

# CHESHIRE AREA OF NAFAS

## Club Representatives Forum

3 July 2023 Frodsham Community Centre, WA6 7QN

Talk by “Moorfield Farm Flowers” about growing British Flowers. This company is based in Bramhall. They are artisan growers of seasonal flowers. The farm uses a “no dig” technique which was explained to members. I was interested to learn that that flowers from “Holland” are not Dutch but are international and preserved in silver nitrate – hence they keep well. British flowers from the farms are not treated in this way. *Pre-booked* visit requests are welcomed by the farm <https://www.moorfieldfarmflowers.co.uk/>

### 1. Louise Jones welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Present:** Chris O’Hara, Louise Jones, Jean Jones, Tracy-Anne Clancy, Morag McCord, Eileen Fantom, Beryl Cotton, Sharon Nolan, Sue Clissold, Judy Gratton, Sylvia Godber, Diane Hewett, Barbara Fisher, Colette Dunkley, Ruth Hughes, Maureen Herson, Margaret Foden, Helen C Madden, Christine Leigh, E S Hutton, Ann Schuberth, L Griffiths, Roz Heywood, Barbara Penketh, June Bibby, Judy Gratton, Diane Blake, Dorothy Monks, Kathleen Williams, Lorraine Coppola, Joyce Bowett, Kate Hughes, Dawn Weaver, Marilyn Baker, Janice Kellock, Alyson Williams, Wendy McKeown, Carol Bradstreet, Pat Murphy, Vanessa Lees, Anne Watson, Lynne Hibbert, Merryn Shaw, Christine Shore, Chris Blackwell, A Ireland, Chris Middleton, Margaret Delaney, Anne Walton, Gloria Shiel, Margaret Baldini, Denise Hubbard, and Carol Baker.

**2. Apologies** were received from: Janet Schofield, 1<sup>st</sup> Support Officer; Catherine Bower, the Flower Arranger; David Mason, Sunflower Cluster lead; Leek Floral Art Society; Heswall FC; Nether Alderley FC; Prestbury FC; Romiley FC; South Cheshire FC; Tunstall & District FC; Upton-by-Chester FC and Winwick FC.

**The minutes of Forum 25 April 2023** were taken as a true record and signed by Louise.

### 3. Area Chairman’s Report – Louise Jones

Firstly THANK YOU to all of you who came along to the Forum meeting at Frodsham a few weeks ago. I believe that it was a very productive meeting. I would like to thank Tracy-Anne for chairing the meeting and the rest of team for all the preparation for this meeting and their hard work on the day and to those attending.

Since our last CAN team there has been the National Show in Gloucester Cathedral. It was a magnificent show with so much talent: the atmosphere was wonderful. In fact, on day one there was a queue half-way up the High Street to get into the Cathedral. A huge thank you for the team for all their hard work in putting together a fabulous show. A big THANK YOU to all who entered from Cheshire Area – Eleanor Griffiths, Karen Clegg, Janet Schofield, Patricia Murphy, Helen Hunter, Joan Quinland, Denise Hubbard, Gill Davies, Pam Fleming-Williams, Gillian Jackson, Carol Baker and Rita Roberts. Thank you for your enthusiasm and I hope you enjoyed creating your designs. They were fabulous! I managed to see some of our members at the show – I hope all of you who went, enjoyed your time there.

Looking further ahead:

- The Royal Cheshire County Show was held on 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> June. Louise thanked Carol and Sylvia who led the team helping in the marquee for their very hard work.
- At RHS Tatton, there will be no NAFAS presence at this event this year. Can you please pass this on to your members?

### Interflora [www.interflora.co.uk](http://www.interflora.co.uk)

The Interflora World Cup is coming to the UK from 7 – 9 September. This is the first time ever it has been staged in the UK and will be the only opportunity in our lifetime to experience it. It is being held in the Manchester Central Convention Complex (previously known as GMEX). When NAFAS were contacted by Interflora to ask if they would wish to take part it was a very clear “yes”. Interflora have provided a marquee (which would have cost £7000). Demonstrators are needed. NAFAS is responsible for organising its own publicity. Louise pleaded with members present that they passed all information to members and shared it with her: she has to prove there has been publicity.

Clubs with a meeting during the time of the show may be interested in having a speaker. There will already be a plan for September meetings but this would be in addition. Louise has sent information to Clubs who have a meeting this week. Please let her know if you are interested.

There will be a NAFAS team talking to the public there, *The Flower Arranger* will be sold and people will be pointed to Clubs – along similar lines to RCCS.

