

**Minutes of the 67th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of  
WORTHING ALLOTMENTS AND GARDENS ASSOCIATION  
held in The Gordon Room  
on THURSDAY 12th NOVEMBER 2015 at 7.30 p.m.**

*46 members attended with twenty apologies*

The **minutes** were accepted as an accurate record

Apologies: Arthur Burt, John & Sarah Scrace, Guy Wheatley, Julia Carette, Tony Sankey, Frieda Carr, Colin and Peggy Mulholland, Sarah Payne, David White, Angela Read, Jim Pillow, Chris Daniel, Jennifer Cuer-Greene, Leslie Greene, Judy Kara, Cathy Smith, Mr and Mrs Lethby

**President's Welcome & Matters Arising**

The Chair welcomed members in the absence of Arthur Burt who had reluctantly announced his retirement from the role of President. The committee and members were saddened to hear that Arthur was no longer able to continue as President and recorded their thanks for his many years of work on behalf of the Association.

**Chairs Report.**

The Chair proposed a number of amendments to WAGA's objectives to reflect how allotments and the Association have evolved since the constitution was written.

The objectives of the Association shall be:

~~a) To promote the interests of allotment holders and gardeners and to instigate action on behalf of and for the benefit of members;~~

To promote allotmenting and gardening and to instigate action on behalf of and for the benefit of members in that context;

~~b) To represent the interests of allotment holders & other members in dealings with Local Authorities and other such bodies;~~

To represent the interests of allotment holders & other members, in particular to assist WAM and the Council in promoting the success and enjoyment of allotmenting, and to act as two thirds of the panel of appeal in tenant disputes

c) To negotiate advantageous rates for members when purchasing horticultural materials, seeds and sundries which shall be sold through the Association stores;

~~d) To assist with the appointment of site overseers by the Council and its deputies so as to ensure good management and cultivation of allotments;~~

e) To arrange for instruction in horticulture; also lectures, exhibitions, competitions and social events and to organise the distribution of relevant literature;

f) To maintain the publishing of Association news through the Newsletter and other formats.  
*Proposed Margot Hollingdale. Seconded Tony Payne*

*NB for objective B: The current WAM rule states that:*

*WAM appeal rules: "If the tenant thinks the NTQ is unfair they can appeal formally by contacting the secretary, who will convene a meeting between the tenant, the chair or WAM and the chair and secretary of WAGA. The two chairs and the secretary will make a decision which shall be binding on WAM."*

John Nutt asked how WAGA officers could be found to sit on the appeal panel given that many individuals on the WAGA committee are also officers for WAM. It was explained that in the event that the WAGA Chair and Secretary were not able to sit on the appeal panel, other WAGA officers can sit in their place. Daryl Alden (Treasurer WAGA) suggested that a procedure should be written into the WAM Policies and Procedures.

The proposal to amend WAGA's objectives was carried unanimously. In subsequent WAGA and WAM meetings it was agreed that WAGA members of the appeal panel should not be members of the WAM Exec..

### **Secretary's Report**

Now that WAM (Worthing Allotment Management) negotiates directly with WBC on allotment matters (with the exclusion of Humber Avenue – which is still managed by the council) the Association's role has shifted away from many allotment matters it has been involved with in the past. This enables us to focus more on the social aspect of the Association and to focus equally on gardeners.

The Secretary asked how WAGA could encourage the uptake of membership from gardeners. Whilst WAGA is not stepping away from allotments and allotment holders, there are many gardeners in the Worthing area who might benefit from the Association shops and social activities.

The Secretary asked members to promote the Association to their fellow gardeners whenever they are able to.

### **Trading Secretary Report,**

Janet Robins explained that this had been her first year in the job and there had certainly been a lot to learn. Peter Everett, who did this job for many years previously, had been very kind and helped a great deal. She also recorded a big 'Thankyou' to John at WT who gave me lots of support and some really good ideas as to how to improve aspects of the job.

Janet has tried to continue with the aspects which she felt were still valid, but has started to implement some changes to try to start bringing the 3 shops up to date.

We continue to use Fargro and Kings as our main suppliers and have started using another company called Gardening Naturally for items which the other two do not supply.

We began with a sale of stock which had been sitting around, not selling for a few years.

When ordering the seeds this year we have tried to introduce a wider range of many of the varieties, paying special attention to include varieties which are more disease resistant.

We are also now stocking some flower seeds in all shops, namely Sweet Peas and Sunflowers which sold very well last year, and as this year will be Year of the Cosmos, we will be stocking these too.

There have been changes to the potato order too. There are some new varieties for pre-order and there are also a range of new varieties which will be sold on a first come, first served basis.

We have revamped the shop at Chesswood Farm, which is beginning to trade better and is generally a much nicer place to visit.

We also installed some new shelving at WT storeroom, which has made this a safer place to access stock.

