



**Devon Gardens Trust
Annual General Meeting 2023
Tuesday 12th September 2023
Shilstone, Modbury, Ivybridge, South Devon. PL21 0TW.**

Dear Member,

11 August 2023

We have great pleasure in inviting you and your guests to the Devon Gardens Trust AGM 2023 at 11:30 am on Tuesday 12th September 2023 at Shilstone, Modbury. The AGM will be held in the Meeting Room located in the Devon Rural Archive and will be followed by a talk by Sebastian and Lucy Fenwick, the owners of Shilstone, on the restoration of Shilstone and future plans.

Programme

From 11:00 am Arrival and registration, coffee/tea
11.25 am Welcome
11.30 am Annual General Meeting

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the AGM 2022, held on 24th September 2022 and the EGM held on 7th December 2022 (Page 3)
3. Matters arising from the Minutes of the last AGM and the EGM, not covered elsewhere on the Agenda
4. Annual Report of the Chairman and the Trustees (Page 7)
5. Trustees for 2023-24 (Page 22)
6. Presentation of the Trust's key initiatives in 2022 and plans for 2023
7. Any other business (Items for inclusion to be sent to the Chairman to arrive by Friday 1st September 2023).

After the official business, there will be a brief period for questions and informal discussion.

12.15 pm **Talk by Sebastian and Lucy Fenwick, owners of Shilstone, on the restoration of the house and gardens and their future plans.**
1.00 pm Lunch in the Café (booking for lunch is essential. See Booking Form*)
2.00 pm Tour of the Shilstone house and grounds. There will also be an opportunity to visit the Devon Rural Archive.

IF YOU WISH TO ATTEND PLEASE BOOK TICKETS EITHER ONLINE via the link in the latest DGT ENews OR please return the enclosed Booking Form with your remittance to arrive by Friday 25th August 2023.

* DGT members may attend the AGM without charge, but attendance at the talk, subsequent refreshments and tour is only for those who have booked.

No dogs please.

Enquiries by EMAIL to events@devongardenstrust.org.uk

With kind regards,

Sue Minter, Chair

Devon Gardens Trust
Minutes of the Thirty Fifth Annual General Meeting
held on 24th September 2022 at 11:00am
at Castle Hill.

- 35.1 Present:** Members: Jeryl Andrew, Lady Arran, Stephanie Berry, Shane Cormie, Peter Davies, James Davis, Sandra Dean, Andrew Fishley, Mary Fourt, Michael Gee, Penny Hammond, Patsy Hayman, Michel Hickson, Lena Hickson, Marcelle Hoff, Ian Howard, Avis Judd, Jane Knox, Graham Knox, Liz Lewis, Dianne Long, Hugh Mellor, Susan Minter, James Perriam, Viv Rands, John Reeves, Gina Richards, Jean Simpson-Smith, Ian Smith, Richard Soans, Kate Tuke, Jan Uden, Letitia Yetman - 37 members
Guests: Rupert Bannister, Andy Jasper, Alex Heusen, Alison Underwood, Head Gardener at Castle Hill
- 35.2 Proxy votes received:** Janet Anderson, Tom Bigge, John Borron, Derek Carmichael, Susan Harwood, Carol Hughes, David & Carolyn Keep, Jean Silvestri, Rupert Thistlewayte, John Watt, Andrew & Rachel Young.
- 35.3 Welcome and Introduction:** The Chairman welcomed members to the AGM and introduced Lady Arran, who then welcomed the members to Castle Hill. Lady Arran thanked the Trust for the gift of a *Sorbus Devoniensis* to be planted as part of the 'Green Canopy' at Castle Hill to celebrate the Platinum Anniversary of the Queen's reign. She then pointed out that the timing for 'National Green Canopy' has been extended to March 2023 in order to compensate for the inability to plant trees successfully due to this summer's drought. Lady Arran then requested a minute silence to respect the memory of the Queen following her death.
- 35.4 Apologies:** Janet Anderson, Tom Bigge, John Borron, Charles Courtenay, Earl of Devon, Caradoc Doy, Paul Faulkner, Bob & Ann Harvey, Susan Harwood, Rosemary Howell, Carol Hughes, Cecilia Jenkins, David & Carolyn Keep, Julie Kent, Jonathan Lovie, April Marjoram, Nigel Mason, George Seagar-Berry, Jean Silvestri, Richard Stone, Rupert Thistlethwayte, John Watt, Andrew & Rachel Young
- 35.5 Minutes of the 34th Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 1st September 2021 at Poltimore House:** The Minutes were sent to all members in advance of the meeting. The Minutes were proposed, as an accurate record, by Peter Davies and seconded by Penny Hammond and approved by the meeting. The Chairman of the Council of Management then signed a copy as an accurate record of the proceedings.
- 35.6 Matters arising from those Minutes:** There were none.
- 35.7 Report of the Chairman of the Council of Management, Sue Minter:** The Chairman's Report including details of the Trust's activities for the year up to March 31st 2022 had been circulated with the AGM papers. The Chair explained the slightly different format this year. Acceptance proposed by Michael Hickson and seconded by Shane Cormie.
- 35.8 Election of Council of Management 2022-2023:** The Chairman then called on the President, Michael Hickson, to take the chair in order to conduct the election to the Council of Management. A copy of the proposed Election of the Council of Management has been sent out to all members in advance of the meeting setting out the requirements of the Constitution. The President noted the contribution that Sue Minter is already making as Chairman and asked for a proposal to re-elect her as a Trustee for a further three-year term. Proposed by Richard Soans, Seconded by Dianne Long. He then asked for the election of two new trustees to join the Council and information on these candidates had been included in the AGM papers. It was noted that Liz Lewis has been the long standing Membership Secretary and her election was proposed by Penny Hammond and seconded by Dianne Long. Dr Rosemary Yallop a well-respected and knowledgeable architectural historian, was proposed by Dianne Long and seconded by Sandy Howard.

