

# PORLOCK VALE HORTICULTURAL AND HOME INDUSTRIES SOCIETY

AGM

Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2013, 7.30pm

		Action
1	<p><b>Present – committee:</b> Malcolm Appleton, Sue Appleton, Katie Bourn, Peter Day, Win Day, Diana Dean, Kath Else, Chris Fitzgerald, Lorraine Fitzgerald, Lin Littlefield, Paul Murch, Marion Phipps, Lita Strampp, Rita Swindells, Anna Toeman,  <b>In attendance:</b> Pauline and Geoff Garfield, David Swindells  <b>Apologies:</b> John Else, Peter Leather, Margaret Wildig</p>	
2	<p><b>Minutes of 2012 AGM</b>            There were no corrections made to the minutes. Chris Fitzgerald proposed that they be approved. Betty Glossop seconded. This was agreed so both duly signed a copy of the minutes which is on file.</p> <p><b>Matters arising</b>            *Malcolm reported that he has looked into finding lightweight tables but has not found anything that is fit for purpose. Paul had taken on the search but has had no success either. Peter D suggested decorating tables but it was generally felt that these would be too flimsy. The problem with the folding tables in the village hall is the lip which means the surface isn't flat when tables are placed together. It was suggested that we could investigate ways of masking or marking these raised joins. David S offered to join in the search for a suitable alternative to the current trestles.            *It was discussed last year whether we could increase the number of Show sponsors. No decision had been taken but in fact the number of sponsors had increased this year.</p>	
3	<p><b>Treasurer's Report and Accounts – Malcolm Appleton</b>            *Malcolm circulated copies of the accounts to the year ended 30.09.13. These had been audited by Bernard Foster. Bernard had presented a number of questions and notes to Malcolm, but Malcolm had been able to answer all of them so Bernard was happy to sign the accounts off. Bernard had not been well enough to audit last year's accounts, but had done them this year. Both are on file. Malcolm had purchased a bottle of Scotch for Bernard to thank him for his work.            *Malcolm made the following points regarding the General Account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Members' subscriptions have gone down – this has been the trend for a number of years. There are 123 members on the database (there were 164 when Malcolm took over as Treasurer) but only 94 have paid their subscription for this year (53 are Patrons). Malcolm allows 2 years non-payment before removing a member from the membership list.</li> <li>• Income from talks has gone up, mainly because the number of talks has increased.</li> <li>• Income from Porlock Country Fair increased on last year.</li> <li>• Expenditure is pretty similar to last year. The £50 donation was towards the planting at the top of Dunster Steep.</li> <li>• The excess of income of expenditure is up on last year.</li> </ul> <p>*Malcolm made the following points regarding the Show Account:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Income from show admissions and plant sales are both down on last year, the result being that overall income is down slightly.</li> <li>• Expenditure is slightly up but there was a reduction in printing costs thanks to the excellent service provided by the Lovelace Centre.</li> <li>• Malcolm offered his thanks to Diana for organising the raffle prizes.</li> </ul> <p>*To summarise: The amount in the bank is up slightly this year because the General Account had a higher excess of income over expenditure than in the previous year.            *Malcolm suggested that the new treasurer may look at the accounts and wish to change things, and it is important that this should happen. Rita thanked Malcolm for presenting the accounts in such an accessible and clear way.            *The question was asked whether the Spring Show was affected by the weather and as a result entry fees were down. Malcolm responded that the area for concern is the reduction in the number of people coming to visit the Shows. The committee needs to consider doing much</p>	

