

**BERKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST (the “Trust” or “BGT”)  
Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at Purley Barn,  
Beech Road, Purley-on-Thames, Berkshire RG8 8DR  
on Friday 11<sup>th</sup> October 2019 at 7.00pm.**

President: Dr Christina Hill Williams  
Chairman: His Honour Charles Elly  
Treasurer: Hugh Simon  
Secretary: Fiona Hope

### **1. Chairman's welcome and apologies for absence**

The Chairman opened the meeting and welcomed Lucy Zeal, the High-Sheriff, Graham Pask, Chair of West Berkshire Council and Mrs Pask, all members present and their guests.

The Secretary, Fiona Hope, confirmed the meeting was quorate with 26 members present in person with 13 apologies submitted in advance, 3 at the meeting and no proxies.

### **2. President's address**

The President also welcomed everyone and stressed the unique visit opportunities presented by the Trust while respecting the privacy concerns of their owners, citing the Spring 2019 guided tour of an East Berkshire garden not normally open to the public and the Summer guided tours of Rooksnest near Lambourn in 2018 and Folly Farm near Sulhamstead in West Berkshire in 2019. She also commented that visits to neighbouring counties, such as the 2018 Summer visit to Buscot Park, Oxfordshire, were in keeping with suggestions at the September ‘brainstorming meeting’ and subsequent members’ consultation. She then referred to the ‘true celebration’ at Englefield of July 2019 and the August 2019 visit to Winchester Cathedral and city gardens, thanking members Anne and Mark Lovett for their enlightening tour of the former. Last but not least she thanked all the committee for their hard work, including Ellen Crumly and especially Indra Townsend, who was now resigning as a Trustee, commenting that Indra and her husband David had both been stalwart supporters of the Trust since its beginning and hosting an early BGT Summer visit with tea in their lovely Pang Valley garden.

### **3. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting on 12th October 2018**

The minutes had been posted on the website with hard copies being available at the meeting. The minutes of the 2018 AGM were adopted by all members present. There were no matters arising. Proposer: Ben Viljoen; Seconder: Bettina Kirkham.

#### **4. Chairman's report**

Charles Elly stated that the 2018-2019 Directors' Report and Accounts had been agreed by the Trustees and submitted to Companies House as well as being posted on the website for some weeks with copies available at the meeting.

He seconded the President's thanks to Ellen Crumbly for her contribution to the Trust during her short term on the committee prior to other commitments requiring her attention. He also thanked Indra Townsend, who had always encouraged the Committee and has the ability to make everyone who met her feel more cheerful, and who would be missed following her resignation. He then mentioned that while his term of office had continued beyond that of his predecessor, now BGT President, he was very pleased that Bettina Kirkham had agreed to take on this role at the start of 2020. Meanwhile the committee had appointed her as Deputy Chairman, a role which he had held prior to becoming the Chairman. He also welcomed Bruce McKenzie-Boyle and Alison Mihail, supporting their election as committee members following their co-option last year. In conclusion, Charles Elly mentioned the continuing support of Janet Fuller as Vice-Chair, Hugh Simon's careful management as Treasurer, Fiona Hope as Secretary, Peter Thorn as Minutes Secretary and the work of John Salmon to maintain and manage the website.

#### **5. Treasurer's report**

Hugh Simon reported a net surplus of £1,610 for the financial year ended 31st March 2019 leaving a cash balance of £18,728, including £10,000 on 95 days' notice at the Nationwide Building Society earning minimal interest. The Trust's income continued to be mainly from subscriptions and donations, which included £274 donated by Christina Hill Williams and £232 Gift Aid from two-thirds of members' subscriptions. In addition to £457 spent on BGT's affiliation to The Gardens Trust and insurance, BGT's expenditure included £208 on promotion and only £338 for website hosting costs as John Salmon, who manages the website, does not charge for his time. Hugh Simon also noted that while the aim remained to break even from events, the current cash balance had been reduced by the Trust subsidising some costs of the tenth anniversary celebrations at Englefield.

Finally, Hugh Simon thanked Janet Fuller for her excellent keeping of membership records, which had been a great help at the end of year reconciliation, and Brian Tubman for continuing to act as Examiner of BGT's accounts.

## **6. Adoption of the Directors' Report and Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2019**

The Directors' Report and Statement of Accounts for the financial year ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019, as approved by the Independent Examiner and submitted to Companies House, was adopted by all members present.

Proposer: Alison Mihail; Seconder: Bruce McKenzie-Boyle.

## **7. Election of Trustees:**

7.1 In accordance with the Articles of Association, no Trustees were due for re-election this year.

7.2 Having been co-opted by the Trustees during the year, the following Trustees were elected for a term of three years in accordance with the Articles of Association:

Bruce McKenzie-Boyle, proposed by Helen Parvin; seconded by Bettina Kirkham; all in favour.

Alison Mihail, proposed by Janet Fuller; seconded by Bettina Kirkham; all in favour.

## **8. Any Other Business**

There being no other business the AGM concluded.

**Fiona Hope, 10<sup>th</sup> December 2019**  
**Executive Secretary, Berkshire Gardens Trust.**