GRACE & FLAVOUR DIRECTORS' MEETING 9th October 2025

Present	Gerry (Chair), Anne, Beverley, Ray, Rob, Stephen, Mark, Michael		
Apologies	John F, John W, Jane, Helena		
Minute Taker	Gerry		
REF	**ITEM**	**NOTES**	**ACTION**
1.	**Minutes of Last Meeting (September)**	They were agreed. To be posted on the website and Potting Shed noticeboard	GR
2.	**Matters Arising not covered elsewhere**	1. Additional mesh has been ordered (JW and Stephen). 2. Beverley reported that Cardinal Health would not commit to allowing use of their meadow as a car park for a possible NGS Open Day in 2027. They suggested we enquire closer to the event. 3. Seasonal adjustment of veg prices has started. The new display board will make it easier to update prices.	
3.	**Garden Report:** (tabled in JWs absence but not read out). It has been an outstanding year for fruit of every description. We started cropping soft fruit in June and we are eating apples and quinces in October. Ray as ever has produced some great apple juice on Saturdays and Tuesdays. I am not sure if there is cider or grape pressing to follow. Summer crops in general have been excellent, but are now over. We move on to autumn crops such as romanesco, autumn cabbages, mixed salad leaves, pak choi, fennel etc. Unfortunately, red cabbage is limited due to poor germination (perhaps the seed was too old). We are beginning to prepare for next year. The first manure delivery has arrived. Although more expensive than previously, Trevor our usual supplier has retired, I have been able to establish a link he has provided for the future. Garlic has been planted both inside the polytunnel and outside in the garden. I have purchased fresh organic garlic from Tamar Seeds. I have already removed any old seed from the cupboard, completed a stock take and ordered some seeds from Kings (through Rays link to Ripley Garden society) We have purchased some more enviromesh, which although expensive is invaluable in protecting crops. We need to do this better next year. Rob Harris with a small team is investigating the use of soaker hoses. They have been trialing a couple of areas within the garden, and will experiment in the polytunnels too. Unfortunately, as soon as they set up the trial it has poured with rain. The flowers particularly sunflowers and dahlias have been excellent.		
4.	**Company Secretary Report:** Insurance has been renewed. Anne, Beverley, Gerry, Jane, Michael and Stephen have obtained Companies House director logins and personal ID numbers. The remaining directors (JW, JF, RB, RT & HSM) are asked to complete this process as soon as possible.		JW, JF, RB, RT & HSM

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5.	**Finance Report:** Treasurer's report for month ending 30th September 2025 Monthly sales reached their peak for this year's harvest period. Member Sales totaled £1,304 for September, compared to £1300 for September 2024 and £923 for August 2025. This is thanks to a good crop considering the relatively dry weather this year. Expenditure during last month was £1,446 including cost of sales of £175, £404 for the annual insurance premium and £311 to cover our water usage up to the end of September. We invested £278 in purchasing a roll of vegetable mesh netting for next year. Our monthly deficit (expenditure less income) for this September (excluding next year's allotment fees received in advance) was £142 compared with a £223 surplus in August 25. Our current account balance was £8,315 on 30th September and we have £9,146 contingency in deposit accounts. During September £429 allotment fees were received in advance from plot holders in addition to £260 received in August. The £689 total allotment fee income will be recognised in the next financial year. A finance subcommittee meeting took place today (9th October) with Stephen, Gerry, Ray, Rob and Michael present. A provisional budget for 25/26 was agreed to be discussed at the AGM in November along with the accounts for 24/25. Three projects to be considered for grant funding:- an additional polytunnel, installation of a seeping hose irrigation system and replacement of the AED battery and electrode pads if required.	SSM
6.	**Website, Communications etc.:** The website was up to date. No new issues. A newsletter will be sent out in the next few days covering future events - Harvest Celebration on 18th October, AGM, Baked Potato Lunch on 6th December, St Martin's Christmas Tree festival. A number of health and safety issues will be included (see discussion in H&S item).	GR
7.	**Allotments Report:** Allotment agreements and renewals have been completed. Waiting List now down to one person. A new vacancy expected soon. The PCs had been sent the annual letter about occupancy and will be invoiced in November for the maintenance fees. The mowing rota was coming to its seasonal end. A thank you email will be sent to the participants. There was a long discussion about the trees in the allotment area, particularly about safety versus retaining old / dead wood for its ecological benefits. Michael and Gerry were concerned about the risk to the public. Rob Grist, tree surgeon to be consulted on the following:- 1. The old silver birch. It was agreed this appeared to be a risk to the public. Gerry would then contact the NT for approval and hopefully funding to carry out the work. 2. The old mulberry is still alive but has many dead branches which probably should be pruned back to a safe perimeter. 3. The suckering poplar shrubby growth close to the manure area should be as completely removed as possible. Gerry will ask the NT to approve, and hopefully fund the work on the silver birch based on Rob Grist's estimates.	MT RT & MT GR