Information is now on the Interflora website: <https://www.interflora.co.uk/page/world-cup> A streaming package available, tickets are available on-line. Visitors may speak to the people who have made and designed the arrangements. There are workshops, demonstrations, music from the Royal Northern School of Music, and an artisan village with stalls. Travel is easy by public transport.

#### **4. Area Secretary's Report – Morag McCord**

I hope everyone has received minutes of Club Reps Forum 25<sup>th</sup> April, 2023. This was the first face to face meeting since lockdown and was very well attended with only seven clubs unable to be present.

Unfortunately, clubs are still waiting to the last minute before they inform me if they are going to attend and who will represent their club on the day. This makes it difficult to keep a record of who will be present and if there will be catering we need to know the numbers required further in advance.

Make sure your club contact keeps you informed of the emails sent to the Club. Please inform me of any changes to your club officers lists and to your club details.

My thanks to Eileen for taking the minutes.

As this will be my last Club Reps Forum I wish you all well for the future and please treat my successor with the kindness you have all shown me over the past eight years.

#### **.5. Area Treasurer's Report – Tracy-Anne Clancy**

Our financial year runs from 1<sup>st</sup> August to 31<sup>st</sup> July.

##### **Bank Overview**

The balances on the accounts as at 31st May are as follows:

Barclays Bank – Current Account	£6,270.90
Barclays Bank – Savings Account	£22,094.68
Barclays Bank – JDS&E Account	£7,680.46
Barclays Bank – Flower Arranger Account	£4,485.71

##### **Income & Expenditure**

Our main source of income for the year is from Affiliation Fees. We received £19,365 of which £10,736 was forwarded on to HQ leaving Area with a net £8,628. All other events planned aim to break-even or make a small surplus.

##### **Budget 2022/23 and Expenditure to Date**

The affiliation fees received for 2023 for Cheshire Area (set at £4.90 per member) totalled £8,628.90 representing 1,761 members. The budget vs expenditure as at 21st May is as follows:

	£Budget	£Expenditure
Facility Costs	3,500	2,324
Publicity & Promotion	1,000	400
Support for Tests	800	112
Support for Cheshire Show	2,000	708
Face to Face Meetings	300	472
Workshops / Education Day	600	
Other Shows / Social Events	428	
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,628</b>	<b>3,941</b>

##### **National Flower Arranging Day**

This event was well supported by Clubs, 17 Clubs submitted photos of the designs created. These have been featured in the latest Area Newsletter. Each Club has been paid £25 for supported the event; total paid £425.

#### **6. Representative's Reports**

##### **6.i Judge's Report – Sue Clissold**

I hope everyone who attended the fabulous Nationals have now recovered, and congratulations to all our Cheshire prize winners. It was an honour to judge myself.

The new Competitions Manual was launched and is available from Head Office price £5. I have been asked by a couple of Shows later in the year if I will be using the new manual. My personal answer has been I will be judging still from the 2015 one until the end of the year. I feel the 2023 one needs time to filter through

and all judges able to contrast and compare the new format. With that in mind may I remind you that we have such a discussion arranged for Saturday 14 October with Pam Fleming Williams at Plumley Village Hall to do just that.

Looking forward to seeing some of you at Dromentine 18-20 August.

At RCCS two exhibits were not judged. These were by Joan Wilkinson and Ken Hough who entered the pavé class but did not present a pavé. At the show we put information beside the exhibits in order that everyone may understand the judges' decision. The "people's choice" award went to Joan – many congratulations. A Show could not afford a judge so had advertised their schedule classes to be chosen by people's choice. Fortunately, we were alerted to this. We contacted the people involved and an Area Judge has agreed to judge this year and waive the fee. Competitors and the general public learn so much from our decisions and comment cards that we must help struggling shows where we can.

Happy judging everyone and any problems or queries please get in touch.

## **6.ii Demonstrator's Report – Beryl Cotton**

### **• Area Report**

Once again, a request to everyone to be always on the lookout for new talent and encourage any member who might consider stepping up to become an Area Demonstrator if they receive a little bit of encouragement! This is the future!

Area Demonstrators' Training and Test will take place in Mercia and North Wales Area throughout the Summer and Autumn 2023 (details available). Following this, Cheshire Area will consider training and tests once again. We cannot commence a course without candidates!

Our Demonstrators appreciate the kind hospitality offered by clubs i.e., a cuppa and sandwich. A supermarket meal deal proves to be very easy and inexpensive for clubs. Let's ensure we continue with this warm Cheshire hospitality! It is very easy for demonstrators to focus on preparing and executing the demonstration and to neglect themselves with regards to drinking and maintaining energy levels.

