



Aldbury Garden Club AGM

Sunday 12th March 2023 at 3.30pm in the Memorial Hall

Draft Agenda

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of 2022 meeting
3. Matters arising
4. Adoption of reports
 - Chair's report
 - Secretary's report
 - Treasurer's report
5. Resignation of committee
6. Election of committee (3 officers and committee members)
7. Agenda items from members
8. Any other business

Aldbury Garden Club AGM Minutes**

Sunday 29th May 2022 at 4pm in the Memorial Hall

Club Officers

Chair – Tess Alps

Honorary Secretary – Rachael MacRae

Honorary Treasurer – Linda Di Mizio

Allotment Representative – Phil Fido

Committee Member – Chris Fido

Committee Member – Annie Eggar

Chair called the meeting to order, welcomed those present and thanked them for attending.

Apologies for Absence were received from:

Sally Bassett, Jackie Dyett, Anna Hirst, Bill Page, Heather Tyldesley, Jo Stone, Kim Twyman, Julia Kent, Dot O’Gorman, Barbara Gunter-Jones, John Wright, Jean Neill, Clare Juniper, Duncan Eggar

Minutes of 2021 AGM

Minutes were approved with an addendum confirming the previously omitted note that Rod Allsworth had resigned from the committee in late 2020.

Matters Arising

- 1 Keith Emmerson asked if the club had pursued any of the spending ideas proposed by members at the 2021 AGM. The Chair responded that this would be covered in the Officers’ Reports, agenda item 5.
- 2 Following last year’s proposal from Chris Fido that all those who have been members of the club for 40 years or more should be eligible to become honorary members, the Chair announced that the club would be awarding honorary membership to Joan Wright, John Wright, Brian Brightman, Pat Quigg, Mary Whittell and Shirley Chamney. She encouraged people to come forward if they qualify or for others to suggest them.

Ratification of name change and formal adoption of the revised constitution

In December 2021, Aldbury Parish Council (APC) confirmed that they no longer wanted Aldbury Garden Club and Allotment Association to have any formal involvement with the allotments. Consequently, club members were asked (by email or letter) if they would be happy for the club to revert to being called Aldbury Garden Club (AGC), particularly as the committee was about to develop a web presence. 45 members responded, 44 agreeing and one disagreeing. Hence, revisions to the Constitution have been proposed to reflect this new situation, plus the addition of online banking.

Rod Allsworth expressed concern that this leaves allotment-holders in a vulnerable position. The Chair assured him that AGC will still represent their views to the APC if asked to by allotment-holders who are members of the club.

The revised constitution was adopted by 22 votes to 2, including those members who were unable to attend the meeting but had expressed their preferences in advance by email.

Officers' reports

The three written reports including final accounts for 2021 had been circulated prior to the meeting and can also be read on the website.

The Hon Sec added that 3 more members had joined the club.

The Hon Treasurer had written an additional interim report for 2022 and this too can be read on the website.

All three reports were unanimously adopted by a show of hands.

Resignation of Committee

The Committee all resigned.

Election of committee (3 officers and committee members)

Chair

Tess Alps Proposed by Tess Alps Seconded by Barbara Gunter-Jones

Honorary Secretary

Rachael MacRae Proposed by Julia Kent Seconded by Juanita Mann

Honorary Treasurer

Linda Di Mizio Proposed by Linda Di Mizio Seconded by Sylvia Wren

Committee member

Chris Fido Proposed by Keith Emmerson Seconded by Jean Emmerson

Committee member

Annie Eggar Proposed by Alex Pearce Seconded by Clare Juniper

The above volunteers were unanimously voted in by a show of hands and from votes previously submitted by email. There remain 2 positions open on the committee if any members wish to get more involved which would be very welcome.

Following ratification of our name change and adoption of the revised constitution (see above), an allotment representative is no longer needed on the committee and Phil Fido stood down.

Shows

The committee sought the views of members on shows. Chair said that the club shows are a traditional part of Aldbury village calendar of events, but they cost the club a lot of money to stage. Only 13 people exhibited in April out of a club membership of 112. AGC wants to

be sure that members think the expenditure is worth it, particularly for the smaller spring show. The Treasurer outlined what the major show costs are: hall hire, judges' fees, and cup engraving.

