



ROEHAMPTON GARDEN SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Thursday 20th November 2025

1. Helen Finch Chair, welcomed all present.

Present: Helen Finch (Chair), Carol Martinez (Treasurer), Jackie Savage (Vice Chair and Minute Taker), Fleur Anderson (President), Sheila Konig (Vice President), Robert Linton, Ali Linton, Gill Tamsett, Vivien Fowler, Cameron de Buck, Susan Bennett, Shan Karatowska, Kate Hunt, Sally Harvey, Caroline Harvey, Charles Held, Jonathan Compson, Marianna Pencharz, Bill Pencharz, Quentin Ricks, Sue Illingworth, Mark Illingworth, Allan Ford, James Cross, Victoria Cross, Nick Knowles, Carolyn Singer, Kate Shaw, Jane Quayle, Julia Millett, Elizabeth King, Maria Rosiello, Artan Deliallisi, Jane Powell, Ruth Tigue, Raj Patel, Heather Windle, Susan Davidson, Mariangela Renshaw, David Renshaw, Sue Bennett, Florence Terry, Shirley Gillbe, Emma Blackwell, Eva Knedlova, Helen Speedy, Greg Willcox, Harriet Pim, Joe Karatowski, Ian Finch, Silvia Willcox, Janis Humberstone, Marja-Leena Kortelainen, David Macdonald, Sue Macdonald, David Kelly, John Ireland, Vangelis Maniatopoulos, Ciara Wilczur-Wieja (60 members present. Total membership 489. Quorum 5%)

Apologies from: George Casley, Christina Casley, Caroline Alexander, Patrick Crawford, Jean Crawford, Liz Bridge, Jocelyn Smail, Annie Hardinge, Georgina O'Reilly, Jeremy Cole, Pat Dark, Rob Dark, Nina Buchan, Charles Roberts, Andy Gulliford, Jo Eskdale, Larisa Velizheva, John Hobson, Shirley Hobson, Phil Woodward, Richard Standen, Elizabeth Smart, Kate Heery, Pat Heery, Maria Ng, Sue Hodgson, Helen Compson, Matt Todman, Louise Davies, Laura Davis, Jan Newel-Lewis, Jeannette Sweetland, Maria Sforza, Charlie Panton, Geoff Waterhouse, Judith Katz, Madeleine Neave, Franco Beccaria

BEFORE BUSINESS STARTED

Our President, Fleur Anderson MP, presented the JP Higgins Cup for the most points in Children's classes to Oonagh Kelly (Geoff Waterhouse's grand-daughter).

2. **MINUTES OF AGM 2024:** Tacit membership approval of this document received by 16/12/24.

3. CHAIR'S REPORT:

Activities from November 2024 to now:

New Lease: In February 2024 the Council approved the principle of our taking on a full repairing lease which would be funded by our keeping almost all the rent we collect. Currently we hand over 80% of the rent to Enable but the Council are responsible for carrying out all major repairs needed. Thanks to Patrick Crawford recently we have had some repairs funded by the Council - resurfaced asphalt path at the Dover House Road entrance on site 3, replacing guttering on the store with higher capacity gutters to manage heavy rainfalls and stop rain entering the store. Negotiations for the lease have to be done with the Council's legal department and with a solicitor representing RGS. This was a rather alarming prospect as costs to RGS might become uncontrollable. Fortunately, one of our plot holders had contacts in a law firm who were prepared to do the negotiating pro bono. Although our solicitors have been chasing the Council's lawyers no real progress has been made yet. Many thanks for Patrick Crawford who managed to negotiate the Council repairs and is continuing to keep our new lease on the agenda.

Summer Show and National Garden Scheme (NGS) 21st June 2025: For the last few years we have held the RGS Summer Show on site 2. In the summer of 2024 we opened site 3 to NGS visitors which was a great success so we decided this year to combine the Summer Show with an NGS open garden event on site 2. It was very successful as visitors enjoyed seeing the exhibits in the Show as well as being able to look around the allotments and have the opportunity to chat with plot holders. Vivien Fowler managed the NGS side of the afternoon and we raised about £813 for good UK charities that NGS support.

Review of Store: Greg Willcox, Gill Tamsett and Jackie Savage formed a sub-committee to review the store layout. Some new racking was bought and installed so goods for sale, particularly the loose items were more visible to customers and convenient to deal with for store volunteers working behind the counter.