To ensure data protection please ensure that if quoting demonstrator fees and costs in any Club newsletters or on social media etc. it is recorded as a cumulative figure i.e. over six months costs, not singling out last month's demonstrator (with or without a name). This will have the same effect by informing members of costs but does not invade privacy and data protection.

A proposal and budget have been submitted for a Demonstrators Refresher Day to be held at Frodsham Community Centre on Sunday, 17<sup>th</sup> September – £20 per person.

### **• National Report**

The next National Demonstrators Committee meeting will be held on 28<sup>th</sup> June, via Zoom, and the previous day there will be a Zoom meeting for all Adjudicators and Instructors.

For those members who attended Florilegium, the National Show at Gloucester, they had the opportunity to enjoy mini demonstrations by eight National Demonstrators. There was a larger demonstration at the Gloucester Guildhall on the Friday evening performed by Delyth Price and Alison Penno with Debbie Davies performing with dance and music at the beginning of the demonstration setting a remarkable scene.

## **6.iii Education Report – Sharon Nolan**

Is the education list up-to-date? Please be in touch if you should be on it. To remain on the list you have to attend a refresher every three years. Please email [sharonanolan@aol.com](mailto:sharonanolan@aol.com) to be added to the list.

In order to have details published on the CAN website tutors and must complete a consent form to comply with GDPR. Forms are available from Sharon. There is a separate form for flower arranging classes arranged through clubs and for personal teachers and workshop leaders.

### **• Education Day**

This is booked for Sunday 22 October 2023 at Tarvin Community Centre with National Teacher, Dawn Weaver. Everyone on the Education List will be invited, cost £20 per person. If the day is under-subscribed, demonstrators may also be invited. It will not be open to members generally.

### **• Members Workshops**

Following the success of workshops earlier this year, the next workshop will take place at Lymm on Saturday 16 September, cost £20 per person (£25 for non-members). Different mechanics which can be used on a large scale, all foam-free. If this is over-subscribed there will be another scheduled. Flyers were given out at the Royal Cheshire Show and should have been received by clubs before the Forum. There is another

members education day scheduled for 3 March, 2024, at Weaverham and hopefully others will follow.

- **NAFAS Certified Courses**

Work continues nationally on these and volunteer tutors are sought at Area level. If anyone is interested in taking a certificated course, please get in touch with me.

**6.iv Young People's Liaison Report – Judy Gratton**

Jean Jones and I attended a Young Farmers meeting in April 2023. The members participate in various craft activities, including flower arranging, as part of their annual Rally. We discussed how to select and care for the plant material, basic design shapes, using a variety of mechanics and interpretation of competition titles.

Pictured is my interpretation of "Treasure Island".



We were grateful to

Eddisbury and Sandiway Flower Club for the introduction and all her help in preparing the event.

Preparations are underway for Nantwich Show where we are hoping to run children's competition and hands on workshops. Primary schools have been invited to participate with their class "Cast a Spell". If anyone is interested in running floral activities for their own local schools or children's out of school activities, please do get in touch. Judy Gratton 07506022709 or email [judy.gratton@live.co.uk](mailto:judy.gratton@live.co.uk)

**7. CAN online Events Update – Janet Schofield**

Competitors Support Group

The future of the Competitors Support Group is currently being discussed.

**8. Publicity / Events Update – Tracy-Anne Clancy**

**8.i Cheshire Show Publicity Stand**

At the recent Cheshire Show, Cheshire Area had a corner of the marquee in the "Theatre of Flowers" dedicated to publicising our Clubs, what we have to offer and interacting first hand with members of the public. There were approximately 2,000 visitors into the marquee and if all those who showed a genuine interest in learning the art of floral design come and visit clubs or join then we'll be full! There is definitely interest out there for people wanting to learn the absolute basics of floral design. Tracy-Anne thanked Sally Melvin for preparing the material in advance.

Over 200 photos are available on the CAN website. Tracy-Anne will put the link on the newsletter.

Are your Club details up to date on the website? Are the business cards we have up to date? (The business cards we have are available to view at the meeting.) Please advise if we can continue to use them.

Members present took home the business cards which CAN have in order that info is OK. New cards will be

given out at Interflora. Consider a generic email address: clubname@gmail.com

### **8.ii Website & Social Media**

The website has been updated with results and photos from the “Theatre of Flowers” at the Cheshire Show. Huge thanks to Pam Mosedale for taking all the photos and getting them to Mike Gallagher so efficiently in the correct format. Very much appreciated.

The 2022/23 Area budget allows for five updates per annum per Club. More than five updates can be made but costs need to be considered please (please ask). Mike Gallagher can be contacted on [webmaster@nafascheshire.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@nafascheshire.org.uk)

\*\*At least five Clubs do not have any current information on the website.

