

# FRIENDS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDENS

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 10th November 2022 at 2pm in the Stables.

The meeting commenced at 2pm.

## **PRESENT;**

Lesley Crowcroft, Chris Groom, Irene Groom, Susan Toms, Margaret Ray, Malcolm Penny, Catherine Dann, Liz Gambier, Christine Lake, Paul Lake, Christine Wallace, Jo Oliver, Janet Green, Richard Doughty, Tony Swan, Gerry Edwards, Audrey Newell, Joan Butfield

## **APOLOGIES;**

Tony and Rosemary Bucksey, Steve and Sue Place, Keith Barnard, David Pitt, Denise Read, Christine Gregory, Sue Smales, Gill Peter

## **MINUTES OF 17TH AUGUST 2021**

Unanimously agreed.

## **MATTERS ARISING**

There were no matters arising

## **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Presented by MP, Deputy Treasurer

Copies of the Audited Financial Report for the year 2021-2022 ending 30th April 2022 prepared by Steve Duun our Hon.Auditor are available to attendees at the AGM for comment.

During the year our bankers, HSBC introduced charges, monthly fee for maintaining the account and also charging extra for every transaction made. It was therefore decided to change banks if possible so as to maintain free banking.

The accounts with HSBC were closed and reopened with NatWest last December. Nat West provide free banking for charities and community organisations provided either the Chairman or Treasurer already bank with them.

The HSBC Account for the Eastcote Conservation Panel was also closed and reopened as an element of the FEHG new NatWest Account.

Also a Community Savings Reserve Account has been opened with Nat West. We now have two accounts with NatWest, a Current Account and Savings Reserve Account. Within the Current Account we have four elements namely:-

General Fund. Day to day expenditure  
Archive/Publications.  
Craft Group.  
Eastcote Conservation Panel.

To update the meeting as to our financial position on the 1st November 2022 the balances of the various elements are as follow:-

General Fund	£6,590.91
Archive/Publications	£5,236.25
Craft Group	£820.90
Eastcote Conservation Panel	£489.52
Community Savings Reserve	£5,020.50

The General Fund includes the donations for Jenny Gurdon's memorial tree and the money raised at the successful Jubilee Picnic.

I thank Malcolm, Deputy Treasurer for presenting the report in my absence.

Keith Barnard Treasurer

In response to a query concerning ward budget monies from RD, LC clarified that this was money awarded to FEHG from the Councillors who are allocated a sum of money for worthy local causes.

Proposed CG; Seconded RD

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

I make no apologies for the number of reports to be presented to this meeting. The Committee and other members of FEHG work so hard throughout the year to make FEHG such a resounding success. Some of you will not realize how much work goes on behind the scenes, to keep EHG to such high standards. To all of your excellent Committee and other leaders, we cannot thank you enough for the exceptional work you have all carried out during the last year.

We have received full support from the Mayor of Hillingdon Cllr. Becky Haggar. The Eastcote Ward Councillors have been very generous helping to fund the Jubilee Seat and the replanting of the Wild Orchard.

Reduction of funding to the Green Spaces department has meant Borough wide cut backs. Here, at EHG, we have become 'de facto' park managers. Coping with everything, from blocked sewers, to fallen trees.

The 2023 calendar has been a sell out success, thank to Paul Lake for organizing and to FEHG members who submitted some excellent photos. We now need photos for the 2024 edition which will soon be on the drawing board. Please be out and about the gardens with your cameras.

This year we were able to hold our Volunteers lunch in the Stables. We had not been able to hold this event because of Covid. It was a very happy occasion, with the opportunity for the Chairman to congratulate everyone on the London in Bloom successes and to present a new award of Star Volunteer. It was a difficult choice, so many bright stars amongst you all, but the brightest, there were two, Keith & Malcolm, both spend so much time at EHG outside of the regular sessions, dealing with workmen, being on call they deserve recognition. The Mayor attended the lunch and presented the awards.

It was possible to open the Dovecote to the public, it is hoped that next year the Dovecote will be opened on the Book/Plant/Craft sale days. Susan Toms is the organiser, our thanks to Susan and her helpers.

Long Meadow, Dave Martin has been the lead looking after the meadow, ably assisted by Christine Wallace, Dave Plummer and Richard Doughty and others. Steve and Sue Place continued the Butterfly recording this year. After 10 years of recording and reporting they

both wish to retire. During those 10 years they have submitted detailed results and summaries of the rise or decline of the many species found in the meadow. We are most grateful to them both for such dedicated work. Philip Toms and Christine Wallace will continue with the recording in 2024, if anyone would like to join them full help will be given.