Confidence in current committee: The committee have had a very difficult plot holder issue to deal with this year. We have been subjected to many very long emails from a plot holder who feels the committee and certain individual committee members are not governing the RGS properly. In one of their emails we were asked to circulate to the membership the following: (accusations are printed in red-RGS replies in blue). These accusations were sent out about a week ago so that the issues may be debated openly at the AGM.

1. [The RGS committee is not transparent.](#)

RGS reply: [A link to the monthly committee minutes is sent to all plot holders on the monthly email Update. The link remains active for 6 months. The minutes from the AGM are available on the RGS website for one month after the AGM. The RGS constitution, allotment rules and policies are all available on the RGS website. Plot inspections are advertised at least 2 weekends before the inspection. However, communications resulting from the plot inspections remain confidential within the committee.](#)

2. RGS do not run the AGM according to the RGS Constitution -correct notice is not given and the committee is not elected properly.

RGS reply: We give about 4 weeks' notice but the constitution says at least 2 weeks' notice is needed (para. 5.5.2). Election of the committee is done in accordance with the RGS constitution. Committee candidates are nominated and seconded at least a week before the AGM (para. 5.5.3). Having nominations on the night would not be desirable as we need to be sure the committee roles can be covered properly and it would be very slow. It also has the potential of being very embarrassing for an individual.

3. The accounts are not presented at the AGM.

RGS reply: They always are presented at the AGM.

HF asked if there were any questions or suggestions from the floor on any of these points.

Janis Humberstone:

JH questioned why the member had decided to bring her complaint, which might be described as a minor infraction of the procedural rules, to the attention of the whole membership. JH wondered what the purpose and the motivation might be. Did they wish to humiliate the committee? Were they looking for resignations? The committee are all volunteers who do a huge amount of work and it is often difficult to recruit members to stand and it would be a deterrent for anyone to volunteer if they knew they would be subject to constant sniping from the sidelines.

JH was concerned that if we didn't have a committee then Wandsworth Council might be tempted to try and sell off the land.

JH expressed full confidence in the committee

Shirley Gillbe:

SG was a past RGS chairman and was affronted by Ms Kortelainen's assertions. She was grateful for the work the committee has done over the years and reminded the members that in 2022 the committee's contribution to the wider Putney and Roehampton community was recognised in the Wandsworth Civic Awards. The sites' facilities have been much improved over the last 10 years or so and the committee and plot holders work with harmony and cohesion.

There have been persistent complaints from Ms Kortelainen over the past 11 years and she has never offered constructive advice nor her services to the committee. A three point list of options was itemised to stop what could perhaps be considered fallacious and, on occasion, might be construed as mendacious complaints which have taken up a lot of committee time, caused a lot of stress and taken attention away from the business of the society.

SG gave the committee her full and unequivocal support.

Marja-Leena Kortelainen:

MK stated she was willing to stand for committee.

Helen Finch:

HF pointed out that there are procedures for nominations which must be with the Chair at least 2 weeks prior to the AGM. They cannot be taken from the floor on the night of the AGM.

Jonathan Compson:

JC stated that MK was not criticising the committee and that she had been picked on since she had had her allotment.

He said that he was looking for resolution and that he had expertise in these processes. He had confidence in the committee.

John Ireland:

JI spoke in support of the committee and thought that the complaints about the committee were out of proportion and slight infractions (if there were any) didn't matter.

Marja-Leena Kortelainen:

MK stated that she had been harassed and victimized by the committee really from the beginning and she didn't understand why. She mentioned that the emails that she sent the committee had always been polite.

John Ireland:

JI thought that her original grievance was that she had not been allowed to swap her plot at the start of her tenancy.

Alison Linton:

AL stated that there had been 30 emails from MK in 2 months complaining about the committee. They were very long and had included unpleasant personal remarks and false accusations.

James Cross:

JC stated that he was a new member and plot holder. He said it was obvious there was a dispute between MK and the committee which needed to be resolved. He suggested that the AGM was a completely inappropriate forum to seek to resolve it. He stated it was unfair, for example, to expect members to express views about emails and details of complaints which they had never seen. He expressed the hope that the matter would be resolved amicably and fairly, by mediation or otherwise, but that resolutions could not possibly be achieved at the AGM.

