GRACE & FLAVOUR DIRECTORS 'MEETING 14th August 2025

Present	Gerry (chair), Ray, Michael, Helena, Stephen, Mark, Anne, John W, John F, Beverley		
Apologies	Jane, Rob		
Minute Taker	Beverley		
REF	**ITEM**	**NOTES**	**ACTION**
1.	**Minutes of Last Meeting (July)**	They were agreed, subject to Gerry correcting a couple of typos.	GR
2.	**Matters Arising not covered elsewhere**	Rob reported that the black poplars have forked trunks but are generally okay. One lime tree is obviously suffering from the dry weather. He recommends that this is monitored to see whether the stress causes any more problems. Gerry will show Beverley how to use Mailchimp.	 BN/GR
3.	**Garden Report:** Overall John W is fairly happy with the state of the garden. The main issue has been watering. Three new members have proposed a limited trial of an initial porous hose system costing £250. A crop that would benefit from this is the runner beans. Also worth experimenting with is in the polytunnel when new crops are planted. There are some potential problems and we would need to be satisfied of significant improvements on the status quo before scaling up. The materials being bought will be useful in any case. It was agreed that £250 should be spent on this trial. The electric fence has stopped badgers taking sweetcorn this year but not attacks by rats. It was queried whether the fence was switched on too early. Flea beetle on the brassicas has been a problem. Summer carrots were disappointing, but autumn carrots look okay and leeks look very good. There have been loads of fruit – soft and stoned and the pears will be good. The dahlias have been good. A concern is that everything is very early which may cause a problem in the autumn.		
4.	**Company Secretary Issues:** All directors (including Mark) need to register with gov.uk. Stephen and Beverley have done this. ***Note added after meeting: It is confirmed that Mark is not a director and does not need to register*** Michael has sent an email asking directors to confirm they are "upstanding citizens" for the insurance. All directors need to reply.		All All

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5.	**Finance Report:** The value of sales to members during July 2025 was £1,081 compared with £659 in June 2025 and £792 in July 2024. The continued growth in monthly sales reflects the seasonal harvest cycle. Expenditure in total this July was £786 with compost, water, building materials and open day expenses being the main items. In July we received £677 in donations from members and visitors to the garden. This included member donations of £392 (of plants) and donations of £285 from visitors to the garden with guided tour, tea and cakes and some fruit and flowers. Many thanks to the RAC Pall Mall for their kind and largest single donation of £200 after their visit to the garden on July 21st. The resulting net surplus for the month was £972, increasing our current account balance to £7,544 at the end of June 2025. During the National Garden Scheme Open Day Grace and Flavour helped raise £1005 in charitable donations for NGS and £1004 for Cherry Trees, our local respite centre charity. There were 200 visitors and plant and cake sales were very successful. Particular thanks to NGS and to Cherry Trees and to all our member volunteers for making the day a real success. In preparation for budgeting for next year, over the next few months proposals for expenditure should be directed to John W (Garden Costs), Michael or Stephen (Other Operating Costs and Allotments), Rob (Buildings, Maintenance and grant related projects) Gerry (Trees, Nature and Wildlife). A longer-term plan will be considered if costs exceed annual affordability.	All
6.	**Website, Communications etc.:** John will write another piece on vegetable of the month for the website. Gerry will send out a newsletter on the Open Day, including figures from Stephen and content from Beverley.	JW GR/BN
7.	**Allotments Report:** There is now a waiting list of 6 for allotments. Michael would like to buy black weed suppressant out of the allotment money. Thanks to people who assisted with mowing for the open day and to Jane and Tom for showing visitors around the allotments.	
8.	**Building Team Report:** The bridge has been completed including the approaches. Currently the building team has returned to the East Wall slabs, which are 90% complete. Rob would be interested in knowing the date of the next NT visit so he can accompany them.	
9.	**Wildlife Report**: The pond has needed filling with water five times this year. It was agreed that this appreciated feature should be maintained. Gerry will keep a record of how much topping up he has to do in order to estimate how much it is costing p.a.	

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10.	**Health & Safety:** Kim Tolley from NHS South East Ambulance Service will look at the defibrillator in the next month. It is possible that the whole unit will need to be replaced, not just the battery. She has offered to arrange a CPR training course for members. Rob is pleased to report that there were no accidents during the NGS Open Day. The possibility of additional signage in future for the toilet was discussed to reduce queries to busy catering staff, given the increased usage this year. It was decided that, in accordance with NGS advice, publicising it should continue to be low key. Mark confirmed that the increased usage this year was not a major problem. There have been two incidents recently due to trip hazards. It was agreed that occasionally volunteers should be reminded after tea break of the need to be careful and it should be put in the newsletter.	
11.	**Open Day:** Beverley reported that the NGS Open Day this year was again a success, with 200 visitors (including 13 children). See the finance report for funds raised for charity. The car park was much improved and the day went more smoothly. Lessons learned have been collected. The biggest issue was with the SumUps. The G&F one was fine but the CT one, which did not require a phone, was problematic. Stephen proposed that a second G&F SumUp should be purchased. Another issue was the large amount of work required in the week before the Open Day, falling on a few volunteers. There was a discussion as to whether we should have an NGS Open Day next year or take a break. If we are to have another NGS Open Day new members are required for the organising team, including a replacement for Beverley as project manager. A decision will be required in the next month. An Open Day next year would require a car park (a headache this year). Beverley agreed to write to Dene Place to see if their field would be available next year. Cherry Trees has invited us to a celebration at 2pm on Saturday 13 September. Beverley will forward the email to Stephen.	 BN BN
12.	**AOB** 1. The contents of the shed need looking at. There may need to be a new lead on netting. Gerry will speak to Rob and Vicky. 2. Volunteers will be told that excess plants from the open day will be kept for say 1 week before being put on the compost. 3. There will be an event held by Horsley Community Fund to celebrate its 15th anniversary on Thursday 25 September at Horsley & Send Cricket Club. 4. There was some discussion about the proposed new vegetable pricelist. Gerry and John W will discuss how to reflect seasonal availability in the prices. 5. Ray will do apple pressing several Saturdays in a row, starting on 13 September. Gerry will put this in the newsletter. **6.** The sudden death of David Lush was noted. The temporary difficulties this caused for the Tithe had been resolved. **7.** Michael gave his apologies for the September meeting. (Anne will also be away.)	GR GR/JW GR

Next Meeting: Thursday 11th September 2025 7.30pm, WH Methodist Church Hall

Chairman: Gerry Robbins **Minute Taker:** John F