Ted Bianco asked why the judges are paid for their services. The Chair responded that some judges sometimes waive their fees and that one (the RHS judge) lives a considerable distance away so his fee would little more than cover his transport costs.

Alex Pearce raised the point that now the club has an online presence we can market the shows much more effectively.

The Chair asked if there is anything the club can do to make the idea of entering the shows more appealing. Fay Allwood thought that the complexity of the daffodil categories could be off-putting for many. The Chair agreed and said that above the website explanation of daffodil classes and on the schedule itself we could write prominently that the priority is to bring blooms and not worry about what category they fall in to. The committee can help people with that.

Other ideas were classes for tastiest tomato and most fragrant rose. Many were keen on the idea of classes for first submitters or novice classes so that the shows are more welcoming and accessible to all rather than leaning towards members who are more experienced. Show dates vs school holidays were also briefly discussed but these are hard to move because of harvest/flowering seasons.

A broader range of simpler domestic classes was raised as were ways to interest more children and young people. The Chair suspected that shows were not the most appropriate way to try and engage kids. Experience has shown that a dialogue with the school is a surer way to interest children in gardening. In the past, the club has spent considerable money providing the school with seeds and bulbs plus compost and pots, but this was very dependent on the interest of teachers. This will be followed up by Annie Eggar and Angela Phillips once a new head teacher is appointed.

Overriding opinion was that we should let the spring show run for at least another year as COVID may also have played a part in poor participation for 2022. The Chair invited members to email us with any further ideas. The committee will take the suggestions made this afternoon and any others which are forthcoming and see how they can develop them before the next show.

Agenda items from members

None submitted

Any other business

Fay Allwood suggested the idea of a large herb planter in the allotment area for residents to use. If space could be found, the Chair felt this was a good idea but might be more successful if planted directly in the ground as tubs and pots were hard to maintain. We would need to be given a space by the Parish Council. To be investigated.

The Chair said the club has already been invited to take part in a similar initiative - to plant up Tring Station - by Tring in Transition. The approach initially came from West Midland Trains who say that all their stations to Euston have been 'adopted' by the local community, apart from Tring and Kings Langley. The AGC and the Aldbury Sustainability Club are just two of the local organisations to have been invited to contribute ideas and practical help. At an initial meeting, the Chair had promised help from the AGC by way of a planting list and possibly producing some of the plants once agreed. Various bodies were being approached for funding including the Aldbury Parish Council. Given the enthusiasm in the room, the Chair proposed that the club donate up to £200 on plants for the project once we were satisfied with the plan. This was unanimously approved.

Lesley Bianco would like to see a question-and-answer section on our webpages. This is something the committee are already addressing, but we can't use a forum format within the AGC pages so are looking for another solution. The Chair emphasised that any questions from members are always welcome to be submitted to alburygc@gmail.com and we will do our best to answer them.

The Secretary encouraged members to submit articles for the blog, news, and gardening year sections of our webpages.

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

In attendance:

Vimisha Patel, Rose Allen, Annie Eggar, Chris Fido, Tess Alps, Rachael MacRae, Linda Di Mizio, Philip Fido, Juanita Mann, Jill Timms, Alex Pearce, Sue Justice, Janet Joynson, Andy McClarnon, Ann Allsworth, Rod Allsworth, Keith Emmerson, Jean Emmerson, Fay Allwood, Elizabeth Wells, Sylvia Wren, Joan Wright, Shirley Chamney, Ted Bianco, Lesley Bianco

**** See Ratification of name change minute**

Chair: Tess Alps

Signed:

Treasurer: Linda Di Mizio

Signed:

Secretary: Rachael MacRae

Signed:



Aldbury Garden Club 2023 AGM

March 12th at 3.30pm in the Memorial Hall

Chair's report

2022 was a very busy year for the club but a successful one. We developed a logo and website, and acquired an Gmail address with accompanying Drive where we can now safely archive all the club's documents. Huge thanks to all the people who contributed to the website project - writing articles, digging up the history of the club, taking photos etc - but chief amongst these is Paula Anderson who has effectively become our Chief Technology Officer. Please keep contributing ideas and articles; it's your website.

