

4. ELECTION of:

Chair: John Forster (Member) proposed Sheila Bartholomew and seconded Susan Thompson.

Treasurer: Stephen Povey proposed Sheila Bartholomew and seconded Sarah Ferguson.

Auditor: (non-Society member) Stephen Povey invited those present to let the Committee know if they knew of anyone who might be willing to act as BHS Auditor. Position left vacant.

Secretary: Kirsten Brown proposed Stephen Povey and seconded Doreen Forster.

Membership Secretary: Victoria Taberman-Pichler proposed Stephen Povey and seconded Oliver Bangham.

Show Secretary: Kirsten Brown gave a brief outline of the responsibilities of the Show Secretary, explaining that during 2024 the various duties involved had been shared between the existing Committee Members. There were no volunteers, therefore position will remain currently vacant, subject to further discussion in Committee.

Events Coordinator: Sheila Bartholomew proposed Sarah Ferguson and seconded Jenny Bloomer

Committee Members: the following agreed to stand for re-election

Lisa Ayling
Sarah Ferguson
Susan Pearson
Julie Taylor

Kirsten Brown proposed the election of all those willing to stand for re-election en-bloc and seconded by Lietta Bangham.

Committee Member (position vacant): Oliver Bangham Proposed Sheila Bartholomew and seconded Kirsten Brown

5. Proposal to retain Annual Membership Fee at £5 per person in 2026. Proposed by Stephen Povey and seconded by Oliver Bangham.

6. Plans for This Year:

Sheila Bartholomew, as Events Coordinator, outlined the following events planned so far:

Spring Show – Saturday 5th April from 2 00 pm to 4 30 pm at St Mary’s Church Hall. SB confirmed that the Show Schedule had already been circulated to members and was available on the website. It was hoped that with the use of a large gazebo to be erected in the front garden, which would be used as a Tea Tent, that there would be more room available in the Hall to display exhibits and encourage more entries.

Trip to Wisley. Sheila Bartholomew confirmed that a 34-seater coach had been booked for Wednesday 25th June. However, with the extension of lengthy roadworks on the M25 at the junction for Wisley, it was perhaps an idea to find an alternative venue. This would be discussed at the next Committee Meeting.

Autumn Show – Details to be announced

Autumn talk – Friday 31st October. Talk to be given by Len Bernamont, Gardens and Outdoors Manager at Bateman’s, on the Garden and future plans for the garden at this local National Trust property.

As a very successful Plant stall had been run at Buxted Bonfire Society’s Summer Fair in 2024, it was possible this might be repeated, or BHS could also run its own separate Plant Sale/Seed Swap, using the previously mentioned Gazebo.

An event nearer Christmas might also be considered.

7. Any Other Business:

Christine Barradell tabled a question from the floor about the possibility of running a Buxted Open Gardens. In reply Sheila Bartholomew and Kirsten Brown explained that this had been done several years ago, run by the Churches within the village, and had proved successful. Following discussion, it was agreed that it would be an enormous undertaking, even if done on a very small scale, but the possibility would be further discussed by the Committee.

Stephen Povey wished it to be known that he would step down from the Committee and the Office of Treasurer in 2026. The Society would therefore start looking for a replacement. Stephen was keen that there should be a smooth transition. It was generally agreed that his would be a hard act to follow, after his dedication and commitment to the Society over many years.

There being no further business and the Annual General Meeting 2025 closed at 7 50 pm.

