

DRAFT

Whissonsett & District Horticultural Society and Garden Club

AGM

Thursday 30th April 2026 at 7.30pm

Apologies for Absence

Were received from Mary and Tony Flook, Barbara Frary and Lorna Phayre.

Present

Kevin Allenby, Linda Allenby, Andrew Babicz (speaker), Jenny Cobby, Martin Gill, Kay Gingell, Linda Green, Sian Griffiths, Ruth Lindsell, Jenny Jones, Pat Jones, Warwick Jones, Sarah Mann, Clive Nelson, Karen Nelson, Carole Read and Ken Read.

Chair's Welcome

The Chair, Sian Griffiths, welcomed everyone to the meeting and that it was nice to see some new faces as well as current members.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last AGM (2025) were distributed. These were approved although it was recognised that not all attendees' names were mentioned in the Minutes. This will be rectified at future AGMs.

Treasurer's Report

A set of accounts was distributed. Kevin ran through the main points, explaining that Lloyds Bank have changed club accounts to community accounts and now charge for services (£4.25 per month and extra if cheques are raised). Income from the two shows was slightly down because we are no longer able to run a tombola. The evening meetings still run at a loss because of the increasing cost of speakers, which includes their mileage costs. He thanked Andrew Babicz, our AGM speaker, for waiving his fee and costs.

There was an overspend of £345 last year and the bank balance as at 31 March 2026 was £1,195.

A full set of accounts is attached to the Minutes.

Chair's Report

The Chair, Sian Griffiths, first thanked Kevin, Linda and Mary for their work on the committee over the year and also thanked Jenny Cobby and Jenny Jones for offering to run the refreshments for the evening. She also thanked Andrew Babicz for kindly giving a talk after the official AGM business.

Sian reported that the Society, in common with many societies, is struggling with reduced membership and increased speaker costs. Some local horticultural societies have had to close. Covid had a negative effect on societies in general and people are getting more information on line.

She had been looking back at the Society records and in 1948 there were 45 people at the AGM. The Society has brought a lot of pleasure to people over many years and continues to do so. There are many positives such as learning from good speakers, meeting and making friends as well as several successes at the Sandringham Flower Show - 4 golds, 1 silver gilt and a Best in Show over the last few years. The Society's Summer and Autumn Shows have proved to be very popular.

She said that, as well as trying to encourage new members, the Society also needs more committee members because, at present, there are only 4 committee members and that is not enough to continue as in previous years. The present committee had therefore planned a reduced programme of events for the coming year. She said that if the Society can't attract more committee members the current four committee members have decided that, although they enjoy their roles, they cannot continue after this year without more help so asked people to consider joining the committee. If people wanted some time to think about whether they would like to join the committee they could be co-opted during the year and to please contact one of the committee to have a chat about it.

She said if things didn't change the Society would have to close down after this year.

Suggested Programme for 2026

It had been noted over the last couple of years that entries for the Summer Show were down, particularly in the fruit and vegetable categories, but also flowers. The committee therefore thought that it would be better to just have one show in the Autumn.

This does have the disadvantage, however, that the best of some flowers, particularly roses and sweet peas, will be over so it was suggested having a small flower show in July specifically for those categories.

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The following programme was proposed:-

- Thursday 11 June 6.30 pm - Visit to Southgate Barn. Sign-up sheet available.
- Thursday 2 July (evening) - Flower Show in Whissonsett Village Hall
- Saturday 5 September - Autumn Show in Whissonsett Village Hall
- Thursday 15 October - Evening meeting - speaker or demonstration. TBA

This means that there will be 2 evening meetings with speakers, 1 evening Show, an Autumn Show and an outing. If any other opportunities come up members will be informed and the society website will be updated (wdgc.uk).

Sian asked for comments on these proposals. Jenny Jones brought up the fact that membership is £10 and that guests only pay £2 for evening meetings, which didn't seem fair and maybe didn't encourage people to join. Pat Jones said it was important for members to pay a fee to cover the basic running of the Society, which included insurance and also members are kept informed of any changes to the programme by email. Sian said the committee would have a look at the fee for guests.

Jenny Jones mentioned that Eastons are doing some interesting trips this year, to Northampton and Suffolk if people are interested.

Election of Officers

There being no other volunteers, the present committee agreed to be re-elected.

- Chair - Sian Griffiths (proposed Pat Jones, seconded Linda Allenby)
- Treasurer - Kevin Allenby (proposed Sian Griffiths, seconded Warwick Jones)
- Secretary - Mary Flook (proposed Kevin Allenby, seconded Ken Read)
- Committee Member - Linda Allenby (proposed Sian Griffiths, seconded Pat Jones).

Any Other Business

Pat Jones thanked Sian and the committee for their work through the year. There being no other business, the meeting was closed and members were able to enjoy refreshments and a talk on "Seasonal Container Gardening" by Andrew Babicz, followed by a raffle.

Signed (Chair)

Date