	<p>more publicity including banners, newspapers, radio, and spreading the publicity further afield.</p> <p>The committee thanked Malcolm for all his work as Treasurer.</p>	
4	<p><b>Secretary's Report – Lorraine Fitzgerald</b></p> <p>“I think those present at the AGM last year left wondering what the new year would bring to our Society. Fortunately four people come forward willing to join the committee – Rita as Treasurer, Anna as Secretary and Katie and Marion. They will inevitably change things, this is always necessary, and it is with new ideas that things can move on for the better. Overall we had a very successful year. From memory the Spring Show, although down on entries (because of the cold weather), was still a success and I am sure that, after the exhaustion of running it, we had a good time. Again our Summer Show was memorable with record numbers of entries, although slightly less foot fall (we think that time because of the heat!). In between these events we had our talks (thanks Margaret) and of course the Summer Fair which was blessed with dry weather and the whole village and visitors enjoyed themselves. We are still ‘missing’ a Chairperson, however we seem to manage and, together with all our extra helpers and judges I think we do a good job. My thanks to you all and good luck to the new members.”</p> <p>The committee thanked Lorraine for all her work as Secretary.</p>	
5	<p><b>Appointment of officers to the committee</b></p> <p><u>Chairman</u> – no-one put themselves forward to stand as Chairman. The question was asked what the Chairman's role entails. The response was that in the past the Chairman had been the face of the Society, had kept the committee's activities ticking over and reminded members what needed doing. The Chairman had also organised the summer trip. The question was asked whether the bank requires the Society to have a Chairman. Rita had discussed it with the bank and there isn't a requirement as long as all signatories are members of the committee. The Society will continue without a Chairman.</p> <p><u>Treasurer</u> – Malcolm Appleton proposed Rita Swindells. Seconded by Lorraine Fitzgerald. Approved.</p> <p><u>Secretary</u> – Lorraine Fitzgerald proposed Anna Toeman. Seconded by Chris Fitzgerald. Approved.</p> <p>Current signatories are Malcolm Appleton and Chris Fitzgerald. Malcolm Appleton will stand down as a signatory. Chris Fitzgerald is happy to remain as a signatory. Rita Swindells and Anna Toeman will become signatories. To do so they need to present themselves and their ID at the bank – they will arrange to do this.</p>	RS/AT
6	<p><b>Formation of new committee</b></p> <p>*Malcolm and Sue Appleton are both standing down from the committee.</p> <p>*All other current members are happy to remain on the committee. New members since the last AGM are Katie Bourn and Marion Phipps.</p> <p>*No new members came forward at this meeting.</p> <p>*The committee totals 16 members.</p>	
7	<p><b>AOB – from the agenda</b></p> <p><u>Subscription rates</u>: At a previous AGM Malcolm had proposed charging members a single subscription rate of £5. The committee had rejected this proposal on the grounds that some members like to be Patrons and have their name in the summer show schedule. The topic had been raised again at the committee meeting in September and a decision deferred until this AGM. It was asked what benefits there are to be a member of the Society – the only one that could readily be identified is free entry to the shows, but a number of people felt that many members are happy to be giving a financial contribution to the Society. However, the Society is affiliated to the RHS and this should bring benefits to the membership, but these have never been explored. Anna offered to follow up. The Society is also affiliated to Somerset Federation of Gardening Clubs. Through this we have public liability insurance and cups insurance. Again there may be benefits to our members which need to be explored. Anna will follow up.</p> <p>Paul proposed raising the Patrons subscription to £6 and leaving the members subscription unchanged at £3. After discussion this proposal was approved.</p> <p><u>Representative on Village Hall committee</u>: Anna explained that she had agreed to take over from Sue as the Society's representative but asked if there was anyone else who would like to</p>	AT AT RS