It was further noted that Dianne Long has also proposed Paul Faulkner as a Trustee and that this had been seconded by Clare Greener. However, the Council of Management is planning shortly to meet a further two new prospective Trustees, Jane Knight, a landscape architect from the Eden Project and Rupert Bannister who has been involved with 'Growing Devon Schools'. It is proposed that these three new candidates should be nominated for election as Trustees at the same time at the EGM which is planned for December 2022.

35.9 Financial Report and Governance: The Chairman then asked Jeryl Andrew, the Chair of the Governance committee, to explain the changes that the Council is proposing to the Memorandum and Articles of Association, which had last been updated in 2005. She noted that an update was now timely particularly to take account of the use of digital communications. Advice had been requested from the Trust's solicitors, Tozers, who had advised that the format was outdated and recommended a full revision to bring the Articles in line with current charity and corporate governance. A couple of items required approval from the Charities Commission which had only been received last week. As a result, it was not possible for this item to be included in the papers for this AGM. The revised Articles will therefore be sent to members for consideration at an EGM which, it is hoped, could be held as part of one of the Trust's other events which would be likely to be in December.

The financial statements had been included in the papers that were circulated. These were noted and acceptance of the accounts for the year 2021/22 was proposed by Jeryl Andrew and seconded by Liz Lewis. The appointment of Bush & Co as accountants for the year 2022/23 was proposed by Stephanie Berry and seconded by Liz Lewis. Both were approved nem.con.

35.10 AOB: The chairman invited Ian Smith to talk to the meeting about developing a network of professional gardeners working in historic gardens in Devon. The idea was to bring individuals or small teams together to share ideas. He has already been developing the scheme in North Devon where it is proving successful in helping to support gardeners who are often isolated in their work environments. There is to be a meeting on Saturday 15th October 2022 at RHS Rosemoor. The plan is that the Curator, Jonathan Webster, and his staff will be walking with the attendees through the gardens and Joshua Sparks will talk about regeneration of agricultural and horticultural land and how rewilding can work in historic gardens. It is hoped that as many gardeners as possible will attend. Ian also noted that he has been working with the Education Committee to offer bursaries and finding ways to support WRAGS trainees who are coming back into the industry.

The Chairman requested help from members to work on the newsletter as Dianne Long who has been doing this for some time is looking to step back. She also asked for ideas for Autumn / Winter social events to be given to Shane Cormie.

There was a request from the floor for further information about the Christmas event, which is to be held at Clyst St Mary Village Hall on Saturday 7 December 2022 between 2pm and 4pm.

This concluded the official business of the Annual General Meeting which ended at 11:23hrs.

Signed by Chair.....

Date:.....



Devon Gardens Trust
Minutes of the EGM held on Wednesday 7th December 2022 at 14:00hrs
at the Clyst St Mary Community Centre

NB decisions in italic

Present – Janet Anderson, Jeryl Andrew, Shane Cormie, Peter Davies, Caradoc Doy, Jane Gerrard, Clare Greener, Penny Hammond, Stewart Henchie, Michael & Lena Hickson, Ian & Sandra Howard, Avis Judd, Jane Knight, Liz Lewis, Dianne Long, Sue Minter, James Perriam, Vivien Rands, Jeanne Silvestri, Richard Soans, Jan Uden, Ian Varndell, Beryl Whidden

The Chair welcomed everyone to the EGM and checked that all present were members. She then explained that the EGM had a twofold purpose: first, to adopt the new Articles of Association, which were not ready for the AGM, and secondly to elect new Trustees, who have recently had the opportunity to meet with current Trustees.

The Chair read the list of **Apologies** - Penny Bayer, Davina Brown, Charles Courtenay, Earl of Devon, Sandra Dean, Susan Fryer, Susan Harwood, Derek Jackson, Rosemary Howell, Derek Jackson, Suzanne Jones, Carolyn and David Keep, Spencer Keys, Hugh Meller, John Reeves, Jack Shelley, Shirley Tamblyn, Rupert Thistlethwayte, John Watt

The Chair explained that the main purpose of this Extraordinary General Meeting was to vote on the adoption of the new Articles of Association for the Trust. She invited **Jeryl Andrew** to address the EGM to explain the background to this. **JA** explained that the exercise of updating the Memorandum and Articles of Association had been needed as there were a number of changes required to bring the governance of the Trust in line with modern practise. A note had been circulated to all members explaining the main changes that were proposed along with the proposed new Articles of Association, now in a single document rather than the current format of a Memorandum and Articles of Association. **JA** ran through the main points and then invited questions from the floor.

The Chair then proposed the Special Resolution to adopt these new Articles of Association, it was seconded by **Liz Lewis** and passed by the meeting **nem con**

The Chair then offered thanks to **Jeryl Andrew** for all her hard work in working with Tozers to review and update the Articles.

2. The Chair then moved to item two on the agenda, the election of the new Trustees.

Jeryl Andrew proposed Jane Knight, seconded by Penny Hammond.

Dianne Long proposed Paul Faulkner seconded by Clare Greener

Sue Minter proposed Rupert Bannister seconded by Shane Cormie.

All were elected **nem con**

They were then invited to the next meeting of Trustees on Friday 20th January at Exeter Community Centre.

The EGM concluded at 14:40 hrs.

Signed by Chair.....

Date:.....