Amongst all the good news we have had some sad news as well. Founder member Jenny Gurdon passed away also Madeleine Horsburgh of the Craft Group. They will both be fondly remembered for the wonderful contribution they made to FEHG.

Perhaps one of the most important tasks is serving tea and coffee at break times, these times are much appreciated by us all, a good cuppa, biscuits and a gossip are enjoyed by everyone. To our 'Tea ladies' Margaret Ray and Audrey Newell, we love and appreciate you both.

Lesley Crowcroft - Chairman

### **Lib report.**

The results for the 2022 entry into London in Bloom are truly magnificent. Considering the extra work now undertaken by FEHG because of the Council cut backs, the whole of the gardens were rated as brilliant.

The entries are judged on various aspects, cleanliness, layout, accessibility, good horticultural practice, choice of planting, sustainability, wildlife etc.

Special note must be made that the entry for Walled Garden received Gold and Category Winner, this means we working against professional gardeners, there were 14 entries in this section, we came out tops!!

Gold awards for the Park of the Year category and Our Community, Level 5 – Outstanding for Its Your Neighbourhood.

We were also awarded the RHS National Certificate of Distinction, one of 5 awarded to the Volunteer Groups in the London area. There were 132 groups taking part in the volunteer entries.

The Judge made many complimentary remarks about the gardens including calling the Prairie bed 'Stunning'. Thanks to Sue Smales and her helpers for keeping the bed to such a high standard.

Lesley Crowcroft

### **Garden Report**

- Firstly, a big vote of thanks to all, working in all weathers, all year round, to keep EHG to such a high standard, as proved by our London in Bloom results, for so many to enjoy. This is definitely a Labour of Love.

New additions.

- The pathway around the top of the garden has opened up new vistas for visitors, instead of the muddy mess that was present every time we had heavy rain, Paul Richards former Head of Green Spaces had this path installed as one of his last projects at LBH. Paul was a great supporter of the Gardens and will be missed.

- New seats, one was donated by Joan & Terry Butfield at the top of the Jubilee Orchard. Another is currently in the pipe line. The Jubilee seat around the weeping ash on the site of the former Eastcote House, installed for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee has been very welcome. This project was the brainchild of Chris Groom, the Ward Councillors funded the seat from the Ward Budget.
- Also, to celebrate the Jubilee a new bed was installed near to the Field End Road entrance. With a centre piece of a flowering cherry 'Royal Burgundy'
- This year we also had a wild flower meadow planted opposite the Jubilee bed. This was really eye catching and a hit with visitors. Our thanks go to Dragana Knezevic Countryside Conservation Officer LBH. We are hoping that we can have this re-seeded for next year.
- The traditional art of hedge laying came to EHG. Geoffrey Pitt, brother of David FEHG member visited from Devon to train those interested volunteers in the art of hedge laying. The hazel hedge at the rear of the Old Orchard was the chosen hedge.
- Geoffrey, a prize winner hedge layer gave his expertise free, it was an enjoyable week a vote of thanks to Geoffrey and to David for arranging the training session.

#### Outstanding repairs to the Grade II listed buildings.

- Repair work to the Garden Walls is in progress. It has been necessary to drastically cutback many of the roses and other climbing plants to free up the sites in need of most attention.
- Changes for the Dovecote are now proceeding, it is hoped that they will be carried out in early 2023. These will include the removal of the ugly concrete floor installed in the 1980s with a return to existing brick floor which is underneath the concrete. Repair to wood work within the Dovecote that has rot and in some cases woodworm infestation. All timbers will be checked and treated where necessary. Work is also needed on the gutters and the soak away
- The damp in the stables walls will also be investigated with a view to removing the cause. Gary Penticost, Director of Operational Assets, LBH, has visited EHG and noted these works and is pushing them forward, for which we are very thankful.