Ali Linton:

Enable had facilitated mediation on MK's terms on Teams after MK had refused to meet in person on her plot. The meeting took place on Teams but MK did not attend. MK knew about the meetings because she had sent her apologies.

Janis Humberstone proposed a VOTE OF CONFIDENCE in the committee seconded by John Ireland.

There were too many hands in favour to count, so HF then asked for a show of hands for all those who **did not have confidence** in the current RGS Committee. No hands were raised

HF asked for any **abstentions** - no hands were raised. Marja-Leena Kortelainen did not raise her hand at all.

THE VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN THE COMMITTEE WAS UNANIMOUS WITH NO ABSTENTIONS.

Plans for next year:

New RGS Website: The current RGS website is creaking. It has been going for a very long time in IT terms and is due for a complete overhaul. We hope to make it more contemporary and simpler to update and are investigating currently available options.

Succession Planning: Last year I mentioned that several of us had been serving on the committee for many years and would like to stand down or take less responsibility. We now have a total of 17 members prepared to serve on the committee, two of whom are new and hopefully we will be able to hand over to newer, fresher committee members.

Thank You:

As a Society we are very fortunate having so many willing and able members whose contributions make everything happen. In particular we have an excellent committee who give so much time and commitment to RGS. Jackie Savage as Vice-Chair continues to be very supportive and provides an excellent sounding board for me. She also manages the waiting list and the RGS email - both tasks done very efficiently. Carol Martinez continues to keep RGS accounts in her role as Treasurer as well as making sure both the summer and autumn show run smoothly as always. The 3 site secretaries, Susan Bennett for site 2, Richard Standen and Caroline Alexander for site 3 do an admirable job ensuring plots are let promptly and are cultivated well enough. Ali Linton as Site Manager has been very supportive with tricky situations that the site secretaries have to deal with. Gill Tamsett and Greg Willcox keep the stores stocked and running smoothly with Annie Hardinge ensuring the seeds stands are well stocked. We are fortunate that Jean Crawford keeps our website running as well as publishing the very interesting monthly Updates. Cameron de Buck has been very helpful with IT and social media questions too. The database is kept meticulously by Robert Linton from which the annual rent invoices are sent out to you all. The lease and on site repairs are looked after by Patrick Crawford. Fortunately he is a very patient man who doesn't lose heart trying to get things done. Shan Karwatowska ensures there is woodchip supplied to both sites and has been fantastic organising teas for the shows and the NGS event. Vivien Fowler, as always, has got the plant sales going and is always there to help with catering as well as keeping the Potting Shed area so attractive on site 3. Other members of the committee who don't have a specific role are always willing helpers with anything that needs doing. We hope that they will feel able to take on a specific role in time. All in all we owe a huge thank you to all the committee for their commitment and amazing contribution over the last year.

Not only do we have a very active committee we also have many other members who give time and skill to the Society. All these tasks are done by volunteer RGS members:

- Serving in the main store on site 2 and the trading sheds on site 3
- Ensuring there is tea and coffee in the main store
- Cleaning the toilets and tidying the social areas on both sites
- Making cakes for events
- Manning the bars
- Organising food for events such as the AGM
- Helping at the shows
- Shredder training
- Maintaining areas on site that is not any specific person's responsibility
- Bits of plumbing
- Turning off the water for winter and reading the water meter
- Ensuring the locks work and other equipment is maintained
 - Helping with IT problems
 - Running the auctions at the shows

These are the people who have given their time over the last year:

Raj Patel, Danuta Grabda-Ferreira, Mariangela Renshaw, George Casley, Dorcas Johnson, Jeremy Cole, Sue Hodgson, Marianna Pencharz, Sue MacDonald, Jo Eskdale, Maria Sforza, Bill Pencharz, Sylvia Willcox, Mary Jane Ireland, John Ireland, David Renshaw, Jane Quayle, Georgina O'Reilly, Sue Illingworth, Harriet Hobson, Carolyn Singer, Julia Millette, Adele Stebbings, Bella Stebbings, Matt Price, Albert Tuin, Elaine Barnwell, Ian Finch, Charles Gillbe, Artan Deliallisi, Mark Sutcliffe.

Many, many thanks to you all too. HF also gave a special thank you to her husband for all his support he gives to the RGS Chair.

