

Minutes of the NNHS Annual General Meeting 29 November 2025
Jubilee Hall East Tuddenham at 11am

Chairperson Len Finch opened the meeting and welcomed the 34 members who were in attendance. A one-minute silence was held in memory of members lost during the year.

Apologies:

Gloria Goodley, Nick & Rubyna Elsey, Doris Waymark, Ann Hammond, Anne Bridge, David Salter

Minutes of the previous AGM:

The minutes of the AGM of 7 December 2024 had been circulated in advance of the meeting. There were no matters arising and the minutes were agreed (proposed Malcolm Stelfox, seconded Sue Brown).

Chairperson's report and review of the year:

Len Finch reported on another successful year. He was pleased to see Summer Show co-ordinator Malcolm Stelfox back with us after a lengthy absence due to illness. The Spring Show had gone well – more Daffodils than expected and the Memorial Class for the late Peter Firman had been very well supported. Len and General Secretary Lesley had attended a plant fair at East Ruston Old Vicarage for the first time. This went well, with details obtained of a few more people to go on our Speakers List and a very quick sale of most of our plants. The afternoon visit to The Old Vicarage at Fressingfield by kind invitation of Dr & Mrs Castro had been wonderful and we had really appreciated the opportunity to look around their magnificent garden. The Norfolk Show went well, despite a few of our key players being absent, and the Royal Norfolk Agricultural Association (RNAA) were pleased with the new classes for beginners and the high standard of exhibits. Committee had purchased new display banners and a gazebo and had one badly worn trophy re-silvered. We have formed a steering group for our 200th anniversary celebrations in 2029. Thanks go to the archive group who are gathering information to help with putting an anniversary booklet together – a few more volunteers are required to help with this. The President's Evening at Beck Hall, Billingford hosted by Julia Stafford Allen and by kind agreement of Lord & Lady Goodenough, had been another wonderful event – excellent company and buffet and a lovely garden to look round. Len had again attended the Sandringham Flower Show, supported by Alan Bidewell. 2026 will see this replaced by the RHS Sandringham Flower Show. Much as we would like to take part in that, we don't have sufficient resources or volunteers to cover a five-day show, so we won't be there in 2026. We will encourage our members to enter the various competitions instead. Our Gardening, Plants and Floral Art Day at Dereham Memorial Hall on 2 August had been a joint fundraiser with the Norwich Group of Flower Clubs, with whom we are working ever more closely. The Gardeners' Question Time chaired by Richard Hobbs and with Alan Gray, Ian Roofe and Jonathan Moseley as the panel had been great fun. It was followed in the afternoon by a very well received and entertaining flower arranging demonstration by Jonathan. Overall it was a fantastic day. Many thanks to everyone who took part and a special mention to Pauline & Don Kinmond who ran the catering all day. Everyone enjoyed the day so much that we are now planning something similar for 2027. The Autumn Shows went well but highlighted what a difficult growing season 2025 had been. Vegetable exhibits were down but fruit entries were up. It was sad to see the number of Chrysanthemum exhibits declining but positive to have a few enquiries from people hoping to show in the future. Thank you to Richard Hobbs for running two judges' workshops in 2025, very beneficial for everyone involved. The new version of the Norfolk Gardener collated by John Knowles and edited by Lesley had gone down very well. Len finished by thanking everyone for their support and input throughout the year. The society is in a good place and the future looks good.

Treasurer's Report, including receipt and consideration of the accounts for the year ended 30 September 2024:

Susan Cranmer thanked everyone for being there and for their continued support of our charity. As Treasurer, it was her privilege to present the financial report for the past year and to offer an overview of our current financial position. First, she was pleased to share that this has been a year of steady progress. Despite the ongoing economic challenges many charities are facing, we had managed our finances responsibly and remained focused. Our income this year came from a combination of individual donations, gift aid, and with the majority coming from our events. Susan expressed sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed—whether it be via supporting the holidays, events, shows or by volunteering. Every contribution makes a real difference.

On the expenditure side, Susan reported that we have continued to prioritise spending that directly supports our vision for the society. We have invested in a new gazebo to support our Summer Show at the Royal Norfolk Show, in

returning one of our trophies to its original condition and in methods of being able to take card payments at our shows/events. We need to keep a keen eye on increasing costs for the future and ensure that we make strategic decisions for next year to ensure that we can keep the Society heading in the upward direction.