\*\*At least one Club has not updated for two years.

Cheshire Area Facebook page is a great way of promoting events in our Area. If you are a Facebook user, please ‘like & share’ to keep our profile uppermost.

[Note for Programme Secretaries: Demonstrators, judges, speakers and educators for the Cheshire Area are all listed on the Area website. Click on CAN directory from the home screen and select from the drop- down list.]

### **8.iii Newsletter**

The Area newsletter is published each calendar month. Issue 9 has been published and features more designs from National Flower Arranging Day plus all the Cheshire entries from The National Show. Any member or Club with information about events or photos to share across the Area, can be sent to [treasurer@nafascheshire.org.uk](mailto:treasurer@nafascheshire.org.uk) for inclusion. Please forward the newsletter on to all Club members. A member from the floor asked why they were not receiving this. This is either because the contact details are incorrect or the newsletter is not being passed on.

### **8.iv Flower Arranger Report – Catherine Bower**

- **2024 Subscriptions**

Details of cost and order dates will be communicated to Area Chairs at their meeting on 18 July, following which Area Flower Arranger representatives will be given details. The order form will be sent to all Club contacts by the Area Secretary.

- **2023 Autumn Edition**

This is due to be delivered within five working days of 13 July. Any problems with delivery should be notified to me.

- **Future Dates**

Winter Edition Club order 17 August for delivery by 12 October

The club order date is the date clubs should notify me of any changes, especially to the delivery address. Changes after this date cannot be guaranteed.

Contacting the Area Flower Arranger officer can be made via: [flower.arranger@nafascheshire.org.uk](mailto:flower.arranger@nafascheshire.org.uk) or link on website contact button.

### **8.v Royal Cheshire County Show “The Theatre of Flowers” – Carol Baker and Sylvia Bower**

Carol and Sylvia thanked all who helped and looks forward to next year’s Show.

This year was Sylvia’s and my first show as joint chairmen. At first it was quite daunting but exciting.

However, all the hard work put in by everyone on the committee and other helpers paid off. We had some new mechanics for staging, which allowed us to change the layout of the marquee. It allowed us to open up the space and gave visitors and competitors a clear and better view of the exhibits with a vista through to the demonstrations taking place.

Competitors entered 94 exhibits in total and the standard was very high. There were many of the usual faces but also newcomers, both from the Cheshire area but also other areas. The best in show was won by a Mercia and North Wales member who was new to exhibiting. Results and photographs from the show can be found on the Cheshire Area website [www.nafascheshire.org.uk](http://www.nafascheshire.org.uk)

The judges were very impressed and commented on the high standard achieved by the competitors.

The four demonstrators were well received and their arrangements “flew” off the sales table before the end of the demonstrations.

The children’s “hands on” station was very busy on both days and those instructing were kept on their toes with lots of little beaming faces taking a small arrangement home. This is important from an educational perspective. Also, the adult “hands on” area was busy. There was a stile displaying flowers from a local

grower – Moorfield Farm Flowers – and people could have a go at arranging some flowers in a glass jar or bottle.

The “Theatre of Flowers” was a great success and now we can build on this for 2024. A big thank you to everyone who helped to make it a success. It’s teamwork that makes it happen.

## **9. Cluster Updates**

### **Peony Cluster – Jean Jones**

The Peony cluster group was well represented at the recent meeting of the Club Reps at Frodsham Community Centre and it was so good to finally put names to faces. Apologies were received from Joan Wilkinson and Wistaston and District Flower Club. We met in our group and enjoyed time to get to know each other again before moving on to discuss the topics suggested by the Leadership team. We hope that the opinions we offered will be useful for future planning. Several members of the Cluster exchanged contact details so that they could communicate further and perhaps even share activities. We agreed to meet again at Astbury Garden Centre, Newcastle Road, Congleton CW12 4RL on July 12<sup>th</sup> at 11:30am. Representatives of all the clubs in the Peony Cluster are welcome to join us for a coffee and a discussion on communication and co-operation between clubs (and there might even be time for lunch or shopping!). Best wishes to you all.

### **Iris Cluster – Anne Walton with June Shallcross and Elizabeth Cooke**

Iris Cluster keep in touch via email. The social time together at Frodsham was really useful and enabled us to put names to faces which has helped to cement the growing relationship we have.

Since then, the Leads for Iris Cluster invited cluster members to join them for coffee at Tarporley Garden centre on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> June. Five people attended with four clubs from the Cluster being represented. (Eddisbury and Sandiway, Mid Cheshire, Tarvin/Ashton Heyes and Tarporley). Apologies were received from 3 clubs. It was recognised that because of the mileage distance of the cluster (Wirral to Winwick!) it would not be feasible for some clubs to attend but we hope they may join us for future gatherings. It was really good to get to know each other better and to share thoughts and ideas.