<p>take on the role. No one put themselves forward so Anna will become the VH representative.</p> <p><u>Guidelines for show stewards:</u> Peter Leather had prepared draft guidelines which he had circulated prior to this meeting. The only point raised for discussion was where committee members should go during judging if they are not involved as stewards. After discussion it was suggested the Meeting Rooms could be made available and refreshments provided. This was agreed. The guidelines were formally accepted and will be issued to committee members.</p> <p><u>Gift for Michael Hickson:</u> It had been agreed that we would mark his 50<sup>th</sup> year as a judge in Porlock with an ornamental daffodil from Allerford Forge. Lorraine will follow up.</p> <p><u>Show schedules:</u> After the Spring Show the committee had discussed providing details of narcissus classification in the show schedule. Peter had prepared a flyer which met with everyone's approval so this will be included as an insert in the new schedule. Anna asked that if there are any suggestions for the new schedules please could they be sent to her prior to the sub-committee meeting on 26<sup>th</sup> November.</p> <p><u>Newsletter:</u> At present there is one newsletter sent to members with their show schedules. Anna is happy to write the newsletter but asked if anyone had anything they wished to include please could they email it to her. There was some discussion about having more frequent newsletters. Printing and distribution could be costly but volunteers were forthcoming who are happy to deliver by hand so this may well be worth pursuing. It was asked how many members have email addresses. Malcolm responded that about half have provided addresses so this might be another avenue to explore. The Society features in the Porlock Vale Newsletter every quarter.</p> <p><u>Delivering/posting schedules:</u> Volunteers came forward to cover the rounds previously done by Sue and Malcolm, and those done by post. The list of distributors will be clarified shortly.</p> <p><u>Show rosettes:</u> Sue offered to provide Anna with samples to make sure the new ones have the desired wording on them.</p> <p><u>Community involvement/donations:</u> Last year the Society had been asked, by the Orchard Group, to contribute to the purchase of wildflower seeds/plants. This was agreed but the payment had never been made. It was agreed to put Ben Wildig of the Orchard Group in touch with Rita so that the donation could be made.</p> <p><u>Members' social event:</u> After discussion it was agreed to hold a coffee morning one Saturday in February, with a seed swap element for those interested. Anna will follow up. It was suggested that there could be a second event in the summer where people could bring their plants along for identification – Lin, Betty, Win and Peter D all expressed an interest in being on the "panel". This will be followed up next year.</p> <p><u>Suggestions for talks:</u> It was agreed that it should be possible to hold more talks, demonstrations and workshops, particularly if committee members are prepared to lead them. Suggestions included flower arranging by Jackie Growden, lily bulb planting by Lorraine, willow wreaths by Lorraine, bee keeping by Don Fitzgerald, wild foraging by Katie, propagation by Peter Day, fungal foray by a National Trust guide. These will be followed up with Margaret.</p> <p><u>Suggestions for garden visits:</u> The Society had not organised a garden visit for some years largely because of the difficulty of filling a coach. It was agreed to ask members at the coffee morning if they would a) be interested in doing a visit and b) would be prepared to commit themselves so that a trip could be organised. Suggestions from the committee included Floodlit Westonbirt, Floodlit Hestercombe, Forde Abbey, Bicton and the Rare Plants Fair and Bishop's Palace at Wells. Highgrove was discussed but a request made six years ago was turned down on the grounds that the Society had already been once.</p> <p><u>Gardeners' Question Time:</u> Anna proposed applying to host a recording of GQT. This was agreed. Anna will follow up.</p>	<p>PL</p> <p>LF</p> <p>PL</p> <p>COM</p> <p>COM</p> <p>AT</p> <p>SA/AT</p> <p>AT</p> <p>AT</p> <p>AT</p> <p>AT</p> <p>AT</p> <p>AT</p>
<p><b>Other business</b></p> <p>*Lita asked what the aims and ambitions of the Society are. Lorraine responded that these are formally laid out in the Constitution which was agreed in 2009 and circulated to all committee members at the time. If anyone would like a copy please ask.</p> <p>*It was suggested that the Society could become a charity but it was argued that this might limit our activities, particularly in making donations to local causes. In the past the Society has given contributions or help to Dovery Museum, St Dubricius School, the Orchard Group and West Somerset College, amongst others. During the past few years events have not been</p>	<p>COM</p>

<p>making sufficient money to build up the reserves in the bank so we have to be a bit cautious about expenditure, but it was agreed that it is important to help local organisations.</p> <p>*There was a general discussion about promoting the Society and how important it is to explain what we are about and what events we are putting on in a lively and accessible way. Publicity generally needs to be improved. The Society has a website and a Facebook page which need regular updating with events and there are plenty of publicity opportunities to explore including new locations for event posters, new opportunities for promoting events such as the Porlock websites, West Somerset College, and local accommodation providers. Katie has been working on some of these for the talks.</p> <p>*It was agreed to update the banners to something more appealing than the current yellow one. Anna to follow up with Chris Miles regarding suitable companies to investigate.</p> <p>*Paul asked whether the Society had ever put together a seed order on behalf of its members, as the Allotment Society does, and other horticultural societies do. The response was no but it was certainly something that could be investigated. Paul agreed to look into what the Society would have to do. It was asked whether we could combine with the Allotment Society to do this, or at least develop closer ties with them. Paul reported that he had proposed closer ties at their AGM but it had been rejected on the grounds that the two societies have quite different purposes.</p> <p>*Prior to the meeting Anna had sent round an invitation that had been received from Minehead and District Gardeners' Association for two of our committee members, and their partners, to attend their Christmas do. Lin and Katie had already indicated that they wished to go, but without partners, and asked if anyone else would be interested. Betty would like to go. Anna will respond on their behalf.</p> <p>*Rita asked whether it would be possible to preface any subject on an email with the letters PHS so that it is clear that it is coming from the Horticultural Society. This was agreed.</p> <p>The meeting ended with a vote of thanks and presentation of gifts to Sue, Malcolm and Lorraine.</p>	<p>AT</p> <p>PM</p> <p>AT</p> <p><b>COM</b></p>
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Anna Toeman, Secretary

Approval of minutes (to take place at the 2014 AGM) –

Proposed: .....

Seconded: .....