#### Uses of the park and ASB

There have been several instances recently of misuse of the gardens. These are as follows:

- Sally Coster of South Ruislip Community Association holds a meeting every Sunday at EHG for a group called A Stand in the Park. This group is an anti vax and lockdown group, they say that they are standing for freedom against oppression, Possibly they should go to a park in Moscow! She has recently twice tried to use the name of the Sir Simon Milton Foundation who work for the elderly, as a platform to give this group credibility. Both times the Chairman of FEHG has contacted the foundation and the posts have been removed.
- In June this year Sally Coster teamed up with Jam for Freedom. This group gives impromptu pop concerts in parks. They are backed by the likes of Piers Corbyn etc. Members of FEHG tried to have it stopped as permission had not been sought from

the council, no safeguards were in place. We did achieve a Police presence, who eventually did shut it down the event once it started to become too rowdy. We are monitoring this situation for anymore possible incursions by this group.

- Incursion of motorbikes around the park. FEHG led the action to have the Police take action. Eventually, with evidence supplied by FEHG and CCTV footage supplied by Fiona Sweet LBH these people were traced and found mainly to be drug dealers with lack of insurance etc as well.
- Just before the Jubilee Picnic there was graffiti on the outside of the north wall of the gardens. Because of the extra Bank Holidays it was not possible to have this removed before the Picnic, so we hung a flag over it for the day. The graffiti was removed the day after the Bank holidays. Our thanks to LBH for prompt action.
- The gardens have also been used in a positive way. Susan Dalloe, LBH Curator, has arranged a Herbal Tea party, Mindfulness walks and story telling for the little ones given by the Library Service. All have been over subscribed.

Future works.

There are only minor new works planned for the forthcoming year.

- Planting a tree for the Coronation of King Charles
- Replanting some trees the Wild Orchard.
- Planting a tree for Jenny Gurdon
- Planting of two donated roses in the walled garden.

Lesley Crowcroft

### **Plant and second hand book sales**

We were not able to hold as many sales as we had intended this year. August was cancelled because of the extreme heat. September which would have been part of the Heritage Day was cancelled because of the passing of the Queen.

We held 5 book sales and 3 plant sales, for the October sale the Craft group held a sale in the stables. This was a great success, for next year depending on the availability of the Stables the Craft group will hold sales at the same time as the book and plant sales in the Gardeners' Yard. The Dovecote will open at the same time.

At the April sale FEHG hosted the start of the Classic Car season, 'Drive it Day' this was for car club members only. The Car clubs made a donation to FEHG, with some sales of our publications these sale days made a total in excess of £1,800.

On plant sale days we were joined by Eastcote Horticultural Society, they were selling different plants and bulbs to us, one group complimented the other both having very successful days.

To the dedicated volunteers, Books- Sue Smales who organizes all the books throughout the year, Margaret Ray, Dave Plummer and Linda Wells, Plants-Lesley Crowcroft, Jo Oliver, Denise Read and Sue Francis thank you.

Not forgetting all the gardeners who tend the plants to make it possible for us to have a surplus to sell on.

Lesley Crowcroft

## **Hinman Shield**

This award aimed at young people groups was started in 1980 by Sheila Liberty and Margaret Ward Dyer. Named after Margaret's parents, George and Margaret Hinman, who, in the 1930s, saved Long Meadow and Eastcote House from being developed as part of the Eastcote Park Estate.

This year the Shield is being awarded to the 4<sup>th</sup> Eastcote Scout Group, for their work at the gardens and support at the Picnic. It was to have been given at the Heritage Day, which was cancelled it will now be awarded at the tree Dressing November 26<sup>th</sup>.

We need to know of other groups, schools, youth groups, uniformed groups in the local area who help the community. Please let the Chairman know of any groups' activities that could be considered for the award.

Lesley Crowcroft

## **YOUNG PEOPLE'S VISITS**

The 4th Eastcote Scout Group Beaver colonies visited EHG this year. Beavers are aged 6-8, boys and girls.

At the end of May the Monday group came and did a fun quiz for half an hour then spent another 30 minutes washing down the green benches and metal gates in the walled garden. Rinsing wasn't necessary as the rain arrived but this did not stop the enthusiastic young people washing anything they could find. This was a great help just the week before the Jubilee picnic.

Also in September we hosted the Wednesday Beavers run by Liz Gambier's daughter, Cathy.

They did a great job, firstly picking up windfall apples in the old orchard and then raking up four wheelbarrow loads of fallen crab apples from the wild fruit orchard.

Again, this was a great help saving the volunteer gardeners' a job.

We look forward to the tree dressing event when the 4th Eastcote Scout Group will be given the Hinman Shield for their Community work.

Malcolm Penny

LC thanked KB MP PL and CL for sorting the Beavers out.

LC also thanked all members of the committee and the leaders for their exceptional work during the year.

