



**DORSET**  
GARDENS TRUST

## **Minutes of the 30th Annual General Meeting, December 16th, 2020**

Dear Members,

I have pleasure in sending you the minutes of our AGM held on 16<sup>th</sup> December. This was done in the form of a closed online meeting of the Council and regrettably we were unable to invite you to attend, but your votes and questions were all tabled.

At the meeting we said a fond ‘farewell and thank you’ to our retiring President William Gueterbock who has served the charity so well in various capacities for 23 years, and we welcomed Henry, Lord Digby as the new incumbent, whose gardens at Minterne and family have been an integral part of the trust since it was founded.

While the business of this very late AGM was to report on the proceedings of the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> December 2019, it was inevitable that the tumultuous developments of 2020 were raised and discussed within the context of a County Gardens Trust. While there have of course been many negatives for our membership, not least in our inability to provide a busy programme of events and garden visits, we have all come to realise that gardening and conserving the historic landscape have been brought to the front line in the battle to preserve our health and sanity during this extraordinary period.

Working with gardens and enjoying the natural world have never been so important and it is with that in mind that we hope to be able to continue our valuable work in the not too distant future, and to wish you all a happy and better New Year.

William Hanham  
(Chairman)

## MINUTES OF THE 30th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

A CLOSED MEETING HELD VIA ZOOM

ON WEDNESDAY 16th DECEMBER 2020

William Hanham welcomed Council members to this closed AGM.

APOLOGIES - none

THE MINUTES of the AGM at Hinton St. Mary on 16/4/19 were agreed and there were no Matters Arising.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT : William Hanham reported that the business of this AGM was technically to report on the year ending 31/12/19 but as those present were familiar with the financial reports he would just comment on the decreasing funds which left the Trust with just £22,000.

There had been plenty of discussion about the future of the DGT with reducing funds, the perennial problem of recruiting volunteers and younger members and the rising costs of mounting events. Due to the Covid crisis we have had to reduce funding to our beneficiaries but providing we are able to roll out a programme of events in 2021, we shouldn't be overly worried quite yet, as we have kept our direct costs commensurately low in 2020.

Although we haven't been able to offer our members much in the way of events, our committees have all stayed busy. The Gardens Trust has offered excellent online talks to all County Gardens Trusts' members and we have provided *News From The Shed* and now a monthly e-newsletter. Particularly cheering were the very interesting and enjoyable days at Minterne this autumn for which we thank Henry Digby and Annie Atherton for organising these so swiftly when the opportunity arose.

William Gueterbock announced his wish to retire as President at the originally planned AGM in April but kindly agreed to stay on until today. We all thank him for everything he has contributed to the DGT since joining the Council 23 years ago. We have presented him with a landscape by the Dorset artist Gary Cook, to show our appreciation of all William's hard work.

Hugh Lindsay added his thanks for William Gueterbock's contributions: becoming Chairman in 2002, Vice President in 2008 and President in 2016. He well recalls the occasional reminder of naval discipline! He hopes that William will continue to offer excellent advice and that he and Jeanette will be happy in their new home in Cerne Abbas.

William Gueterbock thanked members very much for the picture which would be an attractive reminder of all the happy years at the DGT. He was delighted that Henry Digby was taking over as President, as the Digby family had been at the heart of the DGT since its beginnings at Minterne when Eddie Digby became the first President. He said that Council members worked so hard it had made his time as Chairman and then President very easy and pleasurable, not to mention making new friends. He wished all well for the future and hoped that the DGT would continue to thrive.

ADOPTION OF ACCOUNTS for the year ending 31st December 2019 proposed by Sarah FitzGerald, seconded by Chris Clarke, all agreed

ELECTIONS President Lord Henry Digby proposed by Sarah FitzGerald, seconded by Carol Carsley, all agreed.

Vice Presidents The Countess of Sandwich, Mrs. Anthea Payne, Mr. Hugh Lindsay proposed by Sarah FitzGerald, seconded by Annie Atherton, all agreed

Chairman William Hanham proposed by Sarah FitzGerald, seconded by Richard Burden, all agreed.

Members of the Council standing for re-election Joan Dallyn, Caroline Montagu, Gabrielle Selson proposed by Carol Carsley, seconded by Jenny Hedin

Seeking election to the Council Carol Carsley proposed by Chris Clarke, seconded by Joan Dallyn

Elaine Cole resigned from the Council and is not seeking re-election

Appointment of Accountants Edwards & Keeping proposed by Henry Digby, seconded by Caroline Montagu.

15 members had voted by proxy, all in favour of all elections.

Henry Digby said he was honoured to be appointed President and would put his all into it. He believed that Covid-19 could be a boost to Events' attendance as had proved to be the case at Minterne during the summer. Publicity was key to attracting new members and he thought that maybe his new Events' Manager would be happy to offer any advice regarding the DGT website and use of social media.

Caroline Montagu, who has also been involved since the DGT's inception, said she was delighted to continue to serve as Vice President and looked forward to welcoming DGT members to Mapperton in the early spring. Mapperton had been awarded the Historic Houses' Garden of the Year 2020, details will be posted on the DGT website.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS - one member, Miranda Mackay-James, had asked a question regarding online lectures via Zoom. Annie Atherton replied that The Gardens Trust were providing online lectures for all County Garden Trusts., details available on our website. She hoped to be running real lectures soon, once the village halls re-opened.

The Minutes of the AGM will be emailed to members, once approved by Council, and posted on the website.

Caroline Montagu suggested that Gilly Drummond, who came to the inception meeting of the DGT, should be invited to an Event in the light of the 30th anniversary of the DGT. It was suggested that she could be invited to Mapperton in the spring.

Council will meet again on February 10th at 2.00 pm via Zoom, after the Events Committee meeting in January where hopefully a programme for 2021 will be emerging.

Meeting closed at 14.50 wishing all a happy Christmas.