



Sandhurst and District Gardening Club

Minutes of the 63rd AGM held at Sandhurst Community Centre on Wednesday February 18th 2026 at 7.15 pm

1.	Welcome	David Dunford
	All members were welcomed to the meeting.	
2.	Apologies & approval of minutes for 2025	Julie Sheppard
	Apologies were received from: Ian Hopley, Graham and Jill Coe, David Hunt, Betty Wilson, Nina Cron, Jacqui Butcher and David and Anne Dwight. The 2025 AGM minutes were accepted as an accurate record Proposed: Hilary Corio Seconded: Pat Roome	
3.	Matters arising	Julie Sheppard
	None	
4.	Chair's report	David Dunford /Liz Crow
	Well, 2025 has passed and unlike 2024 which was wet 2025 will be remembered for a long dry summer where hosepipe bans were considered although we didn't reach the extremes of temperatures from several years ago. To support this, we had a talk on "Coping with the weather" in July, very apt planning by our secretary. It is evident that our members are resourceful with their ability to adapt to the different conditions we face as entries and exhibits for both the summer and autumn shows were up and we received plaudits from the Mayor's escort and judges on both the quality of the exhibits and friendliness of our members. Sadly, several members passed away during the year among them Chris Dresler who with her parents were founder members of the club and was the major driving force on the club's growth and success as a Sandhurst Community organisation. An obituary penned by Jane Heritage in the April newsletter details Chris's involvement, highlighting her role as Club Secretary for 60 years, as well as show organiser, and reflecting on the immeasurable contribution she made to the club. She was delighted we were short listed for the Queens (now Kings) award. We welcomed Andy Bale, supported by Ian Hopley as the new treasury team. Andy has taken on the treasury focus and now after some protracted delays in accessing the bank accounts has control of the club's finances. We are in safe hands as you will see from the accounts. Andy is currently working through the financial issues we as a club face. He has also been instrumental in introducing Membermojo which will streamline both membership renewal and club communications. You will see from the accounts we remain heavily reliant on the trading hut run so effectively by Beverley, Lesley and the hut	

	team. It has been a challenging trading year not helped by the continuous roadworks and access issues deterring members from visiting. We had two coach trips during the year. Hyde Hall in May and a trip to the Christmas lights at Blenheim in November which were well supported and enjoyed by members. Lydia stepped down as organiser after Hyde Hall and Sheila stepped in to organise Blenheim. We thank them both for their contributions and hope you have seen the flyer for the trip to Nymans in April. As mentioned, the summer and autumn shows were a success with entries up and with excellent exhibit quality. The judges were impressed and mentioned the enthusiasm and friendliness of club members. Following the September show Carole stepped down from leading the team. However, supported by Lori and Carole she has prepared the shows for 2026 including revising the show schedule. We are extremely grateful for the input she has given which is reflected in the increased entries and exhibitors including several new first-time exhibitors. We have also had a positive response to our request for volunteers to support the 2026 show starting with our spring show next month. Sunil and Gareth once again provided their garden for a plant sale which was very successful and we like to thank them for their generosity. They have again offered to host this on Saturday May 30th. To support the plant sale, we encourage members (Oct newsletter) when they divide plants, take cuttings or sow seeds to offer any extras to the plant sale. Please email Sheila who is recording your offerings. Pat and Gill again planted and maintained the splendid flower bed outside and were complemented by the Britain in Bloom judges. Congratulations must also go to Graham, Helen and Ian who won the inter club quiz. Looking forward to this year 2026, whether we like technology or not, it is here to stay and we need to embrace it. Our website needs to evolve, noting the excellent job David has done over many years. Julie has advertised meetings and shows on social media but a more coordinated approach is required as social media is crucial to attracting new members and ensure our longevity as a community club. We have to plan for this, including the financial costs. Finally, we wish to thank the numerous volunteers who give up their time generously to make our club what it is. As a committee we have an open invitation to welcome individuals who wish to get involved and see the club continue for many years to come. Having fresh faces energises clubs and influences what we are able to do. If you would like to get involved, please contact us for a chat. <i>There were no questions from the floor.</i> Proposed: Jane Heritage Seconded: Helen Harding	
5.	Treasurer's report	Andy Bale
	For those of you that do not know me my name is Andrew Bale and following the passing of Steve and the general email that was sent round seeking a replacement I agreed to take on the role. I am a retired Chartered Accountant living in Albion Road with my wife Gina and we are both members of the Gardening Club. I must say thank you to Liz and David for producing the 2024 accounts under particularly challenging circumstances and starting the 2025 bookkeeping before I was able to take over. I hope that you have all had the opportunity to have a look at the accounts provided which follow the format of prior years. There are a few things that I would like to highlight: • Income and the surplus from the trading Hut is down versus the prior year and this I believe has been caused by the seemingly interminable road works that plagued the residents of Sandhurst during 2025! At least (I hope) they have finished in Yorktown Road (but I am not holding my breath) for now. • Subscriptions were slightly higher and the interest earned was slightly down which reflects reduced interest rates. • Generally, expenses were lower than last year and benefitted from no costs for hut maintenance and equipment during the year.	

