

***Crowhurst & District Horticultural Society***  
***Annual General Meeting – Chairman's Report***  
Friday 29th August 2025 – Crowhurst Village Hall

Hello to you all. Thank you for coming along this evening to join us on this AGM that we chose to run earlier this year so that Oliver can attend as he is home for a few days just now and this time of year we hoped to have better weather for you to attend.

Also as we had such a poor turn out last year when the AGM was held at Mantel farm and we were not sure people found that easy to get to in October with the weather inclement also!

Looking back from late October last year we have held two very successful Jumble sales - the last of which was in February this year - which are always so well and kindly supported by helpers and customers. These are great fundraisers, although they do keep Alan a bit busy collecting donations at times from around the local area, and all takes time to arrange as do all our events . Thank you to those of you that always assist us at these events and others throughout the year long.

We held our Spring flower show in March which was well supported and we had above usual entry numbers and Oliver will explain about this in more detail in his report.. It was a very pretty show and we now look forward to our Autumn's pretty flower show which is to be held at this village hall on 20<sup>th</sup> September. We hope this show will also be a great success, despite the heat waves we have had this Summer which have caused such a severe drought and have affected our plants so much despite, on our part of watering every night or morning!!! However the rain has now arrived at last, so lets hope a few plants and vegetables may recover in time for the show possibly???

We wish to alert you all to the fact there are many other classes you can enter apart from vegetables /flowers/produce including Honey, Crafts, Cookery, Photographs Preserves, etc, so we so hope many will take part and help us produce a wonderful show for all of us and all our visitors to enjoy. The visitor's choice award is very successful each flower show and will continue.

I continue also to encourage children to enter their specific classes and again I am also sending out a pretty A4 printed plant picture with a Butterfly on it for children to colour in and complete as they so wish, which will be displayed and judged at the show. This will be produced online also for people to print off and in all our correspondence that are sent out. I am also asking children's groups to try to get their attendants to complete these where possible to hang around the room on show day- which was very effective last year alongside their other unique entries. People love to see the children's entries.

Re Photographs - we were asked at last AGM if we could somehow print photos that entrants wished to enter if they did not have facilities or time to get them printed themselves off their digital devices? We did not require however to purchase a special printer, but Oliver kindly got any that were sent to us, by e-mail printed at the local shops, which worked well and they all looked great – thanks so much for these.

We ran the Village market in July with Gerry for the Brownies/Rainbows running the kitchen refreshments etc We held our annual plant stall there but we were rather lacking on donations this year but managed to raise some funds from this event as did Gerry for which we are pleased to confirm. We were unable to hold a plant stall at the village Fayre this year as we were away and had not realised the date had been changed this year, before we booked this break and sadly no other members were able to take on this role for us.

This season we have held three lovely and interesting visits for all to attend. The first in May was a lovely talk and walk by Jay at the beautiful Ashburnham Place. This is such a wonderful unspoilt landscaped area with it's walled vegetable garden and amazing lakes and trees and flower borders and even more tasty Orangery Restaurant! All that attended had a great sunny and happy afternoon - photos on our website

Next in July we visited Broad Street House in Icklesham which was a private house that owner Sally and her husband and sister, allowed us to visit as a group. It was such a stunning and well kempt garden despite the heat wave, and the house and surrounding beautiful countryside area was so lovely to see. And I think we all left wishing we had such a beautiful home and garden ourselves! Sally and her family were so hospitable and offered us such lovely homemade refreshments after which were very well received.

Finally back on August 19<sup>th</sup> we held the third visit to Battle Cemetery - which has a wonderful meadow area where Michael Blencowe wildlife and Butterfly expert held a brilliant presentation in the hall there and after a field walk amongst the meadow to see if we could spot species of the Butterflies that he had discussed. On such a lovely sunny day we were very successful seeing many species he had talked about! - Super afternoon had by all. This event attracted a few more members than the others, but as with all our events I have had to send out invites to other societies and interested parties to make each event viable, which is such a shame as they are primarily organised - at sometimes great effort for our **own** members to enjoy Please see all of our trips and all events that we have completed on our website where you will see some great photos.

This year Alan and I have made visits ourselves to places which we think maybe of interest to you all in future visits and I am happy to arrange them IF more members are keen to attend in 2026.

We have also managed to negotiate a 10% discount from Rother View nursery at Westfield. if you purchase any of their plants. (produce your society membership card) This nursery has some beautiful plants for sale and they have won Gold with their entries at both Kew and Chelsea Gardens for especially their pretty Alpine gardens which they sell at Westfield. The owner is more than happy for us to attend the nursery to see her prepare one oof these in an afternoon - so that is one place I would like to arrange a trip to next year if people would like to go?

Further [Ed's Nursery](#) form Staplecross which hold a stall each Saturday at Battle Market Square also have offered our members 15% off any plants purchased there on Market days - so please present your membership cards and receive your discounts They have many super plants there also and are a small family nursery that we personally have supported for a long time.

One other thing last AGM people asked about was going on trips like to RHS Wisley - but we know this would be unviable to hire a coach - as other societies have offered just that to their members and ours and the cost would be £25 each to take the coach. No one here took that offer up and they have had to cancel this coach trip now, as no one wanted to pay this amount for the coach - preferring to go by car - despite the horrid journey! The coach was disbanded and they have a membership over 100!!! No chance for us I feel therefore! But if people want to attend any R.H.S. garden Alan has been given authority now to **share a card** which allows **Buy One and get one FREE ENTRY** to such gardens, so just think and ask Alan re this anytime please for members only if you wish to travel to one.

I hope you are still able to listen to more detail from Alan our Treasurer and Membership secretary!

Thank you