Obviously, we are also indebted to Lucy Carmody, Emma Verity and Jont Cole who developed the village hub in the first place. The club's decision to be part of that hub rather than develop our own stand-alone website was, we believe, the right one, as there is a greater chance of non-members becoming aware of us that way, and the public pages that the club produces hopefully encourages everyone to do more in their gardens, whether AGC members or not. The money we spent was good value from the club's point of view but it also enabled the village to get the hub in the first place.

Alongside our usual activities, we initiated the Members' Open Gardens days, whereby AGC members and their friends can visit other members' gardens (for free) on specified dates. Some very pleasant afternoons took place with a chance to chat to fellow members in a relaxed environment. Thanks to Alex Pearce, Linda di Mizio, Clare and Graham Juniper, and Janet Joynson who all generously opened their gardens, in addition to Tim and me. If there is an appetite to repeat this in 2023, we would welcome some different members opening up their gardens to AGC friends. They don't have to be perfect by the way!

The plant sales are incredibly important to the finances of the club and I hope also promote gardening in the community by offering good value plants. But we should maybe go a bit easier this year rather than flog ourselves to death producing 100s of plants as our finances are in good shape. It's a great pleasure to be able to direct some of this income to worthwhile village projects, like the school's gardening efforts and Tring station's refurbishment and we have just financed the replacement of 4 trees in the Millennium orchard.

But the greatest pleasure of last year was to see the membership reach record numbers – at least in recent times – and also to see so much participation. My thanks go to the very hard-working committee members, Linda, Rachael, Chris and Annie, who have achieved so much this year, including doing battle with the evil Santander Bank. Thanks also to the many other members who lend a hand at the shows, the BBQ and plant sales: Sylvia, Rose, Pat, Juanita, Vim, Anthony and Julia - and of course our long-suffering partners, Phil, Duncan and Tim. We couldn't do what we do without you all.

I am standing down as Chair after 18 months in the role. It was never my desire to be the Chair but I was happy to do it on the understanding that this was very much a caretaker role until we could find someone else willing to stand, which we are now lucky to have. I will still do what I can to support the new Chair, whoever they are, and the Club in general.

Thank you for all your kind words and encouragement over the last 18 months.

Tess



Aldbury Garden Club

AGM 2023

Secretary's report

2022 ended with us having 118 members belonging to 84 households. Some chose not to renew their membership in 2023 (or maybe are just very late payers!), others moved away and newcomers to the village joined us. Today we have a total of 103 members spanning 74 households. A thriving gardening community.

We are particularly proud of our seven honorary lifetime members who have held membership of AGC for 40 consecutive years or more: John and Joan Wright, Brian Brightman, Pat Quigg, Shirley Chamney, Elizabeth Wells and Mary Whittell. Congratulations, and thank you!

Rachael MacRae
Secretary

ALDBURY GARDEN CLUB

Treasurer's report on final accounts for 2022

The club had an active and productive year, which is reflected in an overall increase in both income and expenditure, with expenses exceeding income by £117.90. This included some capital expenditure and costs for new projects, as outlined below.

Income from subscriptions was up on previous years and more tickets were sold for the BBQ than in 2021, but there was a slight fall in total income from the two plant sales compared with a single plant sale the previous year. As members were no longer charged entry fees for the shows, income was limited to amounts raised from raffles and the occasional non-member entry fee. A proportion of the spring show raffle and a separate fund raised on the day were donated to the Disasters Emergency Committee fund for Ukraine.

The club spent more money than in previous years, including a lump sum fee of £200 for website hosting for three years, which won't be due for payment again until 2025. Expenditure on the BBQ slightly exceeded income. Donations were given to the fund for Ukraine and to the school in the form of bulbs. Some equipment was purchased, including two hanging banners to advertise plant sales and shows, boxes to store club records and food covers for domestic entries at the shows. Some general costs increased, including hire of the hall, engraving of cups and trophies and printing costs to include the re-introduction of membership cards.

In November the club's current bank account was moved to Metro Bank following the closure of the Santander account.

The club continues to hold substantial reserves, at the end of the year totalling £2869.49.