**Devon Gardens Trust
Annual Report
2022-2023**

Championing Devon's garden heritage

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Legal and Administrative Information Year Ended 31 March 2023

Patron The Earl of Devon
President Mr Michael Hickson VMH
Vice-Presidents Mrs Janet Anderson
Dr Eric Durrance
Mr Peter Hunt
Mr Steven Pugsley
Mrs Joy Williams MBE
Ex officio Lord Bishop of Exeter (Rt Revd Robert Attwell)

Chair Susan Minter (appointed 23 July 2019)
Vice Chair Jeryl Andrew (appointed 21 October 2020)
Treasurer Stephanie Berry (appointed 28 April 2021)
Company Secretary Vacant
Directors Jeryl Andrew, Sue Minter
Membership Secretary Elizabeth Lewis (appointed 1 March 2020)

Trustees
(in addition to those named above)

Mr Rupert Bannister (appointed 7 December 2022)
Mr Shane Cormie (appointed 8 September 2018)
Mr Paul Faulkner (appointed 7 December 2022)
Ms Jane Knight (appointed 7 December 2022)
Mr Jeremy Pearson (appointed 25 July 2017)
Mr Saul Walker (appointed 1 September 2021)
Mrs Rosemary Yallop (appointed 24 September 2022)

Conservation Officer Jonathan Lovie

Registered Company Number 2277427

Registered Charity Number 800540

Registered Office and Correspondence Address

Exeter Community Centre
17 St David's Hill
Exeter
EX4 3RG

Accountants

Bush & Co Limited
Chartered Accountants
2 Barnfield Crescent
Exeter
EX1 1QT

Bankers

National Westminster Bank Plc
59 High Street
Exeter
EX4 3DL

Investment Brokers and Custodians

Brewin Dolphin Ltd
Vantage Point
Woodwater Park, Pynes Hill
Exeter
EX2 5FD

Devon Gardens Trust

Report of the Directors and the Trustees

for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

The Trustees present their report, together with the financial statements of the Trust for the year ended 31 March 2023. The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with the charity's articles of association, the Companies Act 2006, FRS 102 "The Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland" ("FRS 102") and the Charities SORP "Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102)" (effective 1 January 2019). The charity is a Public Benefit Entity as defined by FRS 102.

Objectives

The Trust is a company limited by guarantee and governed by Articles of Association. The Trust is also a Registered Charity.

The Objects of the Trust are to:

- Promote, for the public benefit, the protection, conservation, enhancement, research and understanding of the Designed Landscapes of Devon and
- Promote the education of the public on the arts, crafts, sciences, and all other matters connected with the heritage of those landscapes.

In fulfilling this purpose, the Trustees have complied with the duty in Section 1(5) of the Charities Act 2011 to have due regard to the guidance published by the Charities Commission on public benefit.

The Directors and Trustees

The Trustees and the Directors are shown on page 8. They are Trustees for the purposes of the Charities Act and are proposed from the body of the Membership and were elected formally at the AGM and the EGM.

Jeryl Andrew is due to retire in 2023 having served one three-year term as Trustee and is not seeking re-election. Jeremy Pearson resigned on January 20th for personal reasons having served for five and a half years. Rupert Bannister resigned on July 11th due to other commitments having served for seven months. We thank them for the contributions that they have made to the work of the Trust.

Main Activities and Achievements during the year

My report follows the same format as last year comprising a summary of the main activities of the Trust during the year with full details of the Trust's activities in an Appendix written by the named Chairs of each of the Trust's Committees in their own words, reflecting the fact that the Trust is run by volunteers who each 'own' an area of activity and deliver upon it.

This year, the 35th year of our operation, has seen developments across all areas of our work. We have been fortunate to recruit a number of new Trustees with two appointments at last year's AGM and three at the EGM in December and these new Trustees are beginning to make a valuable contribution to the Trust's activities with fresh ideas.

In terms of grant giving, this year has seen some progress on our work with Oldway Mansion in Paignton for which we have a legacy (the Wilson Conservation Fund). Guidance in the form of a Garden Management Plan for volunteers has been commissioned and completed and a consultant has been appointed by Torbay Council to progress a Conservation Management Plan for the landscape (which is by Achille Duchêne and contains a Meyer rock garden) and to which the Trust will contribute 50%. A grant was also made to Dartington Hall Trust for the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan. We have engaged a consultant to prepare the application for Peamore to be included on Historic England's Register and so protect this picturesque landscape from encroachment by the expanding housing estates in the Teignbridge District Council area. We are beginning to engage more closely with Plymouth Central Park which is in need of an overarching landscape management plan due to hitherto piecemeal development. We would, however, like to be able to award more grants and so have established a New Initiatives Group to explore possible ways that this can be achieved within the terms of the Trust's charitable objects and sought legal advice to clarify this.

One area that we have been considering is how to replace the grants hitherto given for horticultural courses at colleges which are now no longer needed as they are either funded by the government (or, in the case of the RHS apprentices funded centrally). During the year we successfully launched the Professional Gardeners' Network, an initiative first proposed in 2018. Led by Trustee, Saul Walker, it is now developing an interesting programme for this year and could become a conduit for funds into specific course training and/or travel and equipment grants. The committee is also working on reactivating following Covid a number of partnerships with organisations in the county such as Growing Devon Schools (co-ordinated by new trustee Jane Knight) and Farms for City Children.

Clare Greener, the Interim Chair of the Research Committee, is now being supported by David Sykes, as Coordinator, who is working on a programme of meetings and visits. Closer links with the Devon Rural Archive are being forged. Ed Dolphin, a trained arborist, has been recruited to lead on tree recording and its integration into site recording in succession to Marion Kneebone, whom we thank for her work on this.

The Conservation Committee is completing a *Gazetteer* review and refinement which should help inform planning responses and research priorities; and, due to the quantity of work required in reviewing Local Plans, a proposal for enlisting planning volunteers has been agreed. A Parks and Cemeteries programme was launched in November 2022, initially covering six parks and six cemeteries, which is an initiative to support the public parks and cemeteries in the county. This is being led by new Trustee, Paul Faulkner, and we hope will bring forward some proposals for grants.