We have 4 members stepping down from the committee this year. Vivien Fowler has been a tremendously active member of the committee. She designed the Potting Shed area on site 3, found and restored the furniture, planted and maintained all the beds and pots that make the area so charming. She was site secretary for the outer area on site 3 for about 6 years offering help and encouragement to plot holders. The May plant sale that has become a regular event was her idea and she has continued to make these happen raising funds for a local charity. Also she initiated and coordinated the allotment National Garden Scheme open days. Her contribution has been exceptional over her time on the committee. A gift was given to Vivien.

Vivien Fowler:

VF thanked everyone and stated that she had never known such an attack on the committee by an RGS member and had full confidence in them.

Kate Hunt has served on the committee for 4 years and has always been very willing to help out with any special tasks. Work commitments have prevented her from taking on a specific role but it is hoped that in future she will return to the committee when not so busy. A gift was given to Kate

Kate Hunt:

KH said that although she was stepping down she was willing to help in any way. She welcomed new comers to our society and those new to the committee saying that accusations about the committee had not been heard before at any AGM she had attended and this was most unusual.

Jonathan Compson has been serving on the committee for a year but has found his retirement from work hasn't quite happened as he had planned so he has decided to step down from the committee. A gift was given to Jonathan.

HF then handed over to Carol Martinez, the RGS treasurer for her annual report

4. Treasurer's Report:

Hard copies had been distributed before the meeting started so members had had an opportunity to look at the accounts before the Business meeting started.

Finance Report for AGM 2025 01.10.2024 – 30.09.2025

This year, continuing to maintain the allotments for everyone's benefit is a substantial annual expense. Keeping the grass cut, mending the water tanks, pruning trees and clearing overgrown plots prior to re-letting amounted to £8,214.48. This is more than double the amount we paid last year due to much more work needed clearing overgrown plots for re-let, and the total includes a payment of £750 for waste clearance, £687.50 for a stock of new gate keys, £937.87 to build a ramp for the store, £250 for path repair and a plumbing job costing £263.

We spent over £500 on both supplies for the toilets and office supplies for printing ink, paper and stamps. There has also been a payment of £924 for legal fees to continue in the assistance of sorting out the lease / becoming a charity.

Our water and electricity charges amounted to 2,484.23 which is an increase on last year, no doubt due to the 2 heatwaves we endured and the extra use of water. Maintaining the website cost £207.62.

Lloyd's bank has started to charge us monthly for various services such as banking cash – this amounts to £46.05.

There have been no major projects this year but we have ring-fenced funds for both key deposits and a water bill that is proving very slow to arrive. Together these amount to approx. £12,000.

The store continues to keep our community served with essential supplies. This year saw a profit on last year of £3,500 – Country Natural being the most bought item.

We have received a small amount of funds through both donations in the store and when a plot holder sold on equipment they no longer needed and donated it to the society – these funds amount to £234.

The plant sale in May raised £746 for the society. The summer and autumn shows together raised around £1,000 after expenses. Alongside the summer show this year we opened Site 2 in June for the National Garden Scheme and raised £813 in proceeds for that charity organisation.

Further details will be available at the AGM. Carol Martinez, Treasurer.

The accounts were accepted by a majority show of hands.

Artan Deliallisi:

AD spoke to say he wanted to offer his thanks to Helen Finch for everything she does.

5. OTHER REPORTS: (on website only) The members were asked if they had any questions or comments about:

1. Site secretaries' reports
2. Waiting list secretary
3. Show Chair
4. Trading Secretary and Seeds organiser

No questions or comments came from the floor.

6. THE 2024/25 COMMITTEE STOOD DOWN

7. ELECTION OF 2025/26 COMMITTEE

Each committee member was nominated and seconded before the AGM as shown on the table displayed on the evening and below. This was a non-competitive election so the names of each Committee member up for election with the names of the nominator and seconder were read out by HF and a show of hands indicated that they were accepted as a member of the 2025/26 RGS Committee.

