

Crowhurst & District Horticultural Society

Annual General Meeting – Chair's Report

Friday 28th August 2026 – Crowhurst Village Hall

Hello everyone. It is great to see you all. Thank you for coming along this evening we are glad you are here as we have a few acute issues to discuss together.

Before doing so and on looking back over the last Horti. Year, As always our January Jumble Sale did well and we are so grateful that we have a lot of support and kind helpers on the days and plenty of willing customer also. It is fun and thank you so much to all who help. Our next one will be in October so again we will require many hands to make light work please and plenty of Jumble donated!

Our Spring show last March was sadly low on entries. Oliver can confirm more than me but I believe we only had 50 entries as against many more on past shows. We had to decide without delay as to what to do from the Wednesday and decided to cancel the judges; have a small show and we obtained a lot of practical help and assistance from our Horti. Friends from Bexhill. Yvonne came across and judged all in her affiliated judging roll and we pulled together between us a small but thankfully a pretty show for our visitors it was however a bit concerning and stressful and somewhat sad.

We held our annual plant & seed stall/sale as part of the village market in June which did quite well. We had a bumper amount of plant donations and several customers and we were glad to be able to contribute to the school's fundraising morning. However it poured and we all got soaked! That was the last heavy rain we had until the hot weather that followed all summer alongside 5xheatwaves which caused a drought!!! Poor gardens!

During this hot summer I had begun to plan several trips out to gardens etc but as it was so hot I felt people would probably not wish to attend.

Instead I encouraged all to visit the many beautiful gardens locally that The Hospice has as open days throughout the season - and also those of the National Garden Scheme which covers further afield also as people so wished which also helped such a great cause of course also. These gardens tend to have differing open days too, which I also thought may slot better into people's busy lives. Alan and I managed to visit a few of these but I do not know if anyone else went to any but hope you enjoyed them if you did.

We had a lovely talk back in April from Jay about "Nature under our Nose" Jay was head gardener at Ashburnham Place before she moved onto Penhurst Place and we saw her when we all visited a year or so ago. Jay also invited us all to Penhurst in July which I sent out details about to you all and Alan and I attended and we had a lovely afternoon. A wonderful house and gardens. Sadly their large pond suffered from the severe drought and the ducks they have there were having a splash in a small but ideal little refuge for them. Again I am unsure if anyone else went along but I hope so. It was very hot though!!!

I made contact with Merriment's garden centre nursery and cafe in Hurst Green to arrange a visit for us all but when I call they advised me that they had an open day free to all in June so I alerted you all to that as it is so nice there. I hope some of you attended but sadly Alan and I were away so could not go and missed that treat sadly. Please let me know how it went if you did manage to get there.

Further a similar thing occurred when I looked into trying to work out the feasibility of visiting Herstmonceux Castle and Gardens just awhile back and again found out that it was open to all free of charge for their annual N.G.S. support. Again I hope maybe some of you saw this and went

along. Alan and I went and loved it. We had not been there for a long time and were impressed with it all especially the wonderful gardens which are so worth a visit.

Also on our agenda was to try to sort out a visit to the Old Rose Nursery at Northiam. Alan and I went along to check that it would be good to arrange a visit but it was during a heatwave and the Roses were beautiful still but beginning to complete their first flowering. It was very pretty but there are no loos or cafe nearby so we thought it best if anyone interested popped along next June to enjoy the beautiful flowers they have and sit in their pretty garden, and enjoy the perfume as you so wish but it would not really be ideal to go as a group trip It is only "down the road" from Great Dixter so perhaps you could pop in if you are going there one day.

Now we are attempting to plan for our forthcoming Autumn Flower Show in September on 19th at this hall, but have hit large issues with such a hard summer of droughts and hot sunshine following 5x heatwaves and we fear we may not again have enough people to enter flowers plants and produce to have a viable show.

We so need your opinions and knowledge of what you may have to enter please so we can decide. We hope you have looked online where possible to seek out the classes and we have several schedules here for you all to peruse and let us know what you feel you may have to show please as we do need to decide without delay.

Please have a good chat amongst each other at the break please and let us know

Meanwhile we have a few nice things to look ahead at this coming season. I have arranged for Douglas Edworthy to come along and give us his lovely and fun talk on Fungi He used to live here in Crowhurst and spent a great deal of time in the Forewood where his interest in this subject started I hope many of you and anyone else who may like to attend can come along and join us this will be held here in the hall on 17th October at 2.30 Free to members and just £4 for any visitors.

The following Saturday we will be having our second Jumble Sale in the hall on 24th October in the morning as is usual and again if people could let me know if they can help us sort/sell that would be great and pls. spread the word that we need Jumble but no large pieces of furniture please.

Finally just before Christmas I have arranged for a lovely very pleasant local florist to come along in November to the hall to run a Christmas Wreath Making workshop I attended one she ran before and she is great and it is such fun details will follow – again free to members and that will be £5 for visitors. ALL WELCOME. We will have a great time and have mince pies and maybe at tipple or teas and coffees if you prefer Marilyn is full of fun and very experienced and she will offer a lovely time to all.

I think that is well enough from me only to say we have also this year had many offers to attend events that other horti. societies have on offer – some of which I have attended. Bexhill and Westfield also offered our members the opportunity to go with them to Wisley using their RHS affiliation. Two of our members attended and thoroughly enjoyed it. I have posted these all online to you on our newsletter/website and hope some of you may have attended and that latest one of from Battle Horti and Floral society – a talk by Fergus Garrett from Great Dixter which is being held at Battle Memorial Hall on 16th September @ £5 each starts at 2.30 Alan Gavin requests that we book this via himself direct please on his contact on the Poster.

Will be GREAT. Alan and I are already booked in and hope some of you will also join us!

Now over to the holder of our finances Alan our Treasurer and we will continue with this meeting.

Mary B 28/8/26