## **PICNIC**

The jubilee fete and picnic was held on 4<sup>th</sup> June 2022 to coincide with the Queen's 70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee celebrations and was considered by most to be a great success.

The numbers attending exceeded the numbers at previous events and the total profit was a record for this summer event. Many visitors' stalls reported excellent turnover and after the event many compliments were received from stall holders and the public.

The Dog Show drew record numbers as did the Tug of War, Ferrett Racing and the Climbing Wall. The Climbing Wall was provided by the local scouts.

There were no significant organisational problems despite the increased number of visitors on the day. Due to the number of visitors around the Cafe area signage to the toilets and other facilities were not always clearly visible causing some confusion, but this can be rectified for any future events.

The Ice Cream seller was very happy with his day as he had long queues all day causing him to run out of certain products, even after the event had closed people were still queuing to buy what he had left.

Publicity was clearly effective and although one can never know which aspect of publicity is the most effective it is felt that the tie up with a local estate agent was well worthwhile. They paid for the large colourful banners, notice boards around the site and at 10 volunteers' houses, plus a food hamper for the raffle. Advertising of the event locally and on social media is still very important.

Both bands i.e. Jazzology and Tony Oliver Quartet were well received with many visitors sitting to listen to the bands.

Nearly 70 volunteers helped on the day with lots of volunteers before the event assisting with preparation and on the Friday helping with the setting up.

Amongst the volunteers there were some real stars who we should probably be naming but to save them the embarrassment Keith and I would just like to give a huge thankyou to all the volunteers who helped, before and on the day, for all their hard work. THANKS.

Chris Groom & Keith Barnard

## **HERITAGE DAY/CLASSIC CAR RALLY**

It was decided on Friday 9th September that because of the death of Queen Elizabeth 11 the previous day, it would not be appropriate to go ahead with our planned Classic Cars and Heritage Day on Sunday 11th September. We had already been informed that the Council would not now be participating in the event. This meant that the Mayor would not attend to present the community awards and neither would Susan Dalloe be there with the display of archaeological finds from the Eastcote House Gardens digs. Accordingly all the posters, signs and banners on site were taken down and we replaced them with posters saying the event had been cancelled. All the helpers, groups and organisations involved were notified. Keith contacted all the car clubs due to take part, namely, Watford Classic Car Club, Uxbridge Classic Car Club and Jaguar Enthusiasts Car Club. To make sure he came down to the site on Sunday morning. It was fortunate that he did as some classic car owners still came hoping to participate even though they were not registered for this event.

The following had been organised for the event:

- Plant Sale
- Second hand book sale
- Craft stall
- Publications
- Raffle
- Tea Tent
- Cards
- RNELHS table in the Stables.

British Legion - outside - invited but no response  
Eastcote Horticultural Society - outside  
Pinner Flower Lovers' Group - outside  
Two music groups to play two sessions each - Jazzology and Stumbling Block  
Ice Cream Van  
Dovecote to open

As a postscript we re-arranged the following for Saturday 8th October 11am-2pm:

Plant Sale  
Second Hand Book sale  
Craft sale  
Dovecote open

It proved very successful and well worth doing

Susan Toms

## **TREE DRESSING**

### **Last year's Tree-Dressing - Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> November 2021**

Saturday morning began with cold and rain (courtesy of Storm Arwen), but by the time the children and families arrived for our annual tree-dressing it had stopped! Three schools – Warrender Primary, Coteford Infants and Lady Bankes Primary – all brought choirs and entertained us with festive songs. The Worshipful the Mayor of Hillingdon, Cllr. Roy Chandal, accompanied by Catherine Dann, led the dressing of the tree.

Having been unable to hold the ceremony in 2020, the many children and families in attendance made sure this was a very special community event. The Stables looked festive, and the room was full of beautiful crafts and tea and cakes for sale. The raffle and Teddy Bear Hunt made sure there was plenty to do.

A very big thank you to everyone who helped before, during and after the event to make it such a success: our tea stall helpers, our talented craft team, raffle sellers, Teddy Hunt organisers, outdoor stewards and Audrey on the baubles!

Not only did our historic yew tree benefit from hundreds of Christmas decorations on the day – over the following weeks, dog-walkers and other members of the public added plenty more baubles when they visited the Gardens.

