

# **Minutes of BWGA AGM held on 9th March 2013 @ 65 Albany Road St Leonards on Sea TN38 OLJ.**

## **Bohemia Walled Garden Association AGM Saturday 2nd March 2013**

10.00 a.m. at The Independent Church, Albany Road.

Present Bob Hart, Lesley Bruce, Darren Windley, Michel Guille, Sally Hick, Christine M'Baye, Linda Bell, Susan Thomson, Mary Dawson, Mark Thomas and Beccy McCray.

Apologies Juliet Wickham and Matt Windley

Minutes of the previous AGM were read and approved.

Management Committee Report was read by the Chair Bob Hart.

Treasurer's report was read by the treasurer Chris M'Baye and approved.

It was unanimously approved that the HVA will continue as the Independent examiner of accounts for 2012.

All the present officers stood down and Mary Dawson took over the Chair. All officers were prepared to continue in office and there were no other candidates proposed.

Chair – Bob Hart; proposed by Susan Thomson and seconded by Michel Guille

Secretary – Susan Thomson; proposed by Lesley Bruce and seconded by Christine M'Baye

Treasurer – Christine M'Baye; proposed by Michel Guille and seconded by Leslie Bruce

Minutes secretary – Sally Hick; proposed by Mary Dawson and seconded by Susan Thomson

The Chair expressed a need for more people to take part in the management committee. He said that Mary had been working tirelessly on events but will need support. Mary was willing to continue as organiser and so Michel Guille nominated Mary Dawson as Special Projects Organiser and Darren Windley seconded.

Health and Safety Officer – Darren Windley; Christine M'Baye proposed and Mary Dawson seconded.

Linda Bell was invited to put together the newsletter by Christine M'Baye and the committee; Christine M'Baye proposed and Mary Dawson seconded.

Michel Guille no longer wants to be on the committee.

Survey Feedback report was given by Mary Dawson.

A vote was taken on applying for grants to install a waterless toilet, which was unanimously in favour.

The Business/Action Plan is being re-written in the light of the survey by Christine M'Baye and Mary Dawson. Christine introduced the major projects which she, and the committee, felt needed a subcommittee to take forward.

The Wall Sue clarified the fact that under the terms of the lease there is a legal obligation to *try* to repair the wall using bricks, even though the cost will be approximately £70,000 including VAT and contingency fees. Bob reminded the meeting that an application had been made for The Big Lottery of £50,000 but came second. Most grants/funds require additional monies and so it would not be unrealistic to start raising funds little by little. Although the Council has no money at present, if the majority of the money were raised they may well give some financial support.

Darren asked if the wall had any listed status and if once repaired, the council might want to sell the garden. Bob told us that it has no listing status, and as the garden is part of a larger area considered as a nature reserve, it is not likely that it would be sold.

Several ideas were suggested to raise funds:- Display a target board in the garden showing the percentage of the total raised. Break down the costs ie. Bricks, labour etc. Encourage people to sponsor a brick. Hire a fundraiser who would be paid a percentage of the funds they raise.

It was decided that a subcommittee for the wall (Linda Bell, Beccy McCray, Darren Windley, Mark Thomas and Christine M'Baye) would meet together with Susan Thomson as advisor at Linda Bell's home.

Maintenance Christine told the meeting that a monthly work day had not really worked in the way it was hoped. It was suggested that a scheduled rota may be helpful in encouraging people to volunteer work. Susan pointed out that there was nothing that was urgent at present and so it was decided to place a white board in the garden where a rolling list of maintenance jobs could be seen and anyone could take on a task at any time. Christine said she would get a suitable board.

Water Christine told us that the old Action Plan has included solar power for the garden which could be used for heating water. Darren pointed out that this is not cost effective at the present time and not really practical, given the location. Lesley requested the purchase of a calor gas powered urn and a trolley to transport gas cylinders, so that event organisers could be more self reliant. This idea was unanimously agreed.

As educational and community projects are important to encourage participation and would help with grant applications, Christine asked the meeting for ideas for engagement. Mary suggested making contact with the Wonky W.I.

Hastings Arts offer walks round the wood and garden and it was thought that other groups including the disadvantaged could be interested. This idea had been put to Susan by Ros who was not present, but will be asked to 'set the ball rolling'.

Lesley suggested mutual fundraising events with other groups. Beccy suggested a 'pop up' supper club using produce from the garden cooked by catering students.

Mary suggested having educational workshops on herbs, wildlife, composting etc. A general gardening workshop could include plot holders explaining their aims, methods, successes and failures on their particular plot. These could generate approximately £5 per 'student'.

Fundraising events It was proposed to continue with events like film shows, open days including those in conjunction with Bohemia Village Fair. Mary is working on crafts for sale at two events outside of the garden. Christine has photographs of the garden which can be made into a calendar for sale. It was also suggested that produce from the garden be sold. Fresh vegetables available are sold at open days at present. Chutneys etc could be made for sale, but health and safety rules about reusing jars must be taken into account.

Bob pointed out that all of these events need to be publicised in the local paper as well as raising our profile by sending in stories and pictures. Linda said she would be willing to do this.

Mary is making links with partner agencies in the neighbourhood such as the museum. The garden would be very suitable for a murder mystery event or creative writing.

Bob gave an outline of imminent events in which HWG is participating :- Curiosity Bazaar at "The Printworks" Clarendon on 9th March, "Book Fayre" at St Peter's church hall on 16th March, "The Big Dig" led by Movable Feast on 11th & 12th March.

Darren suggested that keeping a running total of people attending events in the garden might be useful for fundraising purposes. This was agreed.

The Newsletter will be published in April and September.

A.O.B Michel raised the problem of misbehaving children in the garden. Susan has put clear notices in the garden to show where children are not allowed. She felt that the only way forward was to nip the problem in the bud by speaking to the parents as soon as a potential problem arises.

12.06 the Meeting ended.