DRAFT: **GRACE + FLAVOUR ORDINARY GENERAL MEETING 2025**

Date & Venue: Saturday 10th May 2025 at Grace + Flavour Ripley Lane, West Horsley KT24 6JW	
Apologies: Anne Butler, Jane Hunt, John Fluker, Rob Treble	
Chairman & Minute Taker: Gerry Robbins	
	Item
1	**Welcome** Gerry welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2	**Minutes of last Ordinary General Meeting 2024 (**published on the G+F website) These were accepted with no changes.
3	**Chairman's Report** This is an update of Grace and Flavour's activities since our AGM last November. The main items will be:- • a report on the garden from John Whitlock our head gardener • a report on our finances from Stephen Stuart-Matthews, our treasurer. First I will briefly run through some highlights. (1) I am delighted to announce that **in February, Anne Butler and Jane Hunt agreed to become directors.** Just to remind you that all the directors meet monthly, apart from May and November when we have general meetings. The directors meetings are well attended and used to discuss all the business of G+F. Minutes are published on our website, once approved by the directors. (2) Early in the year we secured a **grant from the Horsley Community Fund (part of the Community Foundation for Surrey) towards the repair of our rotten and unsafe pond bridge.** Materials have been acquired and enabling work has already started under the expert eye of Rob Treble, our building team lead. (3) In January as part of our long term tree management, **five of the 12 large lime trees on the west side of the site were pollarded to reduce shading on the vegetable beds.** The ground under the limes has been cleared by us on the advice our tree surgeons to reduce excessive soil fertility and increase root aeration. (4) During February and March, helped by blue skies and the dry, if cold weather, turn-out in the garden has been really good, leading to **a major tidying of the garden** in addition to the application of manure over most of the beds. **Comprehensive winter pruning** of fruit trees was done led by Beverley. Thanks to her for galvanising us into action. I am sure you will agree the garden is looking very neat at present. And the hard work will help us later in the year as we become busy with other tasks. (5) **Several G+F members supported the Horsleys' Climate Action Network's meeting** "Nature Recovery: Spring into Action!!" on 6th March at EHVH. Perhaps this is also the moment to mention that we have **built a bee slope** at G+Fn to encourage ground nesting bees. (6) In March we became aware that **Dene Place Care Home was being transferred from BUPA to new owners** - Cardinal Healthcare. I am delighted and relieved to report that the new managers are quite happy for us to use the Dene Place meadow again for car parking for our NGS open day in July. We are very keen continue our cordial relations with our nearest neighbour and having briefly shown two of the new senior staff around G+F, I have no concerns on that front. (7) In mid March **our new website** went live. I hope many of you will have already used it. Content is similar to that of the old site, but presented on a more modern platform which is designed to cope with mobile devices as well as desktop computers. The transfer will allow much easier management by Mark Blowers, our new webmaster. A big thank you to Mark for all his hard work on this, and in our on site personal hygiene department. (contd./)

3 **Chairman's Report contd./**

(8) On the 29th April **John Whitlock gave a short presentation on G+F at the West Horsley Annual Parish Meeting** at West Horsley Village Hall.
(9) **Rob Treble and his team have been working very hard** clearing the weeds outside the walls and laying weed resistance membrane to allow maintenance access to the wall supports and decorating our green sheds in preparation for visiting Plein Air artists and the Open Day.
(10) **G+F in figures**

- We now have over 60 active members.
- Our mailing list is now over 390 strong.
- 10 newsletters were produced in the last year with a client opening rate of 59%.
- And I counted no less than 26 members at our morning break on Saturday 5th April.

(11) **In summary** following a significant bump in the road last summer due to Ashley's departure, things have settled down very well and now nearly everything in the garden is rosy, thanks to everyone's hard work!
(12) **Thank You** The hard work, both obvious and behind the scenes, keeps G+F in tip top shape.
Thank you:-

- to the directors,
- to members who have special lead responsibilities,
- to active members who carry out most of the day to day work,
- and to our supporters in the local community including our parish councils, both West & East Horsley.