	• As with previous years we continue to lose money/subsidise activities. Although the deficit on club nights is lower than last year this was helped by an excellent result on the May plant sale. The average costs of an afternoon talk or club night is £150 and whilst this figure is reduced by the admission income, raffle, and refreshments there is still an average net deficit of approximately £107 per event. • Both shows continue to run at a loss although this year the summer show was higher than the previous year and the Autumn show was lower. Although the income for both increased, the costs increased by more. • Coach trips ran a small surplus overall which has always been our intention, and I was fortunate enough to go on the Blenheim trip and witness first hand the events so eloquently written about by Sheila Davenport. Overall, we have made an accounting loss for the year of £1,036 of which £845 can be accounted for by the depreciation on the trading hut, so in “cash terms” the loss was £190.80. The trend over the last few years has been losses and it would be good to start to reverse this trend in 2026. Bank balances improved slightly to £12,343 at the end of November or £11,893 after deducting liabilities. We continue to rely on the trading hut and the annual plant sale, refreshments, raffle, and admission to subsidise our other activities and offset increasing costs to ensure we have a contingency fund to call on if required. You will all be aware of the introduction of Membermojo this year and the committee believe this will benefit the club going forward. As it was only set up during November/December we did expect to have teething issues as we learnt how to use the system and this has been the case, so please bear with us. So that is it from me and I will be happy to answer any questions you may have. <i>There were no questions from the floor.</i> Proposed: Peter Radband Seconded: Marilyn Grant
6.	Trading Hut report Beverley Morgan
	I'd like to start by thanking members for supporting the trading hut over the last year. Sadly, our takings have reduced, we believe because of the roadworks and the problems with the gate. We ordered less goods and were carrying a higher value of stock at the end of the year. This has led to reduced earnings of £1017.37 from the hut, down by just over £2,100 from last year. Since I took the over the ordering and general running of the hut, we lost our major supplier due to retirement, fortunately replaced with a reliable supplier from Cheshire. This year The Compost Centre closed, together with an online supplier where we sourced popular hut items not available from our main supplier. I'm still looking for somewhere to source these items at a reasonable price. The hut is currently well stocked with the majority of our normal supplies, together with a few new items. Clover growbags were delivered this week, with the price held for another year. We've had to replace some items which are no longer available, replacements have been made with comparable products in both terms of quality and price. Again, a reminder that if there are any products which you would like to see stocked at the hut, please let me know on the hut email (available on the website) and I will look into them. Although not strictly a trading hut activity I just wanted to mention that the club hopes to offer a seed scheme again next year. We have a possibility of two well-known firms who are able to offer a discount across their range. David Dunford will be undertaking this again and will be sending out details later this year, once everything is finalised. We are always happy to welcome new volunteers. If you think you could help out in any way, please speak to me or a committee member this evening. Other ways to volunteer are to complete the details on your membership, leave your name at the hut or contact us by email.