### **This year's Tree-Dressing - Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> November 2022**

All is in hand:

- The Stables are booked from 12:00 midday
- The Mayor's attendance is confirmed
- I have contacted schools – those who have committed to attend are:
  - o Warrender Primary School
  - o Coteford Infant School
  - o Field End Infant School
  - o Grangewood Special School (a first this year)
- 4<sup>th</sup> Eastcote Beavers are also attending, but will not be singing
- Raffle, refreshments, baubles, crafts and the Teddy Bear Hunt are all organised
- The Community Shield and the Hinman Shield will be presented after the singing

Paul & Christine Lake

**WEB SITE**



In summer 2021, after many years' service, Trevor Dixon decided to step down from his role as Webmaster. I had been his second-in-command for some time, and so I stepped up to take on the role.

The website had been hosted by a company called Weebly: we used the cost-free "no frills" package, which offers a very basic service. I was very grateful that Trevor continued to provide advice as needed, but over time a number of issues arose:

- It proved difficult to create new tabs and webpages
- Uploading new content was slow and cumbersome
- I could not find out where "Contact Us" messages were going, so I was unable to answer people's requests
- The narrow screen format was the wrong format for modern screens, especially tablets and smartphones (one of many snags was that new colour content converted to black and white when viewed on phones...)

For support and advice, I contacted a long-standing friend and colleague, Dave Kidner – former headteacher of Newnham Junior School, he went on to establish the Hillingdon Schools' Learning Grid, and now runs GX Computers, a tech support and repair company.

Dave began by getting to grips with the Weebly site, but soon suggested that a better option would be to create a new website. As a result, he built a brand new website for us: [eastcotehousegardens.org.uk](http://eastcotehousegardens.org.uk). In my opinion, the new site is a great improvement on the previous one – full screen, bright and cheerful, with easy navigation through the numerous webpages. Feedback from other committee members has been largely very positive: as with any transfer of this nature, there were some initial teething troubles, but I liaised closely with Lesley to develop a snagging list, and all issues were addressed.

We are fortunate that Dave is happy to donate his services to us at no cost. Unlike many websites, ours has a huge amount of content built up over many years – photos of events, wildlife information, activity trails, publications, committee minutes, etc. – some going back as far as 2010. Dave spent many hours transferring all this data into a clear, user-friendly format. Whilst I have the title Webmaster, Dave is ultimately the person who uploads any new information and troubleshoots the site. I welcome any feedback regarding the website, and I would ask the meeting to record its thanks to Dave Kidner for his hard work, his technical skills and his continuing efforts on our behalf.

### **Performance statistics – August & September 2022**

The new website has access to a range of statistical data provided each month by Google. Headlines for August and September are as follows.

#### **Total clicks**

- August: 691 clicks on the website (equivalent to more than 22 clicks per day)
- September: 1150 clicks (equivalent to more than 38 clicks per day)

#### **Top pages**

- Homepage: clicks August – 530 clicks; September – 687 clicks
- Diary: August – 142 clicks; September – 444 clicks
- Contact Us: August – 18 clicks; September – 15 clicks  
(NB: most messages on Contact Us are requests to book the Stables for parties – despite the fact that the Contact Us page clearly states (twice!) that all enquiries for bookings must be directed to the London Borough of Hillingdon...)

NB: this means that no other page achieved more than 18 clicks during August or 15 in September.

#### **Devices used**

- Mobile: August – 541 (78%); September – 849 (74%)
- Desktop: August – 116 (17%); September – 242 (21%)

- Tablet: August – 34 (5%); September – 57 (5%)

The Weebly site was not suited to phones – in particular, numerous items I uploaded in full colour came out black and white on smartphones, and the menu down the left-hand side left limited space for the main content. Consequently, the high proportion of clicks from phones demonstrates the wisdom of switching to a site with good smartphone functionality.

## **Google Search**

(i.e., queries that people have typed into Google)

Most common Google Search queries:

- Eastcote House Gardens: August – 185; September – 313
- EHG café: August – 73; September – 43
- EHG events: August – 24; September – 81

Paul Lake

## **PUBLICATIONS**

Since the previous AGM, sales have been steady across all six of our remaining publications. Whilst the balance sheet looks extremely healthy, there will be printing costs to come. An Eastcote WW11 Commentary is being reprinted as we have sold out. Eastcote House and Gardens: The People and the Place is, subject to minor updating, to be printed for the third time. Finally Eastcote House Uncovered: Including Long Meadow is in advanced state of preparation.