All the clubs in the Cluster continue to face the ongoing problems of needing:

- More volunteers for the Committee;
- New, and younger members;
- A way of addressing the increasing costs without demanding too much from membership;
- Concerns about the decreasing numbers of available demonstrators.

The future of Area was discussed, but also a recognition of the hard work undertaken by those running Area.

Some members continue to have antagonism towards HQ. We had a discussion about this and some clubs are struggling to enable members to see that for the price of a few cups of coffee they are getting:

- The backing of a National Organisation that promotes the hobby we love;
- A body that over sees the training of demonstrators, judges etc. and sets a standard;
- The opportunity to buy “The Flower Arranger” which would not be produced without NAFAS;
- The opportunity to attend National events like Gloucester which need a figure head organisation to make it happen;
- An organisation which has a voice to “lobby” on our behalf when necessary.

Our discussions suggested that the main problem appears to be because of a lack of transparency from HQ. Some members want to know what does NAFAS do, where does their money go, how many staff are employed, what do they do for their money, how is the money from the sale of Osborne House being used and *protected* and so on. Although much of the information can be found (with a lot of searching) on the NAFAS website it was felt that a simple fact sheet could be provided from HQ for Chairman to share with members. Members still voice the fact that NAFAS is London-centric. This is probably inevitable as long-standing staff work there and the organisation needs a base in the Capital. However, more effort to come out to the Areas and try to understand and acknowledge the problems Clubs face would be appreciated by members. It was acknowledged that the “new” team at HQ are trying to turn things around and that a small number of people cannot do everything all at once but at the same time a closer link to members would help the general understanding and support for HQ. In terms of transparency, concerns were raised about the request made at Frodsham not to publish the payments made to

demonstrators. Chairs feel they need to share this with their committee and members. Area needs to be prepared for discussion about this to be ongoing at future meetings and maybe offer more clarity or a fact sheet about this request, with suggestions about how it can be managed and the purpose behind it. We spent a very pleasant two hours chatting over our coffee. It really felt as though the old fashioned “precious” barriers are breaking down. We have a desire to work together and to share experiences. All clubs were very positive and there was definitely more optimism than a couple of years ago. Clubs have re-opened and are steadily increasing numbers. What is noticeable at all the clubs is that visitor numbers have increased. All good! We are looking forward to catching up again at Frodsham on 3 July and will arrange another coffee and chat in the Autumn.

#### **Lily Cluster – Colette Dunkley**

Nothing to report.

#### **Rose Cluster – Tracy-Anne Clancy**

The Rose cluster met on Wednesday 31<sup>st</sup> May at Fryers Garden Centre, Knutsford. The following Clubs were represented: Goostrey, Group 2000, Hale Barns, Heald Green, Lymm and Sale. Clubs shared information about upcoming events being hosted by their clubs.

The outcomes from the Club Representatives Forum held in April at Frodsham were also discussed. There was genuine dissatisfaction with the role of HQ and the lack of engagement and information being shared with Area. The question “what would happen if Area dis-affiliated?” was raised and debated. This then led to a discussion around the future of Area. If Clubs are struggling to attract committee members, will Area be able to fill key roles going forwards?

Some of the cluster members then visited Moorfield Farm to discuss arrangements for the Cheshire Show and the Club Representative’s Forum.

#### **Sunflower Cluster – David Mason**

Nothing to report.

### **10. Future Plans**

The next meeting to be held at Frodsham Community Centre will be the AGM on 5 October.

There is a need to fill key positions with effect from the October AGM. We require nominations before the end of August to enable us to plan forwards (or have an indication what the future holds!). A request for volunteers to come forward and share their skills and expertise was included in the latest newsletter.

Discussion at the meeting – T-AC gave a passionate plea for more people to come forward to be on the committee of CAN.

Please refer to the pages below which are a write-up from the Post-it note sessions held at the last Club Reps Forum at Frodsham.

There are four sections:

- AGM – the way forward.
- What should we Stop doing?
- What should we Start doing?
- What should we Continue doing (and do more of)?

#### **AGM – the way forward**

Members were certain that social time is valuable – Zoom has had its day. T-AC considered another venue which would have cost £55 per head and she decided this was not viable. Another suggested venue is being re-furbished and is not available.

In Frodsham microphones and a good stage are available so booked venue for 2023 AGM on 5 October.

