

**BERKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST (the “Trust”)  
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at The Barn, Purley-on-Thames, Berkshire RG8 8DR on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016 at 7.00pm.**

President: Lady Wroughton  
Chairman: His Honour Charles Elly  
Treasurer: Hugh Simon  
Secretary: Fiona Hope

**1. Chairman's welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chairman, Charles Elly, opened the meeting and welcomed the President, Lady Wroughton and members present.

The Secretary, Fiona Hope, noted that 26 members were present in person (with 11 apologies and 1 proxy) and confirmed the meeting was quorate.

**2. President's address**

Lady Wroughton, President, addressed the meeting; she stressed that the Capability Brown Tercentenary Year (CB300) had provided a key focus for the Trust in 2016. In particular, she recognised the tremendous contribution of Ben Viljoen to BGT, who had lectured on and then organised the CB300 visits to Caversham Park, as well as a mini-exhibition. She also noted the numerous planning applications on which the committee had responded and stressed that there was a need for more volunteers to help with all the Trust's activities, especially for a new Membership Secretary, as Kaye Warner was retiring from this role. Finally, she thanked Kaye and the committee for their hard work, Charles Elly for his support, and the members for their continuing support to the Trust.

**3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 8<sup>th</sup> October 2015**

The minutes had been posted on the website with hard copies being available at the meeting. The minutes of the 2015 AGM were adopted by all members present, with no matters arising.

Proposer: Christina Hill Williams; Seconder: Indra Townsend.

**4. Chairman's report**

The Chairman's Report, which together with the Treasurer's Report formed the 2015-2016 Trustees' Report, had been posted on the website with copies available at the meeting. The Trust has 84 paid up members in the year ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2016, a decrease of 4 from the previous year. Charles Elly drew

members' attention to the 2015 West Green and Folly Farm visits, the Michael Symes lecture on Rousham, progress on the garden at Watlington House and sad decay of the Hungerford Tragedy Memorial Garden. He also thanked Ben Viljoen for his Capability Brown contributions as well as his tour of Rousham and Richard Griffith-Jones for the guided visit to Eton College Private Gardens in July. He then emphasised that while some initial consideration has been given to progress on research, the main focus had been on planning responses and taking on responsibility for various activities following Ben Viljoen's retirement from the committee. Finally, he noted with regret that Kaye Warner was retiring due to National Trust commitments, joining Lady Wroughton in thanks for her stalwart work as Membership Secretary and stressed that the committee is keen to encourage more members and Trustees.

During the following discussion about how else the Trust could encourage new membership, Charles Elly advised that the Caversham Park events had only resulted in a few new members; something which other County Gardens Trusts had also experienced. He also noted a suggestion that Trust members could be invited to help approach potentially interested people they knew.

## **5. Treasurer's report**

Hugh Simon reported that the Trust's assets, which are predominantly held as cash, had increased by £1,517.81 over the year, still mainly from continuing subscription income, with a small surplus from events, donations from lecture fees donated by Christina Hill Williams, Vice-President, and committee members as well as Gift Aided subscriptions from two-thirds of the membership. The cost of The Gardens Trust affiliation, insurance and the website remain the main outgoings. He also noted that he had taken on lead responsibility for making the website more user-friendly. Finally, he thanked Brian Tubman, for continuing to act as Examiner to the accounts and Kaye Warner for her help at the end of year reconciliation.

The following points were also made in response to several questions:

- The display boards still in use have now been fully depreciated
- Advanced membership payments are treated as deferred income
- Caversham Park ticket sales in 2015-2016 were received before costs were incurred or the events were held so will be brought forward as income for 2016-2017
- The website cost £167 for the annual hosting fee and payment for the domain name in alternate years; Hugh Simon is looking at how the website can be improved without incurring huge outlay costs.

## **6. Adoption of the Directors' Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2016**

Leading on from Item 5 above, Hugh Simon briefly presented this formal report which had been submitted to Companies House.

The Trustees' Report (see Agenda Items 4 and 5 above) and the Directors' Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2016 were adopted by all members present.

Proposer: Mike Fellows; Seconder: Christina Hill Williams.

## **7. Election of Trustees:**

The following Trustee was re-elected for a term of three years in accordance with the Articles of Association:

**Richard Griffith-Jones**, proposed by Hugh Simon; seconded by Indra Townsend; all in favour.

Item 7 concluded the AGM formal business. There was then a break for refreshments prior to the Autumn Lecture on Harcourt Arboretum given by Timothy Walker, former Director of the Botanic Garden and of Harcourt Arboretum.

**Fiona Hope, 30<sup>th</sup> November 2016**  
**Executive Secretary, Berkshire Gardens Trust.**