Andy Weller

## **CRAFT GROUP**

The FEHG Craft Group website was updated February 2022 to showcase many of the items created by our talented craft members during lockdown in 2020 and 2021.

This year we created a banner for the Queen's 70<sup>th</sup> Jubilee.

The craft group have stalls at the Picnic, Heritage Day and Tree Dressing events.

At the Picnic, for the first time we ran a free crown-decorating activity to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee. It was planned for children but in addition to boys and girls there were definitely some Dads in there too! It was incredibly successful and so popular we ran out of free crowns and had to sell crafted crowns at £2 each...and we ran out of those by 2pm.

In October we ran a craft and haberdashery stall to coincide with our last book sale. Last year we made £180 from haberdashery alone. This year we made £235 profit on craft and haberdashery, a decent amount considering it wasn't a Heritage day with bands and Classic Cars to draw people in. The sum included £50 from the sale of material and £50 from the sale of donated houseplants.

We plan to have another stall at the Tree Dressing selling winter and Christmas related items but we don't usually raise much money at this event. We will be putting up Christmas decorations in the Stables on 22<sup>nd</sup> November.

Looking ahead, we hope to hold craft and haberdashery and book sales on the same days to encourage a regular following (as for books). I'm told haberdashery is hard to find.....

Current membership is 14 so we are looking to recruit a few more crafters in the coming months.

Sue Smales

## **BOOKS**

### **Book receipts**

#### **2021**

Heritage Day £165.35

October £90.55

**TOTAL £255.90**

#### **2022**

April £149.70

May £102.50

June Picnic £181.30

July £51 (people were staying indoors out of the midday sun)

August ( cancelled due to heat)

Heritage Day (cancelled due to death of monarch)

October £169.60

**TOTAL £ 654.10**

At our last sale we introduced a 'featured' table where we asked for higher prices for some books. This was successful and will be part of future sales.

We have had many donations and are currently holding a mass of history and war, and science fiction books. Recent donations mean that we are at our limit for storage and no further donations will be accepted until March/April next year, when our first sale is due to take place on 23<sup>rd</sup> April to coincide with a Classic Car meet.

Sue Smales

## **BOOK READING GROUP**

Firstly please accept our apologies for not being able to attend the AGM however, we trust this written report will suffice.

We are pleased to report that the FEHG Book Group is still going strong and currently has 8 members. Despite all the difficulties associated with the pandemic and for a time having to resort to the dreaded Zoom meetings, over recent months' things have returned to normal and we are once again meeting in our homes on the first Tuesday of each month to review and discuss the last book provided by the Library service and then enjoy some refreshments whilst putting the worlds to rights.

Regrettably, as many of you will be aware, our founding member Jenny Gurdon passed away in August. Jenny was instrumental in getting the Book Group up and running and for several years did all the organising. Those of you who were fortunate to know Jenny will be aware that she had a lovely way with words, and her personal reviews were insightful and always entertaining. We miss her company and valued contribution.

As alluded to earlier we continue to use the facilities of Eastcote Library to provide our reading material, and they provide us with a brilliant service. Occasionally we may have to wait for a particular novel if it is in popular demand, but generally we always have a new book for each month.

Opinions often vary during our reviews, but in many respects, that's the point of the discussion, and it's always interesting to hear another's perspective.

Rosemary & Tony Bucksey

## **REAL ALE CLUB**

Again this report starts with my apologies for not being able to attend the meeting

Throughout 2022 the FEHG Real Ale Club (RAC) has continued to blossom and attract volunteer gardeners, their partners and friends for a pleasant evening of conversation and discussion whilst enjoying some liquid refreshment.

Our Club continues to meet on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of every month, visiting a previously agreed local venue that ideally serves Real Ale, although there is no requirement to drink Real Ale and several members regularly partake of their own favourite tipple.

These evenings provide an opportunity for EHG Volunteers and Friends to meet and socialize outside of the gardening sessions, and are very relaxed with no pressure or commitment for members to attend every meeting, stay all evening, buy large rounds or contribute to 'whips'.

Regrettably we have also suffered a loss to our membership, with the sad passing of Madeleine Horsburgh in early July. Madeleine's contributions to our evenings were always entertaining and we were fortunate to be given the opportunity to celebrate her life and contribution to our Club with a special meeting hosted by Chris at their home.

In October we passed our fifth anniversary and I am confident the RAC will continue to flourish and will hopefully continue to attract and welcome new members.