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8.	**Building Team Report:** The new, magnetic vegetable price display board has been installed. A hand rail had been fitted to the step up to the back lobby of the Potting Shed. Members to be reminded of the safe route between the allotments and communal area located in the east wall just north of the greenhouses. The north polytunnel skirting had been repaired to reduce draughts. The entrance to the car park had been levelled again. Some repairing of the gutters on the Potting Shed were required. A digger and dumper will be hired to clear out the weed compost bins under the lime trees. This compost will be spread over the allotment paths which are uneven.	RT
9.	**Wildlife Report**: Carey Lodge, local amateur entomologist visited the site on 10/925 at the suggestion of Surrey Wildlife Trust who were asked to advise about the bee slope. Carey toured the site and made several suggestions particularly the use of dead wood and sources of information about bee slope construction and management. These were being followed up.	GR
10.	**Health & Safety:** Members to be asked to remove or dispose of milk at the end of each session to prevent it going stale. This will be included in the newsletter. There was a long discussion about the AED and the possible impact of low ambient temperature on the battery and the pads. The Potting Shed is unheated but rarely freezes. A heated cabinet is usually advised but cannot be used at G+F due to lack of mains electricity. Freezing can adversely affect the electrode gel but there is no known way of testing this. Rob to investigate further through his contacts at Surrey Ambulance Service. Tom Suffolk's email of 7/10/25 raising several important safety concerns was discussed. It was agreed that we should ask members:- • to stay away from G+F if suffering from virus infections. • to use the safe route with the concrete steps and hand post between the allotment and communal areas, avoiding the low brick walls further down the garden as unsafe. • to be aware that paths in the allotment areas are uneven. The building team will improve these in the near future using weed bin compost.	GR RT GR
11.	**AGM Planning** **All directors giving presentations should send these to Mark in good time for loading to the laptop.** Hall will be opened by GR and MB at 7pm. Public entry from 7.15pm. Hall preparation to be lead by MT. Refreshments to be lead by Lyn Payne. Additional volunteers and cake bakers will be requested. Presenting directors should send a copy of their reports to Beverley who has agreed to do the minutes.	GR, JW, SSM, RT, MT GR GR, JW, SSM, RT, MT

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12.	**AOB** 1. The Rev Phil Herrington had yet to confirm he would lead the blessing at the Harvest Celebration on 18th. Gerry to check. (*Note added after meeting: he has now confirmed.)* 2. Gerry will ask if anyone is interested in organising a G+F entry for the St Martin's Christmas Tree Festival (13th-19th December) 3. Tom Suffolk had correctly pointed out that the minute re David Lush's death (14th August directors minutes, AOB item 12.6) was terse and inadequate. Gerry apologised. 4. A fuller announcement already been made in the G+F newsletter of 17th August is repeated here for the sake of the minutes. ***"We were very sad to hear of David Lush's recent death. David was a key figure in the local community, particularly active in Horsley U3A and the Wheel of Care. In the latter role he was responsible for organising the rota of volunteers and delivery lists for the G+F vegetable boxes tithe. All our best wishes go to David's family and friends."*** 5. Beverley has arranged a fruit tree greasing group. 6. Plants left over from the NGS Open Day will be disposed of after checking with Bob Spackman.	GR GR

Next Meeting: AGM Thursday 13th November 2025, 7.30pm, West Horsley Village Hall.
Next Directors' Meeting: 20th November 2025, 7.30pm, Wesley Room Methodist Church. Scribe: Gerry.