There was a questionnaire relating to the shops in the Plotholder this year and all replies were positive. Although the response was small, it is fair to assume that if people were unhappy they would say so.

**Roundup:** There has been a lot in the news about this product, which, at the moment, we are still selling in all of our shops. After investigating this, and discussing it with a variety of people, Janet decided to continue to sell the stock we have, but will reconsider when we need to reorder. The product should be used with caution and people should read the instructions carefully.

### **Plans for the coming year.**

We will be updating the shop and storeroom at Humber Avenue site, hopefully before the beginning of next season. We may extend or amend our stock list to reflect our desire to attract more gardeners. Next Autumn we will consider offering a second variety of garlic and shallots for pre-order.

Thanks were recorded to Rik and Lorraine, who run the Chesswood shop, John who runs the shop at West Tarring and Peter who runs Humber Avenue shop as well as to all the volunteers who help throughout the year.

*Peter Hannam commented that there is no alternative on the market for Round Up as yet, and can recall watching fellow gardeners and allotment holders digging down deeper and*

deeper into the earth to remove the seemingly endless root of a perennial weed, often to no avail.

John Sadler said that a review of Round Up and other Glyphosate based weed killers will be released soon.

Richard Taylor added that Weedol is a good alternative, though not as effective as it used to be.

## Treasurers Report,

### WAGA Accumulated Fund at 30th September 2015

		Credit	Debit
Balance brought forward		16,363.00	
Surplus for the year		440.79	
		<u>£ 16,804</u>	
Represented by:		<b>2014 / 2015</b>	<b>2013 / 2014</b>
		Credit	Credit
Bank Accounts ( 30th Sep)	Interest Account	0.00	3,517.00
	Current Account	8,547.53	5,134.00
		<u>£ 8,547.53</u>	<u>£ 8,651.00</u>
Petty Cash		<u>£ 5.68</u>	
Cash in Tills	West Tarring	30.00	
	Chesswood	30.00	
	Humber	0.00	
		<u>£ 60.00</u>	<u>£ 62.00</u>
Stock at Cost Price	West Tarring	3,610.34	2,807.00
	Chesswood	2,083.00	1,368.00
	Humber	2,277.05	3,255.00
		<u>£ 7,970.39</u>	<u>£ 7,430.00</u>
Fargro Shares		<u>£ 220.00</u>	<u>£ 220.00</u>
Total Income		<u>£ 16,804</u>	<u>£ 16,363</u>

<b>Income and Expenditure 2014 / 2015 (stock adjusted)</b>				
			<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2013/14</b>
	<b>Income</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>Surplus</b>	
Shop	15,559.68	13,024.21	2,535.47	157.42
Social Activities	2,524.10	2,504.97	19.13	50.88
Annual Show	835.06	559.24	275.82	181.47
Plot Holder	130.00	1,068.00	-938.00	-622.50
Miscellaneous				-1,711.04
Facilities	0.00	1,516.22	-1,516.22	
Expenses (Consumables)	0.00	361.75	-361.75	
Printing (per sheet)	0.00	89.92	-89.92	
Mileage	0.00	221.72	-221.72	
Subscriptions	1,793.00	0.00	1,793.00	1,880.51
Donations	203.30	0.00	203.30	125.70
Dividends	572.00	0.00	572.00	
Interest	0.04	0.00	0.04	
Honoraria	0.00	1,587.00	-1,587.00	-1,630.00
Meeting Costs	0.00	243.36	-243.36	-253.00
	<b>£ 21,617.18</b>	<b>£ 21,176.39</b>	<b>£ 440.79</b>	<b>-£ 1,820.56</b>

### Questions:

Peter Hannam:

Q: Will WAGA be able to apply for external funding?

A: Yes. WAGA will explore the options for external funding. For example, improvements to the shop at Humber Avenue could be achieved with the help of a grant to secure the purchase of a shipping container.

Terry Edwards:

Q: Why was there a greater shop surplus for the trading year 2014-2015 than in the previous year 2013-2014?

A: As part of the overhaul of Trading, many old stock items which were not selling were sold at a reduced cost to make room for new and up-to-date stock. Tight stock control has also led to lower expenditure on new seeds etc.

## **Daryl Alden, as Treasurer, proposed that WAGA become a Company Limited By Guarantee (CLG)**

### **Why?**

Because, under present rules, the members of the committee would be personally liable for any debts, for example arising from a claim against insurance not covered by the policy. A CLG limits the risk to £1 for each member.

### **How?**

We need to submit a form to Companies House which adopts standard regulations or articles of association. They then register company directors and a company secretary as responsible for that company's behaviour, but also register all our members as members of the company, with one vote each at the AGM.

We also tell HMRC of our existence.

### **How much?**

To register the company costs £40. To submit an annual return costs £40 p.a.

### **What the implications?**

All WAGA members have one vote as members of WAGA Ltd.

Committee members/Directors have reduced personal liability.

