

**FRIENDS OF EASTCOTE HOUSE GARDENS  
QUARTERLY GENERAL MEETING**

**MINUTES 6th December 2017**

Minutes of the Quarterly General Meeting of the Friends of Eastcote House Gardens, held on Wednesday 6th December 2017 at 10.30am at The Stables, EHG.

**Present:** Lesley Crowcroft (Chairman); Keith Barnard (Treasurer); Joan Butfield; Cllr. Catherine Dann; Trevor Dixon (Webmaster ); Doris Dowell; Alison Holtorp (Chairman Eastcote Residents' Association); Sue Place; Steve Place (Countryside Conservation & joint Deputy Chairmen); Liz Gambier; Chris Groom (President, Eastcote Residents' Association); Jon Marx; David Payne (President FEHG); Margaret Ray; Sue Smales; Jackie Solomon (Minute Secretary); Karen Spink; Susan Toms (Ruislip, Northwood & Eastcote Local History Society); Andy Weller (Researcher & Archivist); Linda Wells

**Apologies for absence:** Antony Bucksey ; Rosemary Bucksey; Gerry Edwards (Eastcote Park Estate); Jenny Gurdon; Gill Hughes; Jane Neave; Anne Payne; Ruth Ryan; Philip Toms

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**MINUTES**

1. The minutes of the last meeting held on 28th June 2017 had been previously circulated by e-mail. With the correction that Alison Holtorp be added to the list of 'Apologies', they were approved as a record of the meeting

2. **Matters Arising** noted as follows:

- The rough sleeper was no longer appearing in the Gardens, having moved on to Northwood.
- The Community Shield had been awarded to Frank Underhill and Jeff Duley at the Open House event.
- A proposal at the last meeting to provide information on a walking route between Eastcote House Gardens and the Heath Robinson Museum in Pinner Memorial Park was adopted but input was requested from all on the best way to put this into practice

3. **Chairman's report** The Chairman reported that:

- Linda Furnell had resigned from the role of Deputy Chairman. She was thanked for her many years of work and support for the Gardens. The Chairman had asked Sue and Steve Place to jointly take on the role of Deputy Chairman and this was endorsed by the meeting.
- Rosemary Bucksey was standing down from the Management Advisory Group, she was thanked for her work, especially in establishing the Craft Group. It had been agreed that Sue Smales would take on the role of co-ordinator between the Craft and the Management Advisory Group.
- The Chairman also announced that she would be stepping down from her role as Chairman in June 2018. She would provide a 'job description' of the role and all were asked to participate in continuity planning with reference to:- committee roles, event planning and work in the Gardens.

**The meeting noted a message received from Alison Holtorp, Chairman of Eastcote Residents' Association** as follows:

" ERA would like to thank everyone involved in maintaining Eastcote House Gardens and Long Meadow to such a high standard that they achieved so many Gold Awards and were also awarded Green Flags".

The Gardens and Long Meadow will be entered into London in Bloom in 2018.

The Chairman also reported on Autumn events as follows:

- London Open House September 2017: the innovation of having set times for history talks in the Dovecote had been a great success with groups of about 20 visitors gathering. Sue Toms and David Payne were thanked for taking this on and agreed to provide the talks at future events.
- Remembrance Day November 2017: a wreath from FEHG had been laid at the Eastcote War Memorial
- Tree Dressing December 2017: another well attended and successful day. A report and photographs had already appeared on the 'Eastcote Local' website and Philip Toms would be providing photographs for the EHG website shortly. [Post meeting note the photographs are now on the web site.]

#### **4. Financial Matters**

##### **.1 Treasurer's Report**

Points were noted as follows:

Fund raising events and sales of publications, logs etc meant that the organization was in a healthy financial position with funds standing as follows:

General Fund: £7,048.99; Heritage Lottery Fund: c.£4423.19; Craft Group: £391.00; Publications: £4,925.27

The Restoration Fund had now been transferred to the General Account, making the funds available for expenditure on projects; the HLF monies to be used by 1st June 2018 so that Hillingdon Council can, in turn, recoup part of that expenditure.

##### **.2 Mandate for cheque signatory**

The nomination of Susan Place as an additional signatory for FEHG cheques was approved and agreed. The Chairman and Treasurer to make arrangements with the bank accordingly.

#### **5. Updates from FEHG Groups**

##### **.1 Book Group**

The group has continued its regular meetings on the first Tuesday of each month. At the 5th December meeting it will have discussed its 54th book since meetings started 5 years ago.

##### **.2 Craft Group**

The group has had stalls at 2 more events in autumn 2017, all have been very successful with results as follows:

Open House, 17th September 2017 raising a total of £75.65

Tree Dressing event, 2nd December 2017 raising a total of £100.45. Monies raised will be added to the Craft Group funds for future events or projects

##### **Activities**

Another three rats have been made for an appearance at the 2018 Picnic 'Bash The Rat' game making a total of six available for use.

On 31st October 2017 - The Craft Group had an external demonstrator, Pat Grisdale, who gave a very interesting talk and demonstration on Corn Dollies with the group members making their own 'Lovers' Knots'.

'Eastcote Remembers' Poppy project - The design for the poppy display has been decided: The Craft Group are creating/designing two collages that will hang down from either side of the Stable's balcony. Ruth Ryan is creating a centre piece and garlands will hang down between the collages and the centre piece.

We are very grateful to St. Albans Ladies Group for the second bag of knitted poppies they have donated to be used in the project.

The Craft Group is at its capacity of 20. A waiting list will be set up.

Rosemary Bucksey who founded the Group will be standing down from the FEHG Management Advisory Group with effect from 12<sup>th</sup> December 2017.

Sue Smales has agreed to take over the role of Craft Group Coordinator.

### **Future meetings**

12th December 2017: Last meeting of the year.

9th January 2018: First meeting of the New Year.

2nd February 2018: Craft Group's second birthday

### **.3 Real Ale Club**

A full and delightful report on this new club is at the end of these minutes. Briefly, meetings will be on the first Thursday of each month, contacts for newcomers are Tony Bucksey and Keith Barnard and up-coming meeting dates are:

4th January 2018: The Ickenham Inn, Ickenham

1st February 2018: Beer Asylum, Pinner

1st March 2018: The Hop & Vyne, Ruislip

Venues to be confirmed at previous meeting

### **6. Publications and Archives**

The meeting noted that there was a steady stream of sales and a full report would be presented at the AGM.

### **7. Web site**

The webmaster reported just one small glitch on the site over the display of the Christmas greetings page. [Post meeting note, this has now been rectified]

### **8. Countryside Conservation** The following report was received from Steve Place:

It has been a busy and rewarding year for Long Meadow.

- Green Flag status was achieved at the first attempt. A gold was awarded for the large conservation area category in the London in Bloom event.
- The backwater retained water throughout the year after being re-dug, to the benefit of the breeding dragonflies. The meadow is one of the top butterfly sites within LBH with 23 species recorded.
- The most butterfly rich areas within the meadow were cordoned off to exclude them from the annual hay cut so the butterflies could feed and breed without disturbance.  
The annual butterfly report for 2017 is available to read on our website.
- Another extensive bramble and scrub cut was done to reduce encroachment into the grassland to keep the meadow open and substantially grassland.
- Work parties have been well supported and productive - thinning the backwater vegetation to maintain open water, cutting the cordoned off areas of grass and flowers after the butterflies had finished, cutting away branches overhanging the river to allow ease of passage along the river when removing rubbish and Himalayan balsam, removing litter from the site.
- LBH has still not installed the info boards but we have been advised this could happen in January. No response has been received from LBH about our Chrysalis bid for some stone chip paths in the muddiest parts of the meadow.

### **9. Project Updates**

- Gardening: The next section of the Pamela Gardens boundary is now planted with shrubs and under planted with bulbs.
- The Stumpery is established and planted up with ferns. An information leaflet and board explaining the creation of wildlife habitats is planned.
- The Plough is now installed in Dove Meadow
- The Stables: fixings for hanging displays will be installed soon. Free standing display screens and a lockable museum display cabinet for the Dovecote has been ordered.
- Eastcote House: The site of the old house will be marked out with paving slabs, permanently and securely installed. The columns will be erected to mark the former porch and this area will also feature a small flower bed which will be maintained by the Council. The rough grass within the site will be replaced with lawn grass to make this area more distinctive. The work needs to be completed by June 2018 and the new lawn should be laid down by March so that it can establish

well before summer events. Information boards with plans of the old house and its outbuildings, also showing the location of Hopkyttes, are planned to provide context.

- Archaeology: All digs are completed with a technical report plus a layman's guide on the project forthcoming. It will take considerable time to get the finds from the digs back to EHG and this may not be achievable, however, the Chairman and Christine Wallace have material, found casually which can be retained on site and a display in the Dovecote is planned.
- Book & Plant Sales: Five sales had been held to date with excellent results, raising just over £1,100. The final sale (books only) scheduled for Sat. 9th December.

## **10. Eastcote Remembers 3rd-17th November 2018**-commemorating the end of World War 1

An extract from the minutes of the MAG meeting of 25th October 2017 gives below a full update:-

The Chairman reported that on behalf of LBH, Nick Porter had arranged for FEHG to have the use of The Stables, free of charge, for this fortnight other than when classes had been scheduled. Preparations were in hand as follows:

- Mon- Tues 12th & 13th: In Voice and Verse had booked the venue for presentations of readings and music from the First World War. FEHG would assist in taking bookings and serving refreshments if possible.
- 3 talks given by Matt Neave, Sue Toms (RNELHS) and Lesley Crowcroft (FEHG), Jeff Duley (Royal British Legion) respectively would be scheduled.
- A booklet using material from the local history display (Eastcote in WWI) was proposed. Its compilation and availability (e.g. unpriced with donations to RBL instead) would be discussed further.
- Craft Group had decorating The Stables well in hand
- The Chairman is contacting local schools, inviting them to contribute to the display, the 6th Eastcote Cubs had already signed up.

A group comprising: Lesley Crowcroft, Andy Weller, Susan and Philip Toms and Sue Smales [Craft group] would be convened to discuss all aspects of the exhibition

## **11. 2018**

Some innovations were noted as follows:

- Dovecote: the idea of opening the Dovecote to visitors one afternoon a month, from May to September 2018, was adopted at the MAG meeting of 25th October. Tuesdays were proposed as the Craft Group would have the Stables open, refreshments, therefore, available. Keith Barnard was willing to undertake some afternoons and a rota including some other volunteers would be required. David Payne, Susan Toms and Trevor Dixon volunteered at the QGM.
- London Open House: An Apple Festival -as a new addition to the day was proposed at the MAG meeting of 25th October. While this would involve some planning as to picking and storing apples from the EHG Orchard as well as staging a new stall, interest had been expressed by Sue Place, Rosemary Bucksey, Sue Smales, Gill Hughes and Lesley Crowcroft. A meeting to discuss organization would be arranged in the New Year.
- The Classic Cars were a popular attraction at this event and vintage motorbikes would be added next year.

The Chairman requested that all volunteers think about contributing to preparations for the FEHG events as well as volunteering on running days, particularly with a view to continuity in 2018/19.

A list of proposed event dates as noted at MAG 25 October 2017 is given below for information:

### **2018 events**

Given in date order as follows:

Books Sales	24th February
Eastcote Horticultural Society	17th March 2018
Spring Show	

Books & Plant Sales	21st April
Tree Walk	date to be confirmed May
Picnic	9th June
Eastcote Horticultural Society	16th June
Summer Show	
FEHG 10th Anniversary	Thurs. 21st June
picnic/buffet style lunch in The Stables(subject to availability of The Stables, tbc. with Nick Porter)	
Books & Plant Sales	23rd June
London in Bloom	judging date to be confirmed June/July
Books & Plant Sales	4th August
Britain in Bloom	judging date to be confirmed August
Eastcote Horticultural Society	8th September
Autumn Show	
London Open House	Sunday 23rd September
FEHG end of season	date to be confirmed September
picnic/buffet style lunch in The Stables	
Quiz Night	27th October
(subject to Tony Bucksey being ready to organize the event again)	
Books & Plant Sales	6th October
Eastcote Remembers	Sat. 3rd November - Sat.17th November
Tree Dressing	1st December
Book Sales	8th December

12. There being no other business, the meeting closed at 11.40am

**FEHG Quarterly General Meeting**  
**Minute item 5.3**



*Real Ale Club*

Dear Friends,

After several conversations at various events Keith Barnard & Tony Bucksey decided that there were a sufficient number of individuals involved with Eastcote House Gardens who might like to get involved in a regular social event involving (possibly) stimulating and amusing conversation and (definitely) a supply of real ale. Our initial thoughts were the group would be known as the FEHG Real Ale Club (FEHGRAC), and it could meet up at a different local venue that serves Real Ale on a regular frequency to be decided by the members.

The formation of this Group was discussed and agreed with our Chair, who circulate an email on 22<sup>nd</sup> August 2017, inviting interested parties to attend the FEHG RAC's inaugural meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2017 at The Hop & Vine Bar, 18 Ruislip High Street.

As a result, 8 members attended the first meeting, with another 3 individuals expressing an interest to attend future meetings. The RAC current membership comprises Tony Bucksey, Keith Barnard, Chris Groom, Malcolm Penny, Gerry Edwards, Paul Lake, Tony Swan, Trevor Pullen, Steve Dunne, Mike Holmes and Martha (Apologies I do not know Martha's surname).

The attendees of 5<sup>th</sup> October contributed to a very enjoyable evening at a very pleasant establishment that I am confident will become a regular venue.

In our early conversation we discussed and agreed the following in respect to future meetings & venues: The RAC would continue to meet on the first Thursday of every month, and there was no commitment to attend every meeting; During the winter months it was agreed that local venues would be used to avoid travelling in areas with limited public transport in potentially inclement or unpleasant weather; All FEHG volunteers and their partners, friends would be welcome to attend, and there is no commitment to drink real ale.

Our second meeting took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> November at The Case is Altered, Eastcote and 8 members attended with 2 apologies received. This was another enjoyable evening, and was a good opportunity for us to see the result of the recent refurbishment of this venue.

The third meeting is taking place on 7<sup>th</sup> December at The Oddfellows PH, Pinner, and new members would be very welcome to join us.

Future meetings & venues are as follows

4<sup>th</sup> January 2018: The Ickenham Inn, Ickenham;

1<sup>st</sup> February 2018: Beer Asylum, Pinner

1<sup>st</sup> March 2018: The Hop & Vyne, Ruislip.

Venues to be confirmed at previous meeting

Anyone interested in joining us please let Keith or Tony know.