Venues will rotate round the region in the future. This year, as well as the AGM, there will be a buffet lunch and an afternoon demonstration. The AGM paperwork will be arranged in booklet form along the same lines as Club Representatives Meeting. A mixture of stalls, including some suitable for Christmas shopping, will be booked. The price is not known yet but there will be an “early bird” booking option with a discount.

#### **What should we Stop doing?**

There was an overall feeling following the April meeting that Cheshire should stop paying NAFAS HQ fees. T-AC requested NAFAS HQ accounts to be told that the accounts are too complicated to understand. Tracy-Anne is a chartered accountant and was shocked to be patronised in this manner. A meeting has been

arranged for 14<sup>th</sup> July with NAFAS when LJ and T-AC will be able to question HQ. The result of the meeting will be circulated. Members were invited to draft questions. It was clear that Members were happy to continue to pay CAN but were unclear how their members benefited from HQ.

**Matters for debate with HQ:**

HQ fees are vague – where does the money go? “General administration costs” hide in the audited accounts making HQ seem to have a lack of “normal” accountability and a lack of transparency. Does HQ have a published budget? There has been more money in the past so waste was not so relevant. Membership is falling so Clubs need to be circumspect.

Investment interest from sale of Osborne House pays for their new accommodation (which is in London in order to retain the staff). Affiliation fees are paying for staff. What do these staff actually “do” that helps the Clubs – job descriptions etc.. Clubs would like to see a summary of the accounts more frequently than the annual submission to the Charity Commission. The RHS has a good model.

LJ explained that things are much better than a few years ago. The trustees are keen to have a database but this is proving difficult to put in place. The models of WI and NT were quoted from the floor as a good example but this would require a database of members. Some Cheshire members had previously offered help to HQ with this but did not receive a reply. Cheshire could lead the way on this if someone is willing. LJ invited members to come forward to do this.

**11. Proposals – LJ**

Do you have a great idea? Area has a proposal form which can be used by any Cheshire affiliated Club or any member of a Cheshire affiliated Club to submit an idea or proposal to Area.

Every proposal will be considered, the person or club submitting it does not have to make it happen.

This form when completed should be emailed to the Area Secretary [secretary@nafascheshire.org.uk](mailto:secretary@nafascheshire.org.uk)

The proposal will be discussed at the next CAN Leadership Meeting and taken to the next CAN Team Meeting for a decision. The person submitting the proposal will be informed of the decision shortly after the meeting.

**12. AOB** – nothing further was discussed

**13. Date of next Club Reps Forum – 7 December 2023**

**Signed**.....

**Date**.....



## **Appendix to minutes**

### **Feedback from Club Reps Forum at Frodsham**

#### Members Views on Future AGMs

All the points noted on the post-its at the meeting on 25 April at Frodsham have been listed (as written) below for information. As the saying goes, 'you can't please all the people all of the time' so therefore there is not one simple answer (which we already knew!). We should aim to have a variety of 'offerings' throughout the year so that it keeps the momentum going and keeps it 'fresh'.

T-AC thanked everyone for being honest. Without much analysis, the messages are fairly evident

#### **AGM – the way forward**

Reading through the post-its, there are some key points and suggestions which keep being referenced:

- Face to face meetings – preferably with food.
- There is a desire to have more opportunities to socialise, keeping the business to a minimum (booklet in advance).
- No Zoom.
- Social day or afternoon tea is a favourite option with a demonstration (open invitation for guests / attract new members).
- Transport is an issue.
- Venues need to be rotated, have good access, a stage and working microphone.
- Events should be varied.
- Maybe a mix of day time and evening meetings.

#### **Taken from the Post-its**

- AGMs are dull
- Plumley as a venue was not popular
- Consider weekend
- Sunday afternoon
- Consider evenings
- Evening meeting with AGM start @ 6:30pm followed by open meeting
- Consider meetings in light nights
- Consider location of Clubs
- Lunch is a good idea
- Catered lunch favoured
- Ticket price OK
- Move AGM around the area
- NO ZOOM AGM
- We need more time
- Reduced fees with multiple club membership
- Convenient & quick needed
- Not all day
- AGM on its own
- Separate AGM then a "big person" for social evening
- Social separate day for AGM
- AGM on Zoom
- Zoom evening
- AGM on Zoom appeals to select people
- Make AGM more important i.e. Stephen Lane = up scale
- Face to face AGM with S Lane / Nicky Whyllie
- Zoom AGM not acceptable
- Resurrect lunch
- Social day again outside demonstration
- Annual lunch
- Day time
- Shopping i.e. Stalls

