

**FRIENDS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDENS
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Management Advisory Group
MINUTES 28th June 2017**

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Eastcote House Gardens Management Advisory Group, held on Wednesday 28th June 2017 at 10.45am at The Stables, EHG.

Present: Lesley Crowcroft (Chairman); Keith Barnard (Treasurer); Rosemary Bucksey; Antony Bucksey; Joan Butfield; Heather Chamberlain; Cllr. Catherine Dann ; Doris Dowell; Linda Furnell (Deputy Chairman); Liz Gambier; Chris Groom (President, Eastcote Residents' Association); Jenny Gurdon; Gill Hughes; Jane Neave; David Payne (President); Margaret Ray; Sue Smales; Jackie Solomon (Minute Secretary); Karen Spink; Andy Weller (Researcher & Archivist) ,

Apologies for absence: Trevor Dixon (Webmaster); Gerry Edwards (Eastcote Park Estate); Anne Payne; Sue Place; Steve Place (Countryside Conservation); Susan Toms (Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Society); Philip Toms; Linda Wells

MINUTES

1. The minutes of the last Management Advisory Group Committee meeting held on 14 June 2017, previously circulated by e-mail, were approved as a record of the meeting.

2. Matters Arising Not on the Agenda

The Chairman reported that, following the death of Ron Voinquel in May his relatives had arranged his funeral for: 10th July at 1.45pm at the Breakspeare Crematorium with refreshments afterwards at the Black Horse Public House. All were asked to let the Chairman know if they were attending – numbers would be required for the caterers.

3. Election of Officers and committee

.1 The Officers & Committee were confirmed to serve to June 2018 as follows:

Officers

President – Dr. David Payne

Chairman Lesley Crowcroft

Deputy Chairman – Linda Furnell

Treasurer – Keith Barnard

Minute Secretary Jackie Solomon

Management Advisory Group Committee

Supporters' Secretary – vacant post

Gerry Edwards (Eastcote Park Estate)

Chris Groom (President, Eastcote Residents' Association)

Steve Place & Sue Place (Countryside Conservation)

Susan Toms (Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Society)

Trevor Dixon (Web Master)

Steve Dunn (Hon. Auditor)

Andy Weller (Researcher and Archivist)

Rosemary Bucksey (Leader – Craft Group)

Joan Butfield; Gill Hughes; Jane Neave; Sue Smales

LBH appointments:- Cllrs. Catherine Dann, Becky Haggard & Nick Denys; Nick Porter (Green Spaces Officer).

.2 The meeting noted that Jenny Gurdon had decided to stand down from Committee and thanks for her past support was voted.

4. Treasurer's report

.1 The draft Income and Expenditure Account for the year ending 30 April 2017 was tabled at the meeting.

.2 The Treasurer's comments were noted as follows:

FEHG was maintaining a broadly similar financial position to the previous year.

On income, Committee noted that the Publications activity received no subsidy from General Funds and achieved its results on an entirely self-financing basis.

Under expenditure, the main purchases had been eg. blinds and pa system for the Stables, tools for the Gardens and funds transfer from the HLF to the General Fund had been made for these purposes. Routine expenditure on eg. stationery and refreshments as well as a donation to the Hillingdon Brain Tumour & Injury Group was included in the 'Other expenditure' category.

.3 Committee approved and accepted the Accounts.

.4. The Chairman and Treasurer recorded their thanks to Mr. Steve Dunn for his work auditing the accounts.

There being no further business, the Chairman opened the Quarterly General Meeting of FEHG.

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MINUTES

1.The minutes of the last meeting held on 11 January 2017 had been previously circulated by e-mail. There being no matters arising they were approved as a record of the meeting

2. Chairman's report

The Chairman noted the overall healthy financial position of FEHG along with positive feedback received from appreciative visitors

She thanked especially Steve and Sue Place for their work on Long Meadow; Jenny Gurdon for continuing to run the Book Group and congratulated Rosemary Bucksey on having established the Craft Group so successfully.

It was noted that, for the present, the Chairman would continue to run the Supporters Group and would brief Joan Butfield on administration in due course.