In other developments, a new initiative was the creation of an annual Award by the Trust for innovation and creativity in the management of historic gardens. The first recipient of this

award was Knightshayes for its innovative management of its walled garden.

A further edition of the Journal is due out shortly and we are currently looking for someone to take the lead on Communications and to fill the role of Newsletter and eNews editor. As a volunteer organisation we are entirely dependent on people coming forward to take on these roles. Dianne Long has undertaken this role and others very competently for some time but we need some new faces to join our organisation.

Shane Cormie has been in charge of our social media presence and has coordinated the Events programme which started with a very successful Christmas event and proceeded with winter Zoom talks and visits through the summer including a joint visit and lecture with the Sid Vale Association.

We have undertaken a review of our governance documents in the last twelve months with updated Articles of Association adopted at the EGM in December 2022 and the introduction of new policies including a Code of Conduct for Trustees and a Lone Working policy.

Finally, I am delighted to report that our membership numbers continue to grow with a total of 36 new members since April 2022. We now have 315 members of whom 125 are Life members. It is with sadness that we report the deaths of Elizabeth Maycock (Life member), Ian Panton, Dr Eva Gibson, and Dr Alison Newton. Dr Gibson and Dr Newton were both Life Members for more than 30 years.

The Trustees would like to thank all members for their continued support during the past year.

Sue Minter
Chair

Financial Report

As of 31 March 2023, the Trust's reserves amounted to £326,164 (2022: £357,964) of which £124,313 are Restricted Funds (Wilson Conservation Fund). The Restricted Funds originate from the John Wilson legacy designated to be used for the restoration and conservation of important Devon gardens with priority to be given to the restoration of Oldway Mansion, Paignton's original landscape designed by Achille Duchêne. The balance of Unrestricted Funds is to be used for the normal activities of the Trust.

The summary income and expenditure account, produced for circulation to members, is included on the following page. The activities for the year generated a net movement in funds of £(31,800) (2022: surplus of £107) which included investment losses of £21,344 (2022: gain of £16,895). The investment portfolio value fell by 3.59% in the 12 months to 31 March 2023, with 2022 proving to be a challenging year for investors, with the war in Ukraine, high inflation, rising interest rates and the growing risk of a global recession creating instability for financial markets. The Trustees regularly review the investment performance and carry out an annual review of Brewin Dolphin's mandate.

In this financial year the Trust awarded a first grant of £3,108 to Oldway from the Wilson Conservation Fund for the appointment of a consultant to prepare a garden management guidance plan. General expenditure for the year was in line with 2022.

The Trust's expenditure on operating costs is stable but always exceeds its income. To ensure that DGT has sufficient operating funds and is able to respond to any unforeseen challenges the Trust maintains a level of reserves of twice the average annual expenditure in the General Fund of the Unrestricted Funds (£56,636). The balance of the Unrestricted Funds (£145,215), held in the Designated Fund, is available for expenditure in line with the Trust's objectives. This year a New Initiatives Group was formed to explore ways to award more grants as the Trust remains well financed.

Statement Of Trustees' Responsibilities

Company law requires the Trustees to prepare financial statements for each financial year which give a true and fair view of the state of affairs of the charitable company and of the incoming resources and application of resources, including the income and expenditure, of the charitable company for that period. In preparing those financial statements, the Trustees are required to:

- Select suitable accounting policies and then apply them consistently;
- Observe the methods and principles in the Charity SORP;
- Make judgements and estimates that are reasonable and prudent;
- Prepare the financial statements on the going concern basis unless it is inappropriate to presume that the charitable company will continue in business.

The Trustees are responsible for keeping proper accounting records which disclose with reasonable accuracy at any time the financial position of the charitable company and to enable them to ensure that the financial statements comply with the Companies Act 2006. They are also responsible for safeguarding the assets of the charitable company and hence for taking reasonable steps for the prevention and detection of fraud and other irregularities.

**SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023**

	2023	2022
	£	£
Income		
Subscriptions	4,533	3,350
Gift aid	645	1,005
Donations	416	19
Events, including AGM	2,809	446
Book sales	151	211
Income from Investments	8,771	7,035
Total Income	<u>17,325</u>	<u>12,066</u>
Expenditure		
Depreciation and impairment	1,422	1,704
Administration	405	228
Office rent & service charge	1,648	1,633
Publicity & marketing	1,105	1,510
Bursaries & grants	1,000	662
Conservation - grants awarded	3,108	11,400
Conservation - committee expenses including officer	3,904	3,684
Research & recording	486	152
Events, including AGM	4,310	1,065
Publications - journal & newsletter	1,489	660
Subscriptions & sundries	223	141
Insurance	680	641
Accountancy	2,028	1,814
Investment management fee	3,082	3,403
Book expenses	731	157
Legal & professional fees	2,160	-
Total Expenditure	<u>27,781</u>	<u>28,854</u>
Gains/(Losses) on Investments	<u>(21,344)</u>	<u>16,895</u>
Net Movement in Funds	<u>(31,800)</u>	<u>107</u>
Funds Brought Forward	<u>357,964</u>	<u>357,857</u>
Funds Carried Forward	<u>326,164</u>	<u>357,964</u>

SUMMARY INCOME AND EXPENDITURE ACCOUNT (CONTINUED)
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Bank current account	7,975	9,357
Brewin Dolphin account	13,228	21,704
Investments at Market Value	308,205	335,448
Fixed Assets	284	1,706
Stock	1,222	1,963
Prepayments	628	578
Accruals	(5,378)	(12,792)
	<u>326,164</u>	<u>357,964</u>

Notes

1. The Trust is a Company limited by guarantee, with charitable status.
2. This abbreviated financial statement is produced for circulation to the Members. A copy of the full accounts prepared in accordance with the requirements of the FRS 102, the Charities Act 2011 and the Companies Act 2006 is held by the treasurer

Appendix

Reports from Committee Chairs

2022-2023

Conservation Committee Report Chair: Dr Dianne Long

Planning Casework

During the period 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023 there have been some 25 consultations affecting designed landscapes in the county of which 16 required a substantial response by the Trust acting on behalf of the Gardens Trust, the statutory consultee on all planning applications affecting sites on the Historic England (HE) *Register of Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in England* (*Register*), there were also 3 felling license applications by the Forestry Commission, and 2 pre-applications relating to sites on the *Register* and on the *Devon Gazetteer of Parks and Gardens of Local Historic Interest* (*Gazetteer*).