- Microphone
- Borrow or buy a portable microphone for smaller meetings so not charged by Frodsham
- Majority in favour of Zoom AGM
- Social day and Zoom AGM separate
- In depth reports sent out in advance. Questions put forward before meeting for discussion to shorten meeting
- Reasonable cost for social day e.g. £10 / £15
- Shopping stalls
- Park Royal for AGM (brief) Demonstration with afternoon tea
- Social day. Must have a stage.
- Try a different venue
- Cheshire View Christleton. Tarporley Community Centre. Tarvin.
- Owley Club, Weaverham. Buffet lunch
- In Oscroft near Tarvin – Pryor Hayes Golf Club. Catering on site, large room but no stage
- Mr Timpson as an alternative speaker
- Demonstrator or speaker for AGM not on a floral topic, something other
- We like Frodsham as a venue
- Fresh talent – not always a National
- Would a golf club be a good venue – if there is a big room. There is parking and there is usually food available
- Frodsham good venue
- AGM in person, stalls, microphone & demonstration
- Need a social day with fresh talent from further afield
- Does meeting need to be all day? Some people may not be able to commit to a whole day
- Frodsham with good reasonable outside caterers to keep costs down
- Printed booklet circulated in advance and bullet points at meeting with some sort of social after AGM
- Suggested place – Woodford Community Centre
- Sub-titles for those who are hard of hearing
- Separate from anything else
- Zoom AGM just for business in October
- Sub-titles on recording
- Social day on weekend to attract those who work
- Afternoon tea with a demonstrator
- With outside access
- Lunch or picnic
- During summer FRODSHAM / OPEN everyone welcome
- Evening demonstration to attract those who work
- Mini fete or stalls
- Open to all
- Bridgewater Gardens NAFAS affiliated clubs get in free for organised event
- Is it possible to consider a Garden Day or Garden Walk
- Not Zoom because of liking personal contact and a brief AGM. Refreshments with a Glass of Wine and a Demonstration
- Old hat having stalls
- Bring a Friend for Free – Workshop
- Fun day with bring own food and have some stalls for friends to buy and finding out from other clubs' ideas
- Transport – could club organise car share or mini-bus?
- Food – Afternoon tea or something informal?
- Open invitations for meeting & face to face afternoon tea
- Competition, lunch or afternoon tea, good demonstration (National), workshop or speaker
- Call it Annual Social Day and have tickets for Afternoon Tea
- Afternoon tea or demonstration or workshop. AGM via Zoom with a Demonstration included via Zoom.

Change AGM to Annual Virtual Social or Education event

- NO ZOOM AGM. Location of meeting
- No Zoom, Demonstrator, cake, tea
- Perhaps demonstration one year then alternative year in-house workshop and demonstration
- Reports sent via email, quick AGM and form of social day
- AGM booklet and whizz through with chance to ask questions
- AGM (or other name), a short informal get together first. Then a demonstrator from a distance that isn't affordable to the local clubs due to travel costs
- Start at 11am with a hot pot lunch @ 12 noon then a demonstration @ 2pm. No Zoom
- AGM in person, call it Area Annual Event. Food – can invite club members, Demonstration from afield – sell tickets
- Afternoon tea & demonstration
- Afternoon Tea. Demonstration
- Afternoon Tea, Transport, Unusual Demonstration
- Transport & Afternoon Tea. Cakes
- Workshop
- Pre-AGM Reports. Transport i.e. minibus arranged by Clubs
- Very informal / Sent reports (AGM) / Members read them / If any problems let committee know so they can reply
- Nice refreshments, possible workshop or demonstration. AGM played down but needed
- Social event and bring a friend
- Party food

### **Members Views on 'What we should Stop Doing'**

All the points noted on the post-its at the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April at Frodsham have been listed (as written) below for information. The message is fairly clear that members do not wish to pay money to HQ without feeling or knowing how they are benefiting from it. Area have requested a discussion with the trustees to put forward the feelings of members and ask for answers to our questions.

#### **Taken from the Post-its**

- Stop paying NAFAS
- Stop taking photos of silver tops and old ladies with sticks
- Stop paying London
- Stop HQ wasting money
- Do we need to be part of NAFAS? Very little benefit for the majority. If we stay with NAFAS we need more information. As a new member, starting to think it may resemble SNP
- Try to get answers from Head Office re Finance
- Stop paying National Fees
- Competitions
- Six year tenure, being dictatorial, affiliation to NAFAS
- Stop wasting money
- Length of service too long
- Stop paying affiliation fees – we have no benefits
- Stop affiliation fees
- Stop HQ affiliation fees. What do they use it for? Start our own Area
- Remove National layer
- Do we need National level
- All good – stop nothing
- Names i.e. chair / vice chair
- Structure
- Stop putting square pegs in square holes – there is a place for everyone
- Stop compressing roles
- Large face to face AGM

### **Members Views on 'What we should Start Doing'**

All the points noted on the post-its at the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April at Frodsham have been listed (as written) below for information.

