

**FRIENDS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDENS
MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP - COMMITTEE MEETING
THURSDAY 12TH SEPTEMBER 2024 AT 11AM - VOLUNTEERS**

The meeting commenced at 11.05am.

PRESENT

Chris Groom, Catherine Dann, Susan Smales, Jo Oliver, Malcolm Penny, Tony Swan, Sue Place, Denise Reed, Joan Butfield, Susan Toms.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Keith Barnard, Chris Lake, Paul Lake

MINUTES OF LAST MEETING

CD pointed out that under Tree Dressing Becky Morris should read Betty Morris. **Action JB**

TREASURER'S REPORT

In KB's absence MP gave the report.

The balance of the General Account now stands at £16,339.87 including Craft Group, Sales of Calendars and other publications.

Reserve Savings account £5,138.39

KB to look into the benefits of moving £5,000 across into the savings account. **Action KB**

HERITAGE DAY ARRANGEMENTS

ST said everything was on target, rotas sent to volunteers. MP volunteered to join LK as a car parking steward 9am-11am. Saturday at 4pm is setting up in stables.

JB confirmed that the Deputy Mayor would be in attendance and JO confirmed that refreshments will be available for him.

SALES OF BOOKS AND CRAFTS - SS

Income from books and craft for July and August is as follows:

Books: £114 in July, £147 in August =£261 (when added to the previous total of £306.70, book sales so far this year have yielded £567.70). We have several happy repeat visitors, and we are still being 'discovered' with people waiting for the door to open. In July and August, the book cabin was full with browsers from opening until closing. We now have to give a 5-minute warning and call 'time'. There were many enquiries about making book donations. Some have been received, more are expected.

Craft: £134.50 in July and £196.90 in August = £331.40 (added to previous total of £435.32 gives £766.72).

Profit from sales of craft and books was £742.02 after 3 months and £1,334.42 after 5 months, with Heritage Day and the last book and craft sale in October still to come, so we are well on course to achieve our predicted profit of £1,500.

A large donation of craft and other items was received on Tuesday afternoon, some of which have yet to be sorted but some are suitable for raffle or tombola prizes, and some will be sold.

As discussed and agreed at the last committee meeting on 4th July regarding more advertising and signage for large events we now have a banner for the back gate, two large banners advertising EHG book and plant sales; also two new A-frames which cost £82.

Something to note: my deputy and best craftswoman has put her house on the market and is planning to move to the south coast. She is also the youngest member of the group, attends almost every week and has done much to make the monthly sales a success.

Without her items we won't make as much profit, but that may be covered by Philip's card sales.

Through deaths and members moving away the group has shrunk from 25 to 16 with most in their 70s or 80s with some incapacities. Attendance is usually 8 or 10, not always the same people; very few are willing to sit and sell and they are not able to move tables and bring stuff down from the loft. If the craft sales are to continue next year, I may need help to set up and clear away. Jo and

Sue Francis have kindly offered to help but this may be a problem if there are plant sales on the same day.

DOVECOTE OPENING - ST

Very successful. More visitors than before. April 87, May 91, June 269+, July 56, August 83.

EASTCOTE HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY - SP

The Autumn show held on Saturday 7th September followed a week of mixed weather. The Friends team managed 36 entries and were able to include apples from the Jubilee orchard, 5 varieties were entered Spartan, Ellison's Orange, Lord Lambourne, Egremont Russet and Bramley seedlings. We also entered for the first time some medlars.

We were awarded the following:

12 x 1st

13x 2nd

7 x 3rd

We won the Tingay cup for the 'highest points in Section A - fruit'. We last won this cup in 2019.

We were also awarded two Gold medal certificates.

A Gold medal diploma certificate for "highest points in apples".

A Gold medal diploma certificate for the "highest points in other flowers section B (excluding chrysanthemums and dahlias). These include grasses, ferns, flowering shrubs along with a small selection of roses.

It was decided to pick the apples on Tuesday morning as this can be quite time-consuming and Steve assisted me with the picking and sorting.

I would like to thank Jane Neave and Janet Green for their help in picking, staging and clearing up at the end of the show.

The next show, the spring show, is on Saturday 15th March 2025 and Jane will be leading as I am away.

I have paid the EHS subscription for 2024/25 and have been reimbursed by Keith.

LONDON IN BLOOM - REPORT .JO

JO, DR and SF will be going to the results day at Wisley on 3rd October.

VOLUNTEERS LUNCH - SP

Everything in hand for the 4th of October. JO will purchase more paper plates and CG will send out a reminder of the date to volunteers. **ACTION JO/CG**

AGM -CG

Suggested dates between 28th October - 1st November which is half term.

After the meeting CG confirmed that the Stables are available on Friday 1st November at 10am.

Later amended to 11.30am.

All volunteers to confirm their availability. **ACTION ALL**

DATES OF EVENTS FOR 2025.

CG agreed to send out a list of the dates of events and subsequently these have been sent.

GARDENING- JO

Fernery - now sign posted thanks to Mark Lemon.

Box Hedging

We have seen some regrowth, but the worst area affected is in the topiary bed. It was agreed that JO could purchase replacement mature plants.

It has been recommended that it is sprayed twice a year, by the Council, April and September. We must ensure this happens.

TS asked if we could do this ourselves with a stronger spray which can be purchased on the internet. eg. XenTari. JO agreed to ask EHS about this possibility

Old Orchard

The grass gets very wet and slippery. We discussed the need, this winter, for a path from the gardeners' compound down to the Walled Garden entrance adjacent to the metal edging on the

long wall bed.

After the meeting CG e-mailed the committee asking them to see the given link for information.

Autumn Work - Walled Garden

Climbing Roses - need hard pruning to reshape and may need re-wiring.

Division of perennials - a few plants require splitting as the beds are getting congested.

OUTDOOR CLASSROOM -CG

In PL and CL absence CG said that the Stables has been booked for 1st April for the Forest School. CL had put a lot of work into this project, contacting schools from a wide area. A representative from Hillingdon will be attending.

BANK CARD READER - KB

No report

FIRST AID UPDATE - CG

CL will be attending on the 7th October and CG on the 17th October. The course to be held at the Bunker.

DOVECOTE/PATHS/STABLES - CG

CG will resend the list of repairs required to the Councilor's. Council staff visit but then we hear nothing.

ACTION CG

AOB

- TS requested that the equipment should be laid flat on the floor and not lent up against a table. It was agreed that the tables would be pushed against the walls and the centre left clear for other equipment.
- CG said that David Simmonds MP will be at the gardens on Tuesday 17th September at 10.30am.

The meeting ended at 12.10pm