(13) **Looking Forward:** By now I think most of you will be aware that we will be opening our garden to the public again this summer under the National Garden Scheme. The date to remember is Sunday 27th July from noon to 4pm. Beverley Nash is leading this project. With her leadership and your support it is sure to be another very successful day.
I will now hand over to John Whitlock for his Garden Report.

4 **Head Gardener's Report (John Whitlock)**

(1) We have had an excellent winter preparation This and the good fortune to have warm dry weather has enabled us to have a very good spring. However, I decided to try to water only using a hand held hose rather than sprinkler hoses this spring, which has been rather challenging year to achieve this…. You may see soon the return of the hoses.

(2) We planned to replace the **old herb bed**. A number of our members worked amazingly hard to clear the land around the herb bed and the bed itself. We are planning to grow squash through the black weed suppressant in this area, in the same way that we did in the old fruit cage area for the last 2 years. However, the speed with which that was achieved meant that there was the time and enthusiasm to clear and cover many other areas in the garden. We have covered an immense number of the paths, areas around the polytunnels and greenhouses with wood chip. The area between the greenhouses and polytunnels has been revived. In addition, Helena and her helpers have started the renovation of the perennial border that runs alongside the path on the eastern side of the garden. I believe she is hoping to grow annuals in some of this area while the bindweed removal continues. As a consequence, the garden looked the best it has ever been at the start of this year's growing season.

(3) A combination of **Vicki, Ray, Tom, John F, Tim and myself** have started many of our seeds in their homes, either in propagators, greenhouses or walkways!!! Without this help we would find it impossible to achieve the results that we achieve. Unfortunately, the lack of mains electricity in a garden of this size is a massive failing.

(contd./)

4	**Head Gardener's Report contd.** (4) Our **first spring sown crops** have been impressive, spinach, turnips, radishes, herbs and salads. Others look very promising for example the broad beans, peas, beetroot and fennel. The asparagus beds have been very productive already. We are cropping from 3 beds this year (only two last year), next year there will be 4. Rhubarb is in abundance. (5) Well over **100kg of potatoes** have been planted (there are lots in the ground that have overwintered). We are growing the same varieties as last year but experimenting with a couple of other varieties in small numbers to see their quality. The **leeks** have been sown and already making signs of good growth so we are hopeful that we should get a better crop this year. We have planted a bed of **globe artichokes** near the north wall. They will probably take a year to get established Bob has measured up for the **electric fence** and we have allowed sufficient room for 450 sweet corn plants. 100 will soon be ready to plant, another 150 are already sown. We are growing a large range of tomatoes, peppers and aubergines. The greenhouses are full of tender crops waiting to be planted. We have had warm days but quite cold / cool nights so we have to be careful not to plant too soon. (Ne'er cast a clout till May is out) There is little to be gained by planting tender crops outside until at least the middle of May. We were incredibly close to a frost last week, possibly there was even a small one….. We have planted an extra bed of **golden raspberries**. The soft fruit area has a very promising amount of potential fruit growing. The fruit trees have avoided being hit by frost and there is a large amount of fruit forming. There will have to be some hard thinning of fruit to ensure they are of a decent size. Beverley and her team have already started some summer pruning. (6) Helena has already had **great daffodils and irises** in large numbers. The paeonies are looking fantastic and will hopefully be ready soon. She has plenty of seedlings in the polytunnels and frames. Many of the dahlias have been planted. (7) Unfortunately, the **annual carrot weeding** and thinning is about to start. The Wednesday weeders have already been in action, earlier than in previous years. However, it's important to realise that they cannot do all the weeding in the garden. If you see weeds remove them. So hopefully we are going to have a very good 2025.