	Finally, a thank you to everyone involved in helping with the hut over the last year, whether this is arranging the rota of volunteers, volunteering for hut duty, stocking the bird food, bagging up stock for the shelves, helping at stock take and finally helping with the deliveries. <i>There were no questions from the floor.</i> Proposed: Colin Fuller Seconded: Sandra Hooper	
7.	Election of committee	David Dunford
	No nominations had been received prior to the meeting. David explained that new committee members/members expressing an interest are very welcome. If more information was required, members were urged to approach David or Liz for more information. Julie explained that if any member wanted to take on a role (and this could be as a committee member or not), elements of her role could easily be split – the role of arranging the speakers each year was straightforward and once done for the year involved little additional work. A member could also take on writing the quarterly article for the Sandhurst residents association (SRA) magazine, which is then cut down and used for the Crowthorne Eye. Members were asked to approach Julie if they wanted more information about either role. In addition, a member interested (or someone from a member's family) in developing the club's social media presence would be welcomed. The club's website will need updating and a bigger presence on Facebook would help attract new members. Again, members were encouraged to approach a committee member for more information. With no nominations from the floor, and the current committee being willing to stand again, they were duly nominated. Proposed: John Heritage Seconded: Hilary Corio	
8.	Nomination of Trustees	David Dunford
	Richard Cox, Liz Crow and John Heritage were nominated as Trustees Proposed by: Sandra Hooper Seconded: Sheila Davenport	
	AOB	Julie Sheppard
	1. Q: Had Zoom meetings been considered instead of cancelling the Jan meeting, as had operated during Covid? A: This had been discussed and rejected for the time being, partly because of the cost involved (so enough members could join) and also because of time limitations with the free version (45 minutes). During Covid, the club had used a member's private zoom account to facilitate the meetings. However, in light of a better-than-expected attendance this January, it had already been decided to book a speaker for next January. 2. Graham Talbot, who is a long-standing judge and speaker for the club, is unable to judge or speak for the rest of this year, due to health reasons. Members were asked to let the committee know if they knew of anyone who may be able to judge the spring/daffodil show. It was confirmed that the committee are already exploring options via the various horticulture societies that the club is a member of; this includes the RHS. 3. Q: What was the point of membership cards, considering the expense and that all information could be accessed via the website/newsletters etc.? They were not required at the hut to	

prove membership, or at club night, neither was a register of names/tick off sheet used. Requiring that members produce them could avoid any possible loss of income from non-members, particularly on afternoon meetings. Increasing non-members fees to £5 was recognised as a good move, bearing in mind full membership was only £10.

A: for many members (who do not readily access the internet), the card was the only way they knew who the monthly speakers were. Members were encouraged to bring their card with them to the hut, but if they did not, an up-to-date membership list was available, and the person on counter duty was encouraged to ask members to give their name to confirm they were indeed members. The possibility of having a sign-in sheet/tick off list had been explored previously and rejected, when considering effort vs gain and the possibility that not all members would sign in anyway! However, the possibility of having something on the card that could be scanned was not impossible – perhaps linked to membermojo. It was something to be explored.

4. Q: what was the outcome of discussions with the football club/Sandhurst Town Council (STC) regarding the use of fobs on Sunday mornings and football supporters etc wanting access.

A: all discussions had been with STC, who then liaised with the football club. The football club had taken the decision that as they could not guarantee to man the gate each week, all supporters would be told that they could not come through the gate. If the football club needed to let people in, they would send someone with a fob. The gardening club would refuse entry to anyone who was not a club member, but if someone tailgated in, they were asked to try and note the number, which would then be sent to STC.

The meeting closed at 7.55 pm