Project Updates

Points were reported as follows:

- The plough and other tools for display are being restored, the planting of the Prairie bed cannot be completed until the plough is installed.
- The laurel has been removed from the rest of High Road boundary. The next section of the Pamela Gardens boundary has been explored and plans for putting in shade loving plants are in hand for the Autumn.
- Steve and his team have built a stone habitat pile, a wood habitat pile and a wood chipping path.
- The Stables: fixings for hanging displays will be installed soon. Free standing display screens and a lockable museum display cabinet for the Dovecote will be ordered.
- The porch column and sections of the floor of Eastcote House have been recovered from the ground. With other masonry, these will be used when the site of the old house and Hopkyttes are marked out later this year.

3. Treasurer's Report

.1 In an oral report, the Treasurer summarised the financial position up to 28 June 2017 as follows:

(i) Balance of General Fund	£6,397.28
(ii) Publications Balance	£4,023.26
(iii) Balance of HLF fund	£1,365.54
(iv) Craft Group Balance	£250.00
(v) Remainder of Restoration Fund	£7,391.66

.2 In answering queries, it was noted that:

- £257.80 had been raised through Second Hand Book Sales with c. 371 visitors at the 3 sales held so far in 2017 making this a worthwhile endeavour.
- There was discussion as to whether an annual fund raising target could be estimated for future years. It was agreed that running costs such as insurance, repair and replacement of equipment, planting and refreshments should be covered by income raised by maintaining the current array of events and sales at around £3,000. Expenditure on larger projects would need to be met from specifically targeted funding campaigns.

4 Website

A report from Trevor Dixon was noted as follows:

The website continues to receive in the region of 40 to 60 individual hits each day, which translates into 150 – 250 page views. The highest was in the run-up to the Picnic, with 150 individuals for the two days before and just over 200 on the day itself, 600-plus page views. This is a record.

The website also receives regular email queries about visiting and volunteering, as well as queries about the cafe and hiring the Stables, as well as taking part in the Picnic. Most of these are passed on to the relevant individuals, although the more general ones are answered by the Webmaster

It was also noted that: positive comments as to the professional presentation of the web site had been received; postings on the local network "nextdoor.com" just before events and sales would have been helpful in driving traffic to the website.

5. Eastcote Horticultural Society Spring & Summer shows

Linda Furnell reported as follows:

.1 So far this year we have done very well at the EHS Shows staging 70 entries in Spring with these results:

11 firsts; 14 seconds and 17 thirds; JS Ranger Cup for highest points in Daffs; WE Evans Cup awarded for best exhibit (3 different daffodil cultivars in 3 vases); Gold

Medal Diploma for the highest points in other flowers; Tony Bucksey also received a Highly Commended for one of his photos of the gardens entered on our behalf. In the Summer show we staged 39 entries with the following results
9 firsts ;9 seconds and 11 thirds; Hurford Rose Bowl for highest points in Roses; Jack Hardy Cup for highest points in Flowers; Silver Medal Diploma for Best Roses bloom and for Best Exhibit in Herbs.

Tony Bucksey also received a Highly Commended for a wonderful photo of Dicentra (Bleeding Heart).

A big thank you was due to all those who helped with the picking on the preceding Friday and staging on the Saturday. It is not possible to put in as many entries as we do without a lot of hands to help.

.2 Plant Sales

Plant sales had also been very successful this year, outcomes as follows:

8th April plant sale: income: £183.00

3rd June, The Picnic plant sale: income: £250.00

10th June, stock left after the Picnic: Income: £110.7

Total income from plant sales this year: £543.07

It should be noted that this was achieved at zero cost (other than volunteers' time) as plants were provided either by splitting and re-potting plants from the Gardens or from plants generously donated by the Friends. We also benefitted from donations of compost and pots for the potting up.

All who helped either at the sales or by donating plants are warmly thanked.

A reminder – next sale:19th August.

6. Community Archive and Publications

Andy Weller reported on sales and stock holding as follows:

Eastcote House and Gardens: the People and the Place This title had sold out and after calling off a further 52 copies from the printer, we have 50 copies remaining in stock.