Our next meeting is planned for 1<sup>st</sup> December, although at the time of writing the venue is not known. If any volunteers and their partners would like to join us then please get it touch and ask to be included in the email distribution list.

Tony Bucksey

## **CORPORATE VISITS**

So far this year we have had three corporate volunteer days.

- 24/06/22 - Coca Cola
- 28/07/22 - Coca Cola (separate team)
- 13/09/22 – Tracelink

Each group was approximately 10 people in size.

Some useful and varied work was done by each of the groups such as bulb planting, work in the new orchard and helping with the compost heap.

Tracelink have offered to pay £500 towards the FEHG funds. However, there are some issues with their accounting system so to date the funds have not been received.

Tony Swan

## **FLOWER SHOWS**

The first show of the Eastcote Horticultural Society held on 12<sup>th</sup> March was a welcome relief to have a live show again. The hall was filled with glorious colour and scent and the event was attended by the Mayor of Hillingdon Cllr Roy Chamdal.

The FEHG entered 33 entries and were awarded the following:

7 x First  
10 x Second  
5 x Third  
2 x Highly commended

The show was so well attended when it opened to the public in the afternoon that they ran out of cake!

The summer show was held on 11<sup>th</sup> June and was a great success for FEHG with 31 exhibits entered and awarded the following:

12 x First  
7 x Second  
5 x Third

The Hurford Rose bowl for the highest points in rose classes 1 – 11

We were also awarded 2 Best in Show rosettes. One for a specimen rose bloom and one for a bunch of herbs.

We were also presented with  
Silver medal diploma certificate for the best rose bloom  
Gold medal diploma certificate for the highest points in the vegetables class (herbs come under the vegetable section)  
Silver medal diploma certificate for the best exhibit in the vegetables class

The autumn show held this year on the 10<sup>th</sup> September had fewer entries than in previous years possibly due to the unusual weather. However, for the FEHG team it was a great success with 24 exhibits entered which included some apples from both the Jubilee and Old orchards and we were awarded the following:

6 x First  
7 x Second  
6 x Third

A Gold medal diploma certificate for the highest points in other flowers

A big thank you to the loyal team who picked the flowers on Fridays and staged them on Saturday mornings: Sue Place, Jane Neave, Linda Wells and Janet Green

Sue Place also helped with stewarding during the judging at the spring and autumn shows and this has given her an insight to the judging process.

Sue Place

## **COMMUNITY SHIELD**

The Community Shield has been presented annually (except during covid) since its inauguration in 2014.

It has been awarded to a person or group within the community who the Chairman and the sponsors believe had selflessly and often quietly carried out tasks for the benefit of the community as a whole. They are a person who the Chairman and sponsors believe is an unsung local hero.

The Community Shield this year will be presented at the Tree Dressing on 26th November and its worthy recipient will be Richard Dalling, who apart from entertaining the community as he is a member of Jazzology, also has brought immense pleasure to the Eastcote community and beyond for more than 15 years as a wild gardener planting and maintaining the bulbs alongside the River Pinn at Forge Green.

If anyone can recommend any person who dedicates their time freely to the good of the community please let the Chairman know.

Joan Butfield

## **CHANGES TO THE FEHGMAG CONSTITUTION**

Agreed

Proposed CG; Seconded MP

## **ELECTION OF OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 2022/23.**

President	Catherine Dann (Proposer TS; Seconded GE)
Chairman	Lesley Crowcroft
Deputy Chairman	Chris Groom
Treasurer	Keith Barnard
Deputy Treasurer	Malcolm Penny
Secretary	Jo Oliver
Minute Secretary	Joan Butfield
Quartermaster	Tony Swan
Craft Group	Sue Smales
Webmaster	Paul Lake
First Aid	Christine Lake
RNELHS	Susan Toms
Eastcote Park Estate and Eastcote Horticultural Society	Gerry Edwards
Committee Member	Denise Read

Hon. Auditor

Steve Dunn

Council Liaison Officers

Josh Wallington, Green Spaces; Fiona Sweet,  
Museums and Historic Buildings

By Invitation

Cllr. Nick Denys

term as Mayor of Hillingdon in June 2023.

Becky Haggar will join MAG at the end of her

The committee was re-elected en bloc

CD, as President, expressed her thanks to the Committee for re-electing her as President. She was full of wonder and praise and proud of everything the FEHG did to make the gardens such a beautiful place to visit. She thanked LC for leading such a good team.

The meeting closed at 3.35pm