Linda Di Mizio
Hon Treasurer



Aldbury Garden Club AGM Minutes

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Club Officers

Chair – Tess Alps

Honorary Secretary – Rachael MacRae

Honorary Treasurer – Linda Di Mizio

Committee Member – Chris Fido

Committee Member – Annie Eggar

Chair called the meeting to order, welcomed those present, thanked them for attending and confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

Apologies for Absence were received from:

Julia Kent, Barbara Gunter-Jones, Peter and Judi Moore, Elizabeth wells, Natalie Gervaise-Jones, Clare Juniper, Janet Joynson, Dot O’Gorman, Jean and Keith Emmerson, Jackie Dyett, Sylvia Wren, Andy and Di McClarnon, Caroline Ellwood, Jean Neill, John and Joan Wright, Duncan Eggar, Paula Anderson, Jill Timms and Lucy Carmody.

Minutes of 2022 AGM

The minutes were approved by those present.

Matters Arising

- 1 Novice categories in the Summer show had not proved to be particularly popular, but the tastiest tomato and most fragrant rose were. For the forthcoming Spring show, domestic classes have been simplified as has the Eric Moss Daffodil Challenge Cup.
- 2 The new school head is interested in gardening projects for the children and we hope to do more with them this year. Annie Eggar is our main school liaison.
- 3 Tring in Transition has not yet claimed their £200 donation from AGC to help plant up Tring Station. Following the appointment of a new project leader, we are hopeful that this will move forwards.
- 4 Elizabeth Wells was congratulated on her 40 years of honorary membership in her absence, and the chair encouraged members to nominate anyone else they knew who had achieved 4 decades of continuous AGC membership.

Officers’ reports

The three written reports including final accounts for 2022 had been circulated prior to the meeting and can also be read on the website.

All three reports were unanimously adopted by a show of hands.



Resignation of Committee

The Committee all resigned. The Chair warmly thanked Chris Fido for the many years she has tirelessly served the garden club.

Election of committee (3 officers and 4 committee members)

<i>Name</i>	<i>Position</i>	<i>Proposed by</i>	<i>Seconded by</i>
Rachael MacRae	Chair	Tess Alps	Julia Kent
Tess Alps	Honorary Secretary	Barbara Gunter-Jones	Keith Emmerson
Linda Di Mizio	Honorary Treasurer	Chris Fido	Sylvia Wren
Annie Eggar	Committee Member	Jill Timms	Rachael MacRae
Sue Justice	Committee Member	Natalie Gervaise-Jones	Rachael MacRae
Paula Anderson	Committee Member	Clare Juniper	Annie Eggar
Ted Bianco	Committee Member	Lucy Carmody	Tess Alps

The above volunteers were unanimously voted in by a show of hands and from votes previously submitted by email.

Agenda items from members

None submitted.

Any other business

Alex Pearce was enthusiastic about the RHS discount card. AGC is affiliated to the RHS, and as part of our membership we have been given a discount card which entitles any member (plus 1 guest) to visit any RHS garden in 2023 with a 50% entry fee discount. The card can be used as many times as we like across 2023 so hopefully many AGC members will be able to take advantage of this.

General opinion was that open gardens were enjoyable days for members and that we should aim to do this again in 2023.

The outgoing secretary issued another plea for blog articles from members. These can be about literally anything gardening related.



Feedback from the recent Cottage Gardens talk in Wigginton was not favourable, but the outgoing chair thought that maybe the Sustainable Community committee and the AGC could combine to hire a speaker on sustainable gardening.

Plant sales are likely to remain cash only as a card reader and associated costs are thought to be prohibitive. Since the meeting, the treasurer has investigated and confirmed this.

The Chair thanked members for their attendance and closed the meeting.

In attendance:

Tess Alps, Annie Eggar, Rachael MacRae, Linda Di Mizio, Chris Fido, Alex Pearce, Shirley Chamney, Fay Allwood, Rose Allen, Ann and Rod Allsworth, Ted Bianco, Sue Justice, Alison Bateson and Rosemary Hollinghurst.

Chair: Tess Alps

Signed:

Treasurer: Linda Di Mizio

Signed:

Secretary: Rachael MacRae

Signed: