

FRIENDS OF JUBILEE GARDENS

Annual General Meeting Monday 26th March 2019 at 7.00 pm in St Peter's Room, Ely

1. The Chairman, John Crawford, welcomed everyone to the meeting and gave apologies for non-attendance from the following:

Niall O'Briain, Rachel Ingham, June Snowden, Virginia Divall, Michael Hendry
Wendy Powell, Jenny Jones, John Eden-Eadon, Judith Lockyear

2. **Minutes of the last AGM held on 5th March 2018:**

These had been previously circulated and were taken as read. John asked if there were any amendments or questions arising from the Minutes. Jane Blanchard (Secretary) said that in response to a question from the floor at that meeting, letters had been sent to the membership setting out our privacy policy and requesting the return of a permission slip to hold personal details on our database. There had been a very good response which had also prompted many donations to funds. There being no further comments the Minutes were duly accepted as a true record.

3. **Chairman's Report for the year 2018:**

John said that this had been a good year with some projects achieved and others still in progress. The two fund-raising events had gone well and were happy occasions. The plant stall and promotion drive at St Etheldreda's Fair achieved a good profit and also signed up several new Friends. The Summer Tea Party at Jane and Laurie Blanchard's house had also proved to be happy and successful. Judith Lockyear had organised a most interesting evening visit to Barchams Tree Nursery which was well supported.

With the help of Mr Mike Searle we now have an excellent website, jubileegardens.org.uk, which is maintained by John.

The Gardens continue to be very popular with the public and have hosted various civic events including the Eel Fest, AquaFest, Triathalon, Summer Band Concerts and a new one, Ely Pride.

Working parties continue to be held on the 2nd Thursday morning of the month and are quite well attended by willing volunteers. A special planting session was held on a Saturday in October to plant 5,000 bluebell bulbs in the Queens Wood as well as cyclamen plants. We look forward to a spectacular display this Spring. Sadly we have experienced vandalism to two trees which have now been replaced. The signs for the Winter Garden and the Dry garden were also damaged and will have to be replaced. It is suggested that Allister (ECDC) who organised the splendid Queens Wood sign, looks into this and get some quotes. The 'Wedding Cake' tree failed to thrive and has been replaced by the Friends.

Once again, through the hard work of the ECDC team and our working parties, we were awarded the Green Flag. We were sorry not to receive a copy of the judge's report and have requested some feedback from ECDC so that we can make improvements where suggested. This year the judging will be done by a 'mystery shopper' so we will really have to keep the Gardens looking good at all times.

The 'to do' list is on-going. The dry garden is the major project for this year. The lavender has been cleared from under the olive trees and it is proposed to gravel this area. The lower area around the bottom will be cleared and sprayed to kill the couch grass and then replanted with lavenders and other dry garden plants. The pampas grass in the sensory garden has become too large and needs cutting back.

4. Treasurer's Report:

Sarah Canham said that she had just received the accounts from Mathew Cooper who had examined them and passed them as correct. He had very kindly done this without charge as a contribution to Jubilee Gardens. Sarah passed round copies of the accounts for members to examine. She said that in January 2018 our account stood at £3320.47 which included membership fees of £940 and donations of £160. After various fund raising events and payments for plants the closing balance is £3408.20. Any plants purchased for the stall on St Etheldreda's Day which were not sold were again offered at the Summer Tea Party, the last few remaining were then planted in Jubilee Gardens. The website which had a small set up charge for its introductory year will in 2019 cost £6.00. (A full copy of the accounts is attached to these Minutes). David Sherwood proposed that the accounts be accepted as a true record and this motion was seconded by Alison Eden-Eadon.

5. Membership Secretary's Report:

Judith had sent a written report as she was unable to be present, which John read to the Friends. She said that she had inherited a rolling programme of subscriptions of approximately 180 Friends, some of whom hadn't made a payment since 2015 or 2016. The list will be updated and amended throughout this year and future years. Everyone has had a subscription reminder for 2019 in the form of email or letter. Reminders will be sent throughout the year according to their renewal date. All contributors receive an email receipt. The total in individual subscriptions so far this year is £340. The total in individual donations so far this year is £157.

Local Businesses: Etheldreda Floral, Neaves and Neat, Hereward Rotary Club and PlanSurv have given a total of £125 in annual subscriptions and will have recognition of the fact on our website. They have all been given receipts which could, if wished, be displayed in their workplace.

Cambridge Commodities are willing to give a large donation towards replanting the dry garden in 2019. In acknowledgement we will have their name/logo displayed on the new noticeboard.

In summary – I am very pleased with contributions made so far, and especially with additional donations, and often accompanying letters of appreciation of our efforts.

6. Election of Officers:

John said that during the year the committee had welcomed two new members, Rachel Ingham and Niall O'Briain. Jane Blanchard is stepping down after 4 years as Secretary and Rachel has agreed to take over this role. John said that the current committee were happy to serve for another year and suggested that they be elected en bloc. They are:

John Crawford, Chair, Rachel Ingham, Secretary, Sarah Canham Treasurer, Judith Lockyear Membership Secretary, Patricia Simmonds and Niall O'Briain. Sheila Friend-Smith agreed to act as Archivist to the Friends in an advisory capacity.

Pauline Sherwood proposed that the Committee be elected and this was seconded by Jeremy Friend-Smith. Jane Blanchard was thanked for her work with the Friends and presented with a card and garden gift voucher. Jane thanked everyone and said how much she enjoyed working with the Friends and although retiring from the committee would still be actively involved in the Gardens.

8. Any Other Business:

Judith Lockyear is organising a summer outing in July to the Botanical Gardens. This will be a private guided tour in the evening. A small coach has been booked to facilitate travel. Full details will be circulated to members very soon.

Alison Eden-Eadon said that Ely Open Gardens would take place on June 9th and that her small garden would be open this year.

John said that if any Friends wished to put information on our website they could send it to him and he would facilitate this. There being no further business, John thanked everyone for coming and closed the meeting at 7.45 pm.

Light refreshments were then served before Sarah entertained us with a gardening-related quiz.