

Crowhurst & District Horticultural Society

Annual General Meeting – Show Secretary's Report

Friday 28th August 2026 – Crowhurst Village Hall

Hello everyone. Since our last AGM, we have held two flower shows; last year's Autumn Show and this year's Spring.

The Autumn Show last year had a lower number of entries than a typical Autumn show, with around 135 entries from 21 exhibitors. Dahlia numbers were particularly low, suffering from difficult growing conditions and a dwindling number of dahlias growers left who exhibit. We also had zero children's entries which is a shame to see, but is sadly not particularly unusual in recent shows. All in all this meant 21 out of our 74 planned classes had no entries at all. All was not lost however, as other sections did better, with photography and honey still well supported. I have reworked the schedule for this Autumn Show to reduce the number of dahlia classes and introduce some new vegetable ones. Hopefully this will inspire some more entries.

This year's Spring show back in March was also a challenge. In terms of numbers, we had 75 entries from 14 exhibitors which was not significantly lower than a typical Spring show. However, again 10 out of the 40 classes had no entries at all, leading us to take the decision on the Thursday before the show to cancel our judges and refund any entry fees paid. The judges fees represent a significant proportion of the cost of organising a show and we felt that rather than cancel the show altogether, it would be better to carry on as best we could. This actually ended up working well and we received positive feedback on how the show looked. We were particularly pleased with the number of visitors who came to see the show in the afternoon, which makes all the effort worth it.

We are gearing up for our Autumn Show next month, but we are well aware that the hot and dry summer has made growing conditions very difficult this year. All in all, our shows now depend upon a small group of regular exhibitors who, while we are very grateful for their continuing support, does make every show vulnerable to getting low entries. It only takes one or two regulars to drop our numbers to significantly drop. This is not sustainable into the medium to long term.

We are always keen to hear of ideas for future show classes. We aim to publish the Spring show schedule at the beginning of February and the Autumn schedule in the beginning of July. Please let any member of the committee know if you have any ideas, requests or suggestions.