Susan was pleased to report that we ended the year with a good financial position. Our accounts show a surplus income over expenditure of £636, and our reserves remain within the recommended level for a charity of our size. This puts us in a good place to continue our work in the year ahead. Looking forward, we must continue to diversify our income streams and plan for rising costs. Fundraising will remain a key focus, and we will continue exploring initiatives. If anyone wishes or has ideas on how they can support/assist, please do not hesitate to reach out to committee. With members support, Susan was confident that we can continue the path that we are on. Susan finished by thanking everyone, whether you support one of our shows or come to one of the events. Managing the finances of a charity is always a collective effort, and she was grateful for the teamwork and dedication shown throughout the year.

The accounts were accepted without question.

General and Events Secretary's Report:

Lesley Webdale thanked everyone for their support and reported on another busy year, one that had been very challenging for her and Phill on a personal basis. She expressed gratitude for all the support from members and affiliated societies, who are keeping this society alive and thriving. Personal highlights for the year were the holidays taking in RHS Gardens at Rosemoor and Wisley, the President's Evening, visit to Fressingfield and the day at Dereham Memorial Hall. We have a wonderful team spirit at present, which is evident at all our events. Concerns were the need to find an assistant secretary to help with the administration and filling the show entry secretary role for the spring and autumn shows. General Secretary and Treasurer had covered the show entry secretary role throughout 2025 and General Secretary had dealt with all the administrative tasks, events, catering and fundraising. Special thanks were given to everyone in the room for playing their part. A particular mention to Sue Brown, Liz & Den Brown, Shirley King, Shirley Cross, John & Sue Burton, Pauline & Ron Harper and Phill Webdale for their support and to Max d'Ayala for taking on and updating the website. Ongoing thanks to:

- Gloria Goodley, our Floral Art co-ordinator, for her personal and practical support, her positivity and for being a brilliant ambassador for us with the RNAA.
- Susan Cranmer for her practical and technical assistance for the shows and other events.
- Tricia Loades for supporting at all shows and for quietly getting things done.
- Len Finch for listening patiently and always being there for a chat.

Membership numbers are steady. Could everyone in the room recruit a friend or relative in 2026? Gift Aid is an important part of our income – if you are not already one of our Gift Aiders, could you do so? Fundraising is also important. Items for tombolas and raffles would be welcome. Members were also reminded that if they sell items on eBay they can opt to donate a percentage to NNHS and that signing up to Give As You Live was another way to raise free funds for the society. Whatever you do for the society – Thank you!

Election of Trustees and other Posts for 2025/2026:

The following existing Trustees were elected as Trustees for the coming year (proposed by Trevor Last and seconded by Alan Bidewell):

Chairperson: Len Finch

Vice Chair: Simon White

General Secretary: Lesley Webdale

Treasurer: Susan Cranmer

Show Co-ordinator (Spring & Autumn): Tricia Loades

Summer Show Co-ordinator: Malcolm Stelfox

Floral Art Co-ordinator: Gloria Goodley

Large Gardens Co-ordinator: Simon Gaches

This left vacancies for two roles for which no nominations were made:

Assistant Secretary: someone to help with administrative tasks such as minute writing, booking venues, answering emails.

Committee member: one vacancy, role to be decided upon taking up post.

Non-trustee roles were filled as follows:

Spring & Autumn Show entry Secretary: vacant
Summer Show entry Secretary: Frances Stelfox
Spring & Autumn shows Manager: Phill Webdale
Summer Show manager: vacant
Trophy Manager: Len Finch
Catering Co-ordinator: vacant
Webmaster: Max d'Ayala
Deputy Webmaster: Don Cuddon
Journal Assistant: John Knowles
President: Patrick Lines
Vice President: to be confirmed.

Those present were asked to consider whether they could fill any of the vacant roles and to talk to a committee member if they were interested.

Thank you to our outgoing President, Julia Stafford Allen

Len Finch thanked Julia for her whole-hearted support over the last three years and said we will all miss her. Julia was presented with a hamper and a plant as a small token of our appreciation for everything she had done for us.

The AGM closed at 12.30, followed by presentation of the All shows awards for 2025 and a buffet and quiz from Vice Chair Simon White.