We have been encouraged that the National Trust has consulted the Trust at an early stage in its planning for work at both A la Ronde and Arlington. In the case of **A la Ronde (II)** NT set out very positive ideas for the better management of the designed landscape, including enhancing accessibility and understanding. In respect of **Arlington Court (II*)**, NT are considering options for future management of the heavily silted lake, which is a significant element of the historic landscape design, and its loss would have a detrimental impact on the significance of the early C19 Picturesque landscape design; however, the silted area has natural environment significance (SSSI) and the solution will need to achieve a careful balance. NT was involving all stakeholders who will be consulted on the Landscape Concept Design that was being developed. The Trust has not objected to other applications at Arlington: for a timber storage structure in the courtyard behind the house replacing and regularising an existing, untidy, informal arrangement, and proposed new woodland planting at Churchill Farm within the designated historic landscape; however, we have commented that given the wider context of changes under consideration at Arlington, we would have preferred to see them being brought forward as part of a comprehensive conservation management plan.

Bicton (I) We have submitted a firm objection to East Devon District Council on an application for an agricultural building within the parkland to the south-east of the main drive, citing the lack of appropriate supporting documentation for the proposal, and its adverse visual impact on the Grade I designed landscape. We see this as further haphazard, incremental development proposed without the benefit of an appropriate CMP for the Bicton landscape. Historic England has responded in similar terms.

Cadhay (II*) An appeal against Devon County Council's refusal of permission for the quarry at Straightgate Farm, Ottery St Mary, which it is believed will affect the water supply to the ponds forming a key element of the historic designed landscape at Cadhay and its wider estate has been upheld by the Planning Inspectorate. We are extremely disappointed by this outcome and remain very concerned for the sustainability of the garden at Cadhay. We will continue to liaise with the Cadhay as this development proceeds.

Courtlands/Lympstone Manor (Gazetteer) Revisions to address Environment Agency concerns over flood risks on a scheme for shepherds huts did not address any of the issues previously raised by the Trust or the East Devon Conservation Officer, our objection was therefore maintained.

Dartington Hall (II*) We considered a proposed residential development (first phase of two planned) adjacent to the Totnes Drive to the Dartington Estate. The proposed development site lies immediately outside the registered site boundary, but clearly within its setting (a fact addressed in the

application documentation). While instinctively regretting the change to the approach to Dartington from Totnes which these developments would cause, careful examination of the historic map evidence did not suggest that the proposed development sites had ever formed part of the designed views from or towards Dartington; and the close proximity of existing housing to the north-west and south-east of the proposed development sites indicated that there were no valid planning grounds on which we might formulate an objection.

Drake Memorial Park, Plymouth (*Gazetteer*) Consideration of proposed variations to a previous scheme for the construction of an extension and crematorium on land to the north of the existing Drake Memorial Park (between it and the A38) revealed that the Park was perhaps of greater significance than previously thought. The issue on which Plymouth consulted was the potential impact on Saltram (II*) to the west. The local topography means that any impact on the registered landscape would be negligible. However, the consultation prompted further investigation into the history and significance of the Drake Memorial Park, which was laid out in 1941 and opened in 1943 using the “lawn cemetery” principle (no upright headstones or kerbs marking burial plots). Dr Brent Elliott (ex-librarian for the RHS Lindley Library) has advised that, based on his extensive research into cemetery design, this privately-operated cemetery is one of the earliest (and very probably the earliest) realised examples of a lawn cemetery in England – previous attempts to introduce this cemetery aesthetic by various municipal authorities having foundered due to public opposition. This enhanced understanding of the significance of the site is very helpful and will hopefully prompt further research.

Knowle, Sidmouth (*Gazetteer*) The derelict former East Devon Council offices were badly damaged by a fire on 30th March 2023. It is not known how this will affect the proposed redevelopment of the building by McCarthy Stone. Coincidentally, a revised scheme for this redevelopment was submitted shortly before the fire.

Mamhead (II*) – Obelisk Gardens (previously known as Mamhead Grange) An amended application for the siting of 14 luxury holiday lodges, the demolition of glasshouses with the retention of one glasshouse for use as a winter garden, and other associated works, has been rejected by Teignbridge District Council. The Trust advised Teignbridge that more evidence was required for the Council to determine whether or not there might be a detrimental impact on the setting of Mamhead Park.

At **Saltram (II*)** we considered that the applicant of a proposed solar farm at the north end of Chelson Meadow (the former rubbish dump site) had not addressed our concerns raised at pre-application stage. Whereas at **Ugbrooke (II*)** we raised no objection to a revised application for a small solar array adjacent to the Old Stables within the Grade II* landscape where a much fuller historic impact assessment than previously submitted goes far in allaying both our concerns, and those of the Teignbridge Conservation Officer with regard to the potential impact of this scheme.