The key recurring messages are:

- More information required from HQ (someone to actively pursue this);
- Help for clubs on marketing, publicity, social media (someone to actively pursue this);
- Job sharing so one job is not too onerous (lots of small teams);
- Social team (to organise all the afternoon teas and social events);
- Leadership team to attend club meetings.

Taken from the Post-its

- Getting more info from HQ on regular basis e.g. why take over responsibility for Flower Arranger
- Our own Area away from NAFAS
- Attract new and younger members
- Officers taking on commitments seriously
- More local events
- Start getting more info from HQ
- Attracting younger folk via Facebook and local websites
- Why can't demonstrators claim to be a charity and therefore no need to pay VAT? Only NAFAS HQ are a charity
- With Group 2000 closing, could Area organise one big event (like Crewe) every 2-3 years
- Re-start two committees covering Finance and Socialising
- Getting full clarity from HQ re organisation
- National news should be available to all members not just in Flower Arranger

- Informing us about National Events and Costs
- Start being more transparent from HQ
- Start charitable status – outside of the London area
- Visit clubs monthly meeting / more informal social events (even low grade e.g. pub meeting or lunch or evening) to let members know what you do
- Job sharing and more feedback from National – How our money is spent
- Due to reduced clubs both Cheshire and North West possibly join forces
- More info from HQ. Explanation of breakdown of income now receiving two incomes (interest and affiliation fees)
- Reliable information from National. Split chair role – National & Area. Robust challenge to National
- Sharing roles e.g. Chair, National, Area
- More info from NAFAS HQ. Job share the Chairman and liaison person with NAFAS HQ
- More information from Headquarters. Where is money going?
- More help in sourcing local grown flowers
- Single affiliation fee
- Members given a membership number for NAFAS
- Member of NAFAS first, then Club like e.g. WI
- National database
- Chain of Office
- Be more transparent
- Social list (social committee)
- Clusters – each club to represent and can bring another club member
- Team approach
- Help clubs with social media
- Phrase things different to avoid pressure and commitment
- Evening clubs partner day time clubs
- Small teams to volunteer for specific events
- Job sharing
- Competitions for schools
- Place greater emphasis on classes that are available
- Encourage members of public with leisure classes
- Job sharing
- Publicity training for clubs
- Include gardening
- Officers attending club meetings
- More job share for committee
- Share jobs between clubs e.g. programme secretary between two clubs
- Class for young farmers at Cheshire Show
- Job sharing on Area committee as well as local clubs
- Cheshire Leadership Level – Job title of Marketing which would or could help every club in Cheshire Area
- Courses to train demonstrators given to colleges so qualified flower arrangers available to all
- Provide advertising allowance to support sources of new members
- Education on Facebook, putting items online, making a website for a club
- Look to work with the Sustainability Network for new foam free ideas
- Continue or re-instate the Education, Judges and Demonstrator's Committee
- Job sharing
- Clubs need to accept that we need to embrace our largest age group 50+. Any youngsters are a bonus
- Need new younger demonstrators

### **Members Views on 'What we should Continue Doing'**

All the points noted on the post-its at the meeting on 25<sup>th</sup> April at Frodsham have been listed (as written) below for information.

The key recurring messages are:

- What we're doing is OK and should continue.
- Education (workshops) and demonstrators should be supported.
- Need to continue meeting up and sharing ideas and best practice.

#### **Taken from the Post-its**

- CAN Leadership (old Area Officers)
- Large Team meeting works
- Booklet form for meetings
- CAN Team (formerly JDS & E)
- JDS & E as a confidential group
- Training & Roles
- Cheshire Show: Newsletter, Facebook page
- Cheshire Show: Workshops, Area Social Day
- Clubs management of Flower Arranger
- NAFAS Area provide activities
- Support clubs by visiting each others
- Be a support and central hub for local information
- Area Newsletter
- Demonstrator information co-ordination and lists of demonstrators up to date
- Training demonstrators
- Support clubs, train demonstrators, hold workshops
- Area Team
- Treasurer
- Need Area committee leadership
- More general workshops
- Area Team
- Education
- Education classes to encourage younger and newly retired people
- How do National NAFAS justify the fees we pay?
- Clusters
- Publicity Officer
- Education Officer
- Chairman & Vice Chairman
- Website & Social Meeting
- Treasurer with proven skills
- Continue CAN
- Demonstrators & Judges Reps
- Continue face to face to share ideas
- Don't over complicate things, respond to Club's needs