We submit reports annually to Companies House and HMRC but, as a 'flat-trading' company operating for the good of our members, with no payments or dividends to members, we are not to be liable for tax from shop surplus.

If WAGA Ltd went bankrupt, each member would be liable for a maximum of £1 unless they left more than one year before the event.

### **Questions:**

Richard Taylor:

Q: As a CLG would WAGA need a registered office?

A: Yes, as a limited company WAGA would require a registered office. That would be the address of one of the Directors. We would not require actual office premises.

Q: Have other Societies/Associations done this?

A: Yes, many other mutual organisations like WAGA have become CLGs.

Peter Hannam:

Q: Will the WAGA shops and its trading status present any problems?

A: No. WAGA is a mutual organisation, which means that it does not generate profit, only surplus, which is used for the benefit of its members.

## **Proposal,**

That WAGA shall become WAGA Ltd, a company limited by guarantee. Seconded by Jack Powis

Vote carried unanimously with 46 votes – plus 6 postal votes - and no abstentions.

## **Show Secretary's Report**

On Saturday, 22nd August, WAGA held their 38th Annual Horticultural Show, known as 'The Great Village Show', for the fifth time at Oak Grove College. For gardeners this has been another difficult year with a cold windy spring and low rainfall but amazingly the number of entries was one of the highest on record with lots of new members and children taking part. It was well attended.

The hall looked sensational, with so much glorious fruit, vegetables, flowers and cookery on display. Outside, in the gardens, there were stalls selling all manner of things including allotment produce, homemade cakes, plants and crafts. Local Beekeepers John and Sarah Scrace were there, explaining the wonderful world of bees and selling glorious honey produced on the Allotment Site. People sat around enjoying tea and cake and soaking up the sun shine and warm friendly atmosphere or walking around the College's award winning gardens.

Exhibits reached a very high standard and it was pleasing to see newcomers picking up awards alongside the experienced showmen.

Peter Webb had a good afternoon winning Best Exhibit of Vegetables, Most Points in the Flower Section, Collection of Vegetables, "Master Gardener" and the Banksian Medal. Peter Green won Best Exhibit of Fruit, Bob Bingham scored the most points in the Vegetable Section while Helen Broad won Best Exhibit in the Flower Section and Best Exhibit in Show for her glorious bowl of mixed flowers. Brenda Cox took the Rose Trophy and the Floral Art Cup, Celia Powis won the Cookery Cup and husband Jack shared The Wine Cup in a dead heat with Mick Russell. Janet Robins won The Best Allotment award, Best Front Garden went to Peter Mazillius and in the novice section new boy Geoff Ford won Most Points and Collection of Vegetables while Pearl Morgan's runner beans were Best Exhibit. In the children's section we had a large display of lovely entries and Siana Boyd won Best Exhibit for her wonderful miniature garden and the most points trophy went to Dulcie Duguid.

The lasting memory of the afternoon was the very friendly atmosphere everywhere, with so many happy people enjoying themselves.

## **Election of Officers**

Hon. President	Vacant
Chair, newsletter editor	Paul Eustice
Secretary	Rik Pease
Trading Secretary	Janet Robins
Show Secretary	Jack Powis

Treasurer and webmaster	Daryl Alden
Membership Sec & Newsletter	Margo Hollingdale
Social Secretary	Vacant
Provider of cake	Judy Kara
Auditor	John Venner

Proposed – Ian Dunster

Seconded – Bob Scott

The officers were elected unanimously.

The committee also thanked John Deeprise, the previous webmaster, for his work during the year on the WAGA website and forum.

*During the introduction and election of officers, the Membership and Social Secretaries each gave their reports.*

### **Membership Secretary**

Membership is at 623 members. 328 members have renewed their subscriptions. There are 110 new members, mostly located in the Chesswood Farm and West Tarring areas.

Plotholder distribution is 368 by email, and 255 by paper copy.

### **Social Secretary**

Tony Payne, who has been the Social Secretary for over three years, explained that he felt it was the right time to step down. 2015 was a busy year with nine social events including Barbecues and Breakfasts, outings to Kings Seeds and the Harveys Brewery, a Harvest Festival celebration at West Tarring, and a Bonfire night celebration on Chesswood Farm.

Tony will still organise the Annual Dinner for 2016.

Tony thanked his wife Sheila, who is always helping him with planning and running events, the WAGA shop volunteers for all of their support with breakfasts and barbecues, and everyone involved with the Great Village Show, the highlight of the WAGA calendar.

**Members expressed their thanks to Tony for all his hard work.**

**There were no further questions or Any Other Business.**

### **President's Cup**

Paul Eustice presented the Presidents Cup to Janet Robins, who thanked all of the shop volunteers for all of their hard work through the year.

*Peter Hannam thanked the committee for all of their endeavours throughout the year.*

The Chair declared the 66<sup>th</sup> WAGA AGM over, and the attendees retired for cheese and wine.