Secret Eastcote had sold out. After taking delivery of a further 100 copies we have 80 copies remaining in stock. This book has proved to be very popular. Very kind comments were received from Sir Sherard Cowper-Coles whose mother worked on the Eastcote base. Multiple orders have been received from former US military personnel. We have exported our publications to Australia, Canada, Denmark, France, Netherlands, US (lots for the US) and Wigan. Perhaps not enough to warrant award of the Queen's Award for Exports but it is satisfying to know that things Eastcote-wise have a world-wide following.

The Black Horse Story: Eastcote's Oldest Pub appeared in February 2016. We had 185 copies available for sale and by the summer of 2016 it was sold out with a profit of around £300. 3 months ago I was contacted by a US of a former licensee who ran the pub in the 1860s to 1880s. I bought back a copy of the book that Local Studies still had available for sale. The Churchill descendant who still bears the Churchill name sent me family history information that is held in our Community Archive.

Haydon Hall's Forgotten History followed in May 2016. This is a £5 publication without sponsorship. We received 300 copies from the printer but were only billed for 250 copies. To date we have sold copies 170.

Earlier this year we issued **Eastcote Connections** which enjoys £200 sponsorship from local builder, Tony King. At the same time a gentleman in California contacted us. He is the owner of Lady Anderson's 1930s Rolls Royce and he also provided us

with details of Lady Anderson's chauffeur who also lived on the Eastcote Place estate. We have a number of photographs of the car that we intend to put on display at the car show at the Open House event in September. To date we have sold 73 copies of Eastcote Connections.

Next year '**Eastcote House Uncovered, including Long Meadow**' will be completed. AOC Archaeology has produced reports for each dig so much of the book is already written. Long Meadow information has come to light that is worthy of passing on, including details of people who lived in the demolished dwellings that our Chairman has referred to as "Neighbours from Hell".

Calendar 2018 now available. All the photographers were thanked, also thanks go to Terry Butfield for refreshing the design and putting the calendar together. Input for the 2019 calendar now invited.

Archive

New information continues to be added to the archive and the catalogue is kept up to date. Other material pertinent to the saving of the gardens will be added at a later date.

The Chairman reported that she would be writing to LBH concerning the relocation of local studies material to the planned museum in Uxbridge and the consequent reduction in public access to the collections.

7. Conservation

Points from a written report submitted by Steve and Sue Place were noted as follows:

Long Meadow

Silt was removed from the mouth of the backwater to allow water from the river to top it up.

Large red and azure damselflies and broad-bodied chasers are in residence now that the backwater is retaining water and hopefully will breed this year.

Frogs laid spawn in March which hatched into tadpoles; we hope a few will survive to produce another generation of frogs.

Marbled white butterfly recorded in the meadow for only the second time during five years of surveying. Small heath butterfly recorded in the meadow for the first time.

During the last five years 23 species of butterflies have been recorded using the meadow making it one of the most important sites within LB Hillingdon.

Management to maintain the meadow as a butterfly haven includes the annual hay cut, with selective areas cut on alternate years to reduce disturbance to the small populations of small copper, brown argus, common blue, small skipper, Essex skipper. The bramble and scrub will be cut again this autumn to maintain an open and inviting environment and control encroachment into the grassland.

While assessing this year's cut with Nick Porter (LBH Site Manager) we received compliments from several people enjoying their walk along the riverside path.

The meadow was judged for a Green Flag award in early June and the outcome should be announced in July. London in Bloom judging for conservation is to be by 'mystery' ie. un-announced visit, results due on 22nd September.

We are still awaiting the Council's response to the Chrysalis bid submitted for some stone chip paths in the areas that become really muddy and unpleasant during winter.

Welcome boards are to be installed at either end of the Meadow. The butterfly and dragonfly records for the last 5 years are to be included in the London Butterfly and Dragonfly atlases this year.

The Chairman noted that inclusion in these publications spoke to the scientific value of the data collected and, therefore, to the quality of the work on Long Meadow.

8. Craft group

Rosemary Bucksey reported on activities as follows:

In August 2016 we ran a very successful patchwork cushion workshop in the Stables and in September 2016 achieved a move from the Gardeners' cabin to the luxury of the Stables for regular meetings.