5	**Finance Report (Stephen Stuart-Matthews)** **(1)** Grace and Flavour annual accounts to end of Sep 30th 2024 as previously presented at the AGM in November 2024 and independently examined by our auditor Brian Manners were submitted to HMRC and Companies House in December. The accounts can be seen on line at Companies House. (2) Provisional unaudited accounts were presented (see below) for the first half to March 31st 2025. This included expenditure of £3,393 during the first half on a variety of items including "Cost of Sales" (i.e. seeds, compost and manure), tree pollarding and general maintenance. (3) We thank the Community Foundation for Surrey for their grant for replacement materials for our pond bridge. Following receipt of funds the bridge replacement work has started. (4) On 31st March 2025 Grace and Flavour's current account balance was £6,102 and in addition £9,036 in Grace and Flavour deposit accounts for future costs and contingency reserves. Overall we are on track with our original forecast for this year and aim to add a small cash surplus to our retained earnings. *Please refer to the attached table.*
6	**Questions from the Audience** **J**K asked if we could consider growing sweet potatoes. JW said he had no experience but this would probably require polytunnel space and he doubted we would grow enough to satisfy demand. A discussion about cultural techniques followed. JW to discuss further with JK re a pilot. Melons also considered but the water requirements are onerous and limited yields a concern. An extra polytunnel may prove unpopular with neighbouring residents and would need careful consideration by the directors. (**Action:** to be discussed at next directors meeting). **JW** raised the possible need for additional members to join the watering rota. (**Action** Anyone interested please contact him directly.) **CW** Could members please visit and post to the G+F instagram account which now has 458 followers, the G+F Facebook account (105 followers). Photos and topical comments always welcome. *(There are links at the* **graceandflavour.org** *website*). **HS** A question about the Saturday Shop during the summer. Would it be helpful to separate members vegetables from those for sale to visitors? A discussion covering various options ensued but no conclusions reached. JW to consider if we need to advertise the Saturday Shop if we have a glut of vegetables.
7	**Close of Meeting.**
8	**Future Events** NGS Open Day Sunday 27th July, noon-4pm, at G+F (parking at Dene Place) G+F AGM Thursday 13th November, 7.30pm, WHVH

FINANCE Report

Period to 31st March 2025

		Actual		Comparison
Income and Expenditure (Cash FLow)	Forecast Year to 30 Sep 25	**Half Year 1 Oct 24 - 31 Mar 25**		Half Year 1 Oct 23 - 31 Mar 24
	£	£		£
INCOME	**8,140**	**4,733**		**4,320**
Member sales	5,680	2,666		2,331
Retail sales	100	0		0
Other Income (Social)	0	-18		0
Other Income (Allotments)	2,015	2,015		1,989
Donations	345	70		0
EXPENDITURE	**-7,740**	**-3,393**		**-2,169**
Cost of sales (Garden Costs)	-1,790	-1,391		-1,100
Admin & Insurance	-670	-82		-84
Water	-650	-29		-288
Other Operating Expense	-930	-302		-275
Maintenance of Premises & Site	-2,600	-1,590		-422
Asset Purchase excl. Depreciation	-1,100	0.00		0
CASH SURPLUS (-Deficit) for Half Year	**400**	**1,340**		**2,151**

***Profit (Loss) - financial adjustments to* Cash Surplus**	1340		2,151
Depreciation (6 months) to 31 Mar 2025	-952		-980
Commitments (cash to bank less current liabilities)	-300		-230
Profit (Loss) for half year to 31 March 2025	**88**		**941**

	Actual		Comparison	
Balance Sheet at	***31st March 2025***		***31st March 2024***	
	£	£	£	£
Opening Book Value (1 Oct 24) of Fixed Assets	15,361		17,320	
Depreciation (6 Months)	-952		-980	
Fixed Assets		14,409		16,340
Current account	6,102		7,868	
Deposit accounts	9,036		4,028	
Commitments	-300		-230	
Current Assets		14,838		11,666
Total Assets		**29,247**		**28,006**
Retained Earnings at start of financial year	29,159		27,065	
Profit (Loss) in half year to 31st March 2025	88		941	
Equity		**29,247**		**28,006**