

## FRIENDS OF VALLEY GARDENS, HARROGATE

### Minutes of Annual General Meeting held in the Brostoff Centre, St Peter's Church, Harrogate on Thursday 12 March 2015.

**Present:** Jane Blayney (Chairman), Robert Grange, Anne Grange, Jon Collins, Neil Hind, Christine Stewart, Michael Hine, Patrick Kilburn, Sue Wood, Paula Collier, Simon Collier, Richard Dobson, Toni Brisby, Liz Chidlow, Tony Sissons, Chrissy Moore, Simon Roberts, Des Smeaton, Peter Blayney.

**Apologies:** Jenny Kimpton, Kim Wilson, Martin Fish, Jim Clark

**Welcome:** The Chairman welcomed those present and the speaker, Christine Stewart

**Minutes of last AGM:** These were accepted as a correct record

**Matters arising:** None

**Officers' reports:** These had been circulated and are attached. Jane Blayney commented on the more salient points of her comprehensive Chairman's report. Jon Collins advised that the membership had changed little over the year at approximately 130. Due to the degree of activity taking place on last year's 1940s Day it had not been possible to have a membership drive too. Anne Grange presented the prepared accounts for the year (copy attached). Their acceptance was proposed by Robert Grange and seconded by Liz Chidlow with all in favour. Special thanks were due to Jane Blayney for her considerable fundraising efforts. Liz Chidlow commented on behalf of Tony Sissons that there had been steady support from 6 to 11 volunteer gardeners and the Peat Garden had been considerably enhanced. This had contributed to Harrogate's Gold Award at the Britain in Bloom ceremony last October.

**Report from Patrick Kilburn, HBC Head of Parks & Environmental Services:** There were significant financial pressures on HBC. Budgets were being reduced year on year which translated into pressure on people. A record 3.1 million visitors to the Valley Gardens had been recorded in the last 12 months, due in no small way to the efforts of the Friends. The Old Magnesia Well Pump Room and surrounding area had been transformed. Over £71,000 had been raised. Not only had the building been restored but it would have a true and living meaning in the future. Grateful thanks were due to members of the Friends.

**Elections:** Officers had agreed to serve for a further year as follows:

Chairman: Jane Blayney

Vice Chairman with responsibility for Membership: Jon Collins

Treasurer: Anne Grange

Secretary: Peter Blayney

Volunteer Gardeners: Tony Sissons

Marketing/Publicity Officer: Kim Wilson

Young Persons' Representative: Sally Haslewood

Per the Constitution all Trustees stand down annually. The following had offered themselves for re-election: Jane Blayney, Peter Blayney, Jim Clark, Anne Grange, Jon Collins

Proposed Richard Dobson, seconded Neil Hind, all in favour

Additionally, Liz Chidlow had been nominated, having been proposed by Anne Grange and seconded by Peter Blayney. All were in favour.

**Future Projects:** Patrick Kilburn would be following up on the survey of the Bandstand but pointed out that the general landscape was in need of attention as well and could not be ignored. Many of the trees and shrubs were past their best and there was plenty on which the Friends could focus. The Harrogate Mumblers had highlighted the problem of smoking in the playground. From the survey the consensus was in favour of a ban and, although it would be impossible to enforce it was hoped that peer pressure would succeed. The report would be accepted and the issue made public in April.

**Any other business:** Peter Blayney asked members to notify as many people as possible of the date of the 1940s Open Day. It had just been learned that, weather permitting, there would be a Spitfire flypast on 28 June. Helpers were needed.

Jane Blayney advised that there would be an Open Garden event at 23 York Road on 14 June with cakes and plants for sale.

**Date of next Annual General Meeting:** Thursday 17 March 2016 at 7.30 pm in the Brostoff Centre, St Peter's Church.

**There followed an illustrated talk by Christine Stewart describing the work done by many groups and individuals towards the Starbeck in Bloom project.**

To conclude the evening the Chairman thanked Christine for her fascinating contribution.

**P J Blayney: Secretary**  
**Blayney: Chairman**

**J E**