Felling licenses

Endsleigh (I) (Forestry Commission Felling License consultation.) A detailed response was submitted to proposed felling and replanting in Leigh Wood (below the Swiss Cottage) in the heart of the Grade I designated landscape, and at another location adjacent to the Tavistock Drive within the immediate setting of the designated landscape. The proposed replanting of Sitka spruce and Douglas fir (as existing) in Leigh Wood, an area historically comprising oak woodland, together with the loss of a small number of mature oaks near the river was of particular concern. The significance of tracks within the woodland which appear to relate to Repton’s landscape scheme was also highlighted.

Castle Drogo (II*) An application to fell a compartment of oak, sycamore and birch in the Teign Gorge below the Castle (but within the registered landscape) and to allow natural regeneration of

the same species. This does not appear to have any adverse impact on the registered park and garden and reflects traditional forestry management in the area.

Other conservation work

Oldway (II) There was considerable engagement during the year with the various stakeholders involved at Oldway, helping to prepare a brief for the appointment of a consultant to prepare a gardens management guidance plan and a brief for a consultants to prepare a conservation management plan for the gardens. The guidance plan was to help the Oldway Volunteer Gardeners Group (incorporated as a charity during the year) prior to the implementation of the recommendations of a CMP, particularly on the significance of particular areas and how to address designed views. The guidance plan was funded by a grant from the Trust which has also offered a grant towards the costs of the CMP. The Trust urged Torbay Council to undertake work to the lime avenue such that it could be maintained by the Gardeners' Group in future, and to undertake a structural survey of the Grotto. Torbay Council appointed a project manager for Oldway and has recently begun consultation on the future uses for the Oldway buildings and gardens recognising that any restoration will be a long-term project.

Poltimore (*Gazetteer*) We have met with the chair and volunteers of the Friends at Poltimore to discuss the conservation of the grounds under their control. Given the resources available and the priorities identified by the Friends we have advised that a gardens management guidance plan, similar to that done at Oldway, would be a suitable way forward rather than a full-scale CMP. We have subsequently shared the Oldway plan and Poltimore now have a well-qualified volunteer able to develop their own plan.

Wood (I) Some members of the Conservation Committee were briefed on progress within the designed landscape. The work undertaken is of a very high standard, and the previously near-derelict Mawson landscape is now substantially reinvigorated with designed views re-opened, historic structures uncovered and appropriate planting introduced. More remains to be done, especially in the walled garden; but even here, positive change has taken place with the derelict glasshouses being recorded and dismantled and the main garden laid down to grass. The Grade II* house has been sympathetically converted to medical use and appears to have provided the whole historic environment at Wood with a beneficial use and sustainable future. This meeting was the first of an on-going dialogue in the context of further proposed restoration works. We have advised that Historic England should be engaged in discussions at an early stage.

Homeyards Botanical Gardens (*Gazetteer*) We advised the Friends of Homeyards that a structural survey of the grotto should be undertaken together with other structures in the gardens; this was completed and costings for remedial works were being sought. The Friends published a booklet on the history of the gardens written by one of its members.

Stover (II) We noted with sadness that the restoration of the 1779 stables had been removed from the NHLF funded Restoring Stover project, primarily caused by the post-COVID rise in costs. Although Historic England had offered funding, Stover School could not contribute financially to meet the deficit but intend to continue to the phase one of the project to stabilise the stables to prevent further deterioration and are keen to learn of possible funding options. The removal of the stables from the overall project also prompted the decision to dissolve the Stover Historic Landscape Trust. The Trust agreed to make an application to The Georgian Group to add the stables to the Group's Heritage at Risk list.

Dolvin Road Cemetery, Tavistock (*Gazetteer*) We had noted with concern that the cemetery had been closed due to a fallen tree and damage to the vaults in the cemetery. Tavistock Town Council (the appropriate authority) advised us that once remedial work was completed, the site would re-open to the public.

The Italian Garden at Great Ambrook

The Conservation Committee visited the Italian Garden at Great Ambrook and was impressed with the scale of restoration that has been achieved to date. The enthusiasm of the volunteers and the commitment to work with different groups and encourage skills training was also noted. We were also pleased to hear that the garden has since received a substantial grant from the NLHF which includes restoration work to the summerhouse and limestone paths.

Peamore House (*Gazetteer*) Further research has been added to support the Trust's application to Historic England to add Peamore House to the *Register of Parks and Gardens* with emphasis on the threat of potential development as identified in the proposed Teignbridge Local Plan almost engulfing the landscape.

Conservation Grants

As noted above the Trust awarded several Conservations Grants during the year:

Oldway for the preparation of a Gardens Management Guidance Plan

Oldway for the preparation of a conservation management plan.

Dartington Hall Trust for the preparation of a conservation management plan.

The Conservation Committee has embarked on two major initiatives both of which are collaborative with the Research Group:

***Gazetteer* Review.** The objective was to undertake a thorough review of the *Gazetteer*. This has updated the criteria for inclusion of sites on the *Gazetteer* and includes a simple hierarchy that will help to inform planning responses and research priorities. The first stage of the review was to determine which sites may be under threat and require research, sites which merit further research to determine their significance, sites which might merit submitting to HE for adding to the *Register*, sites which should be included on the *Gazetteer* and sites which did not meet any criteria for being on the *Gazetteer*. This first stage is complete and the Research Group now has a list of sites for which research is required and an indication of priority. The second and longer-term stage of the review is to update all *Gazetteer* entries on the website to include a statement of significance which will aid consideration of planning consultations.

Parks and Cemeteries Programme The purpose of this programme is to ensure that public parks and cemeteries have in place good current conservation management plans with succession planting plans which, once in place, might trigger some grant funding from the Trust. It was envisaged that this would be a long-term programme and a preparatory phase is underway to gather data on all the sites in the county, examine and make contact with a small number of both public parks and cemeteries that might form a first tranche and that can help identify issues to refine the programme. As with the *Gazetteer* Review this programme is working with the Research Group with Cemeteries being a research theme.

