

I would also like to thank those members who have volunteered help, you will be hearing from us!

I have been hugely supported by a brilliant committee throughout the year, they can be relied on 100% whatever they are asked to do and I want to say how much I appreciate them. A big thank you to all of you. They have all agreed to stay on for at least one more year, with the exception of Viv East who is resigning for family reasons.

*I would like in particular to thank Viv for her help in re-branding the club's image through designing the newsletter and badges and Clare for tackling the data protection policy, the signing in registers and membership renewals **and** taking on the newsletter from Viv. Her IT skills are greatly valued by the club.*

However, I am aware that that a number of the current committee have agreed to stay for another year as a favour to me. We will be looking for some new committee members in 2020 and this is why we have a "mug shot" board. If you look at the role descriptions and think "oh, I could do that" have a think about joining the committee, the board will be making a regular appearance.

2018 was another excellent year for the garden club. We had inspiring talks including Joy Michaud on vegetables, with a particular emphasis on growing for flavour, and Marina Christopher gave us the low down on salvias and taking cuttings from them.

I immediately went home and gave it a go and currently have nine plants surviving on a windowsill as I don't have a greenhouse.

There were two very enjoyable outings, both organised by Iris. The first to Highgrove at the end of July and the second to Wisley in December. We have been to Wisley a number of times but this time was especially nice as the gardens were lit up and it was great to see the trees in winter with no leaves, silhouettes clearly visible.

We had an excellent out evening to Willows, at Boldre in July. The weather was perfect and our hostess, Elizabeth Walker the local NGS organiser, went to great lengths to ensure we had a good evening, even baking some nibbles for us. There were many unusual and interesting plants and a jungly feel. They were very lucky to have their own water source as this was in the middle of the drought and the garden was looking very lush at a time when ours were all very brown.

In September Jenny organised a 3 night holiday to the Exeter area, and we tasted student days again as we stayed in Exeter University halls of Residence.

An interesting experience, each with our own room and refectory style meals, the only downside being rather a lot of stairs. As ever, Jenny had found some fabulous gardens for us to visit.

Highlights included a trip down the River Dart, to Agatha Christie's house, some fabulous metal sculptures like dandelion heads which we all wanted until we discovered they had cost £500, and a fascinating garden on the west of Dartmoor called "Wildside" which had been created on a flat site by the former head gardener at Buckland Monachorum. There was not a flat piece to be seen! He was landscaping everything with a digger and the planting was unusual and spectacular.

We are considering inviting him to give a "special event" talk in the future. He is expensive but we think he would be very good value.

June saw every club's nightmare, particularly for a new chairman! - a "no show" speaker. This is only the second time this has happened in the club's history. A hastily cobbled together slide show gave members something to look at but everyone was disappointed as we expected roses and Mottisfont was in full bloom. To compensate, the committee put on a special xmas party which was catered from club funds. They all worked jolly hard and did a splendid job and the evening was much enjoyed by members. I am pleased to say we have roses on the programme for November.

Our charities for 2018 were Oakhaven and MCV and we were able to give each of them a cheque for £775 from the money raised from the plant fair. We are not planning an Open Garden event for this year. I will talk to those members who offered help on the survey sheet and see how such an event might run in 2020 but I was a little disappointed in the response. It may be that it will have to be a much smaller event than previous ones or perhaps something for the benefit of club members and not a charity event.

In conclusion, thank you for your support in keeping the club thriving.

Proposed by: Clare Johnston

Seconded: Janet Nunn

Passed by the Members

4. TREASURER'S REPORT: Jean Robinson read the report which was prepared by Marigold de Jongh.

To date we have approximately 123 members and we hope to welcome more this year. Subscriptions so far have brought in £1722.

In 2018 the Plant Fair made £1551.00. It was a very well supported event and our thanks go to Juanita Woods and Jenny Spenser for organising this for us. We donated the profits to the Milford Volunteers Environmental Group and Oakhaven Trust.

The General Fund at the end of 2018 stood at £4215 having received most subscriptions . After deduction of holiday deposit money the club funds stood at £2515.

I would like to thank Paul Garton for his invaluable support throughout the year and particularly for having the accounts audited for us. Are there any questions?

There were 2 questions raised, and clarification was given by Paul Garton and Jean Robinson

Proposed: Jill Spenser

Seconded: Val Asher

Passed by the Members

5. VOTE OF THANKS:

On behalf of the members, the Chairman thanked all those on the Committee for their fantastic support in her first year as chair. Viv East is stepping down from the committee due to family commitments, but was thanked for her tremendous work in introducing the Newsletter, the Plants of Current Interest table, and giving us a new logo. All the other committee members have expressed their willingness to serve another term.

Also thanked were Richard and Anne Bickle for their service of refreshments at the Open Evening and Christmas Event. Paul Garten was again thanked for the assistance he gives to our Treasurer in preparing the books, and to David Pratley, our Auditor

Proposed by: Anne Jenks

Seconded: Jenny Hedges

Passed by the Members.

Members will have an opportunity to vote at the March meeting, and the 2 charities with most votes will be Charities for 2019.

10. **ANY OTHER BUSINESS:**

There being no other business the meeting concluded at 8.04 pm