	Committee member	RGS member Nominator	RGS member Seconder	Proposed Role
1	Helen Finch	Sue MacDonald	Sylvia Willcox	Chair
2	Jackie Savage	Elizabeth King	Laura Davis	Vice Chair and Communications and Waiting list
3	Carol Martinez	Stephen O'Kelly	Carolyn Singer	Treasurer and Show Chair

4	Susan Bennett	Jan Newel-Lewis	Emma Blackwell	Site 2 Secretary
5	Richard Standen	James Cross	Jeannette Sweetland	Site 3 Secretary (plots 101 to 127)
6	Caroline Alexander	Louise Davies	Helen Speedy	Site 3 Secretary (Plots 50 to 100)
7	Alison Linton	Victoria Cross	David Renshaw	Site Manager
8	Gill Tamsett	Helen Compson	Matt Todman	Trading Secretary
9	Patrick Crawford	George Casley	Christina Casley	Buildings, Facilities and lease negotiator
10	Greg Willcox	Maria Sforza	Jo Eskdale	Store Manager
11	Annie Hardinge	Marie Ng	Sue Hodgson	Seeds manager
12	Shan Karwatowska	George Casley	Christina Casley	Events, Shows. Woodchip, manure deliveries
13	Cameron De Buck	David McDonald	Charlie Panton	IT and Social media
14	Jean Crawford	Pat Heery	Kate Heery	Website manager
15	Robert Linton	James Cross	Nina Buchan	Membership secretary
16	Ciara Wilczur-Wieja.	Helen Finch	Kate Shaw	New committee member from site 2
17	Jo Eskdale	Richard Standen	Phil Woodward	New committee member from site 3

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS: None

9. THE PRESENTATIONS were made by our President, Fleur Anderson, who is also our local MP.

Show Awards 2025

Awards for the Summer Show

The Lady Hudson Cup - The most beautiful rose in the summer show – **Kate Hunt**

The Lady Corry Cup - The best vase of multiflora roses – **Mariangela Renshaw**

The Dr Howard Coulthard Cup - The best bowl of roses arranged for all round effect – **Elaine Barnwell**

The A Norman Rogers Challenge Cup - The best vase of cut flowers, 3 or more kinds – **Susan Davidson**

The Hugh & Lady Linstead Centenary Cup– The best display of sweet peas – **Sue Illingworth**

The Barbara Dacie Cup - The best flower display in a goblet – **Susan Davidson**

The Roehampton Estate Challenge Cup (presented by Douglas Overall) – The best vegetable in the summer show – **Ruth Tigue (Garlic)**

The WTF Iles Memorial Cup – The best exhibit for 1 vegetable/1 fruit/1 flower – **Vivien Fowler**

The Ladies Cup – Summer cookery – **Shan Karwatowska**

Awards for the Autumn Show

The Reta Challenge / Leslie Harvey Memorial Cup – The best vegetable in the autumn show – **Mariangela Renshaw – Cabbage**

Joint best vegetable - The Barnes & Mortlake Herald / Derrick Ratcliffe Challenge Cup – **Laura Lin-Wilkes (and Mum) – Bitter Gourds**

The Hugh & Marie Jenkins Trophy – The most points for vegetables in autumn show – **Raj Patel**

Dr Miguel Lacroze Cup – The best Harvest Collection – B19 – **Carol Martinez**

The Tommie Noon Cup – The best exhibit in class C54 – 5 different vegetables/fruit – **Vivien Fowler**

The Jack Hawkins Challenge Cup – The best vase of 4 different types of flowers (A10) – **Mariangela Renshaw** and the same display won the **Ben Dandey Memorial Cup for the best display in the show.**

The Autumn Cookery Cup (Ladies Cup) – The exhibitor gaining the highest number of points in Section G – **Ali Linton**

Annual Awards

The Reverend PG Wallis Cup – The most points for fruit in both shows – **Rob Linton**

The Banksian Medal – The exhibitor with most prize money in horticultural sections (This cannot be won by the same person within 3 years) – **Vivien Fowler**

The JP Higgins cup – The most points in Children's classes – **Oonagh Kelly** (Geoff Waterhouse's grand-daughter).

The Davis Memorial Cup – The best plot - Site 2 – **Tahira Saddiqa / Muhammed Sulaman**

The Percy Barnes Memorial Cup – The best plot - Site 3 – **Cameron de Buck**

Certificates for new plot-holders who have transformed their plots in a short time.

Site 2 – **Quentin Ricks**

Site 3 – **Heather Windle and Vangelis Maniatopoulos**

CHRISTMAS CAKES RAFFLE

The raffle was won by ticket numbers 582 and 668. The winners have been notified and the cakes will be collected in early December. Laura Davis was thanked for making the cakes.

The business meeting closed and was followed by social time with excellent food and drink provided by committee members.

Tacit approval of Minutes to be received by 16/12/25