Events Committee Report

Chair: Mr Shane Cormie

Our 2023 visits started in May with a visit to Homeyards Botanical Gardens, Shaldon where previously we had donated 21 *Crataegus persimilis* 'Prunifolia Splendens' (Cockspur or Frosted thorn) to replace an old hedge. For something different, in June a group of members and their friends, inspired by the historic landscape of Sandridge Park, packed up their paints, notebooks and cameras for a Creative Art in the Landscape Day. Later that month we headed to Marwood House and Marwood Hill Gardens for a private visit. July saw us visiting Wildside to see how the garden has developed. Last year's AGM was held at Castle Hill where after the formalities we enjoyed a talk by Andy Jasper, National Head of Gardens and Parklands for the National Trust and a buffet lunch before time to explore this North Devon landscape. We also took the

opportunity to present Lady Arran with a *Sorbus devoniensis* (Devon Whitebeam) marking her service to the Trust as Patron (2008-2020) and President (1998-2007). One of the most popular visits in 2022 was to the Bishop's Palace Gardens, Exeter and the Cathedral Library and Archives. Following feedback from members, several visits have been restricted by numbers to give a more relaxed experience. In May 2023 we repeated the visit to the Bishop's Palace Gardens due to demand. November saw the beginning of our talks programme this time in Cullompton with Caroline Bell enthusing us about Splendid Sasanquas: Gardening with camellias for scent. This was followed in early December with our Christmas Social at Clyst St Mary Village Hall. This took the form of an afternoon tea and quiz and proved an excellent opportunity for members to relax and talk whilst at the same time being a little competitive. In January Sandra Lawrence enlightened us with her Zoom talk on Miss Willmott's Ghost, the subject of her recent book. Some 43 years ago Miss Willmott was the subject of an excellent biography by Devon Gardens Trust member, Audrey le Lièvre, and this was an opportunity to hear of recent new information uncovered on Miss Willmott. In February, Abi Gray from the Devon Rural Archive gave us a talk on the history of Shilstone and what is held in the Devon Rural Archives.

Where possible we have tried to select venues in different areas of our county with talks in Longdown, Clyst St Mary, Cullompton and visits to the South Hams, North Devon, West Devon and Exeter. We also consider the ease of parking, access to public transport and the comfort of the venue. We appreciate that getting all three is not always possible.

We would like to thank all our hosts and speakers for their time and expertise. A special mention goes out to our small band of volunteers who have helped make these talks and visits successful. Without your energy, enthusiasm, time and skills we would not be able to visit and discover more about Devon's (and sometimes beyond) historic landscapes and their people.

We would welcome more volunteers to help set up and run events. This would allow us to increase the number of talks and events especially in different parts of the county. Interested? Please drop us an email at events@devongardenstrust.org.uk and we will get in touch with you for an informal chat. Thank you.

Publicity

In August we held a Devon Gardens Trust Day at Bicton Park Botanical Gardens. Thanks go to Bicton Park Botanical Gardens and our volunteers who assisted on the day by giving mini-talks on our work, encouraging everyone to take part in our quiz to enthuse them about Devon landscapes and of course talking about our work and volunteer opportunities.

Another new publicity event for us was a Volunteers' Event organised by Exeter Community Initiatives at Exeter Cathedral. A number of volunteers and trustees spread the word and welcomed several members to the stand as well as potential volunteers.

During 2022, The Gardens Trust and the County Gardens Trusts teamed up with the RHS Lindley Library to create an online exhibition on *The Bicycle Boys: An Unforgettable Garden Tour*. This followed the travels in 1928 of young landscape architecture students, Loyal Johnson and Sam Brewster cycling around the UK visiting more than 80 unforgettable gardens. In Devon they visited Rougemont Gardens in Exeter, Killerton and Bradfield. Content by The Gardens Trust and RHS with help from the Devon Gardens Trust and others helped increase awareness of the organisations involved as well as the social history of historic landscapes. Thank you to our researchers who assisted in this national story.

Social media

On the social media side, we continue to regularly post on Twitter and Instagram. We currently have 729 followers on Twitter and 327 on Instagram. Please follow us if you are not already and share your images of Devon gardens, parks and cemeteries. The Gardens Trust is investing in research on how the County Gardens Trusts can maximise opportunities via social media and we appreciate their assistance.

Research and Recording Committee

Chair: Dr Clare Greener

During the previous year, the Research Group has had meetings which have combined visits to the Devon Rural Archive and the Italian Garden at Great Ambrook with regular, more formal, catch-ups about on-going research, training, general items of research interest and future planning. Meetings have been held in different areas of the county to encourage a higher attendance. David Sykes has become Co-ordinator of the group and maintains regular contact with members. Essential documents and information have been shared by email. There has been a close working relationship with the Conservation Committee with members of both committees working behind the scenes to consider future priorities for research or recording. This includes identifying sixteen of the most important sites on the *Gazetteer* that are at risk, as a focus for future research by the team, an ongoing project on Parks and Cemeteries in the county and a possible new project on oral history.

The joint project about aspects of life in the 1920s with the Devon History Society has seen several members attend and contribute to their meetings. These have included talks on different aspects of horticulture, market gardening, growth of violets, decline in the fern craze and more. There have been talks about sharing expertise with other Garden Trusts and with local organizations such as the Devon Rural Archive.

One of our new volunteers drafted a leaflet to encourage more volunteers to join the group and encourage membership of the Trust. This will be distributed at talks by Trust members and at various appropriate venues.

Looking forward to 2024 we hope to consolidate the work that is ongoing, which includes updating our filing system, writing up reports on sites and to reinstate tree recording and integrate that work with other recording projects. With the growing demand for research, a particular focus will need to be on the recruitment of new members if there is to be any chance of fulfilling all the demands on the group. Meetings, both face to face and on Zoom, will continue with some being opened up to all members of the Trust.