As a group we have contributed towards many of the FEHG events including: London Open House, the Tree Dressing and Voice and Verse by providing Christmas decorations, knitted toys, craft items and making floral decorations.

We celebrated the Craft Group's first anniversary on 2nd February 2017.

Throughout the year we have continued to meet on the 2nd, 3rd and 4th Tuesday of each month, with 20 members and regular attendees of up to 13 people at each session.

In April, our ambitious project of making a Lap Quilt was completed following a very successful 'Sewathon' and a few extra sewing machining sessions. We also had a demonstration from one of our members on how to make flowers from egg boxes. At this year's Community Picnic we ran our own craft stall with the intention of raising funds by selling the items we have all made. The idea of running a lottery with our Lap Quilt as the prize proved very successful, raising the healthy sum of £149.00. Overall, we achieved £239.50.

Thanks go to everyone who helped with the Craft stall before, during and after the event. We have now been allocated our own budget with an initial balance of £250 to buy supplies for our future fund raising projects.

Progress

Our FEHG website picture gallery has been updated to June 2017 showing quilt-making in progress and the stall at the Picnic.

A propos of the Picnic we have been pleased to re-fresh the 'Bash the Rat' game with 3 new knitted rats, thanks go to Christine Hudson for speedy work.

Future plans

Craft stalls at London Open House in September 2017 and at the November Tree Dressing .

We will continue to knit and crochet poppies and we are developing a display banner for our project to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of World War 1, November 2018. We are grateful to St. Albans Ladies Group who kindly donated a bag full of knitted poppies for this project.

Thanks go to all group members for their friendship, companionship, ideas and skill sharing; to Sallie Pinkerton for keeping refreshments on tap and finally, a big thank you to Nick Porter for enabling the Craft Group to use the Stables, facilitating access and generally looking after us.

9. Book Group

Jenny Gurdon reported that holding meetings on the first Tuesday of the month had solved the business of agreeing diary dates. The Eastcote branch library staff continued to support the group with loans of multiple copies of selected titles. Thanks were due to group members for hosting meetings in their homes.

10. Fund Raising Projects

Performance noted as follows:

- **Second Hand Book sales.** £257.80 had been raised with c. 371 visitors at the 3 sales held so far in 2017
- **Sale of Logs for firewood**
- Last winter season raised: £200, so far, for the next winter season income stands at: £40
- **2017 Picnic:** total raised: £2,284.77
- **Walks and Talks :** raised approx £400.00
- **Quizzes:** total raised: £656.76. Quiz night £327.26;. Christmas Quiz £156.50; Easter Quiz £173.00
- **Plants Sales:** total raised to date: £543.07
- **Craft:** total raised to date: £239.50

11. Future events – dates to note

- Archaeology Open day Sunday July 9th. 10.00–4.00pm – Volunteers needed as stewards please.
- Judging Days. London in Bloom: Thursday 6th July; Wednesday 12th July
- Britain in Bloom: August 9th
- EHS Autumn Show Saturday 9th September
- London Open house Sunday September 17th – Volunteers needed for stalls and stewarding
- London in Bloom results 22nd September
- FEHG picnic lunch Thursday 28th September, in the Stables
- Quiz night Saturday October 28th
- Tree Dressing Saturday December 2nd – Volunteers needed

12. Other Business

.1 Award of the Community Shield sponsored by Joan & Terry Butfield. The Chairman proposed, and it was agreed, that the award go to the Eastcote branch of the Royal British legion

.2 Unwanted presence of a rough sleeper in the gardens.

The meeting noted that steps were being taken to deal with the situation

.3 Information for walkers

David Payne proposed that FEHG should be pro-active in providing information to walkers who asked for direction to other green space sites eg. how to get to Ruislip Woods or up to the Heath Robinson Museum in Pinner Memorial Park. It was noted that: Hillingdon organized a guided walk on the first Monday of the month starting at the Manor Barn, information on the Celandine Route was included on the board in Long Meadow. However, as there was no printed leaflet available the Chairman would look into the feasibility of providing maps and directions from the LBH website.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at: 12.15pm