Education Committee Report

Chair: Mr Rupert Bannister

Supporting Education, Life-long Learning and Continuing Professional Development

The Professional Gardeners' Network was launched at a very well attended meeting held at RHS Rosemoor. A brainstorm of desired training was completed and the initial year promised a machinery day at Saltram run jointly with Devon Garden Machinery and a day on summer pruning at Rosemoor. One key point from a subsequent Education Committee meeting was that education has the opportunity to be more 'inward looking' to support industry requirements within the county. There are also potential routes for supporting wider elements of horticulture education through connections with Growing Devon Schools and Farms for City Children (see below) and via connections with the RHS schools programmes, especially secondary schools

where career choices are made. The new Education Chair agreed to arrange conversations with Sue Moss (RHS education lead) regarding connections with secondary schools for education and awareness.

Three members of the Education Committee visited Farms for City Children (Michael Morpurgo's charity with Devon base at Nethercott House close to Rosemoor) on 24th February 2023 to meet the farm manager. DGT offered support with possible funding for a trainee in the historic walled garden and advice on training requirements for heritage programme contents. There might be the possibility of co-funding this via the RHS Flourish Fund. A visit for DGT members was thought possible at a weekend. Advice was offered about how they could successfully open to the public on specific days.

New Trustee Jane Knight has agreed to re-establish contact with Growing Devon Schools as there was no real connection during the Covid pandemic. The relationship to date has primarily been financial support for them to run teacher training days across Devon.

Trustees for 2023-24

Under the terms of the Trust's Articles of Association there shall be at least 5 and not more than 15 Trustees. For the year 2022-23 there were 11 Trustees, a combination of existing members and those elected or re-elected at the Annual General Meeting on 24th September 2022 and the Extraordinary General Meeting on 7th December 2022. The Articles require that any Trustee who has served their term of three years must retire at the next Annual General Meeting that occurs nearest to the expiry of their term. A retiring Trustee may be re-elected for a maximum of two consecutive terms of office including their initial term.

The following served as Trustees during the past year:

Mrs Jeryl Andrew	Elected 2020
Mr Rupert Bannister	Elected 2022
Mrs Stephanie Berry	Elected 2021
Mr Shane Cormie	Re-elected 2021
Mr Paul Faulkner	Elected 2022
Ms Jane Knight	Elected 2022
Mrs Elizabeth Lewis	Elected 2022
Ms Sue Minter	Re-elected 2022
Mr Jeremy Pearson	Re-elected 2020
Mr Saul Walker	Elected 2021
Mrs Rosemary Yallop	Elected 2022

Retiring 2023 and not seeking re-election:

Mrs Jeryl Andrew

Resigned 2023:

Mr Rupert Bannister (resigned July 11th)

Mr Jeremy Pearson (resigned January 20th)

No new Trustees are proposed for election. Candidates can be considered for election at the AGM if the Chairman receives written nominations in advance of the meeting, together with confirmation from the candidates of willingness to stand. If anyone wishes to make nominations, or be considered for nomination, please contact Sue Minter, Chairman, chair@devongardenstrust.org.uk or telephone 01626 368948.

The Trustees will appoint the Trust's officers at their first meeting after the Annual General Meeting.

DEVON GARDENS TRUST

DGT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2023 BOOKING FORM

Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 11:30am

at

Shilstone

Modbury

Ivybridge

South Devon PL21 0TW

We would encourage our members to book online via the link in the latest ENews. This helps us not only to monitor ticket sales more effectively, but also helps to manage our limited resources within our small volunteer team.

Of course, if you would prefer not to book online, please complete and return this form with your cheque to:

Events, DGT Office, Exeter Community Centre, St David's Hill, Exeter, Devon, EX4 3RG

Email events@devongardenstrust.org.uk

Tickets (for lunch (2 courses) and the guided tour of the house and gardens)

_____ £35 (DGT Members) _____ £40 (Guests/Non-members)

Please state if you have any dietary requirements (a vegetarian option is available)

I enclose a cheque for £_____ made payable to **DEVON GARDENS TRUST**.

Name: _____

Email: _____ Tel. _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

BOOKING REQUIRED BY Friday 25th August 2023.



PROXY VOTING FORM
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 11:30am

The Devon Gardens Trust AGM 2023 will be held at Shilstone, Modbury, PL21 0TW. Members who do not wish to attend in person are encouraged to exercise their votes by appointing the Chair of the meeting as their proxy to vote on their behalf. By voting you will be helping us to ensure that there is a quorum for the meeting.

I _____(your name)

Of _____(your address)

a member of Devon Gardens Trust and entitled to one vote, hereby appoint the Chair of the meeting as my proxy to vote for me and on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Trust to be held on Tuesday 12th September 2023 at 11:30am and at any adjournment thereof, as follows.

Resolution	For	Against	Abstain
1. To approve the Minutes of the AGM 2022 held on 24 th September 2022 and the EGM held on 7 th December 2022			
2. To receive the Directors' Report and Financial Statements for the year to 31 st March 2023			
3. To re-appoint Bush & Co as independent examiners and the Trustees to fix their remuneration.			

Signature _____

Date _____

Notes

1. Please place an X in the box representing your vote for each resolution.
2. If you do not wish to vote on a particular resolution, please put your X in the Abstain box.
3. If you do not complete a box for a particular resolution, your vote will be noted as an abstention. Note that an abstention is not a vote in law and therefore cannot be counted in the calculation of votes for or against a resolution.

This form must be **completed, signed and dated and sent to arrive no later than Friday 8th September 2023** either **by post to** AGM, Devon Gardens Trust, Exeter Community Centre, 17 St David's Hill, Exeter, EX4 3RG **or by email** as an attachment (including signature) to **membership@devongardenstrust.org.uk**