

The Cheshire Area of NAFAS
Minutes of the CAN Representatives Forum (Virtual)
Thursday 7 April at 7.30pm

Leadership Team Present: Chairman – Louise Jones, Treasurer – Tracy-Anne Clancy, Secretary – Morag McCord, Area Support Officer – Janet Schofield.

1. Rules of the Meeting

Janet Schofield dispensed with the etiquette for CAN Zoom meeting.

2. Apologies: Gill Davies Area Support Officer, Sue Clissold Area Judges Rep, Kathleen Williams Area Speakers Rep, Shiona Fosh Area Minute Secretary, Diane Fair Area AOH, Nicky Wylie Area AOH, Upton-by-Chester, Heswall, Tunstall & District, Elworth, Stockport Afternoon and The Bramall Hall Flower Clubs.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes from 3.2.22 were checked and will be signed by when possible.

4. Amendments & Matters Arising

None arising

5. Chairman's remarks – Louise Jones

Announcements:

- Great sadness heard of deaths of Jean Mangnall and Sylvia Makin. Jean was a much loved and admired flower arranger and was appointed a Cheshire Area Associate of Honour in recognition of her steadfast support as Area minute secretary, JDS&E secretary, Area secretary and many other jobs in between.
Sylvia was a demonstrator, a member of the Area Show team and a great competitor, working on the Social committee until, due to ill-health, she resigned in 2013.
- Area Show at the RCCS. Schedule out – sent to clubs and on website. Encourage members to compete and/or attend. The Competitors Support group are holding workshops to help those entering the Show – including face to face training days. Further information email Janet Schofield on canonlineevents@gmail.com

Vacancies

Still looking for volunteers in some roles. A publicity co-ordinator would be great. Role description sent out previously but contact Louise if interested. Also looking for an Area Support Officer and /or Vice-Chairman. Contact Louise for more information.

National Flower Arranging Day – Friday 6 May – consider how to celebrate and publicise your club. Tags to put on arrangements were being sent to the clubs.

Hoping to meet face-to-face in future.

Wonderful to hear of new members joining clubs and know visitors will have great welcome.

6. Area Secretary's Update – Morag McCord

- Thanks to the clubs which have sent updates through the club officer forms. It is very important your details are kept up-to-date.
- My thanks to our Minute Secretary, Shiona Fosh for the great job she does with your reports.
- I would like to retire from Area Secretary in October 2023 at the AGM so could I ask if anyone would like to step up, I will be very grateful and relieved.

7. Area Treasurer's Update – Tracy-Anne Clancy

- The balances on the accounts as at 31 March 2022 are as follows:
- Barclays Bank – General Purpose Current Account £3,877.52
- Barclays Bank – Savings Account £25,913.84
- Barclays Bank – JDS&E Current Account £8210.93
- Barclays Bank – Flower Arranger Current Account £5,425.06 (3 issues to be paid for)
- ** the balances presented above include all known income and expenditure this year to date.

The bank mandates have all been recently updated (excluding the Flower Arranger account). Two signatories to sign at any time.

Income

Affiliation fees amounting to £3,250.50 had been received to date from 10 clubs. Thank you.

Other income recorded was in respect of Floral Fashion Show (break even event), Christmas cards & Trading (profit of £144 to date), JDS&E Education Day (break even event).

Expenditure

Main items of expenditure to date include; Zoom licences £270, Internet Hosting £206, Website and Cookie Charges £842, Storage Charges £586 and Insurance £81. This totals £1,985

Net expenditure in respect of Christmas at Arley was £462 in respect of staging and maintenance, travel expenses.

In 2019 it was agreed that the exhibitions and events in the Floral Marquee at RCCS was in effect our Area Show and as such Cheshire Area should ensure that financial support was provided. Based on this decision, a new set of flower stands were ordered to be custom made ready for the 2020 show. 2020 nor 2021 shows did not take place in traditional format. Stands now been delivered and expensed this year, in readiness for Flower

National Flower Arranging Day.

Area will support clubs to be involved with National Flower Arranging Day (6 May). £25 will be paid to each club taking part (as budgeted). Contact Treasurer with photographic evidence to claim.

Judges Refresher Day.

Event will be subsidised up to £300. The money will come from JDS&E account

8.Publicity incl Flower Arranger

No volunteers to do publicity for Area yet.

Flower Arranger – Cheshire Area

- 2 clubs placed 2022 order following Feb meeting – Handbridge & The Bramall Hall. Awaiting payment from The Bramall Hall FC
- 3 clubs increased their initial order, with Spring edition supplied from Area order – Chester, Wistaston & District and Wirral. Additional copies purchased from HQ to cover possible request from clubs resuming meetings
- Wirral CFAO sadly passed away recently – June Bibby advised Area
- Accounts and January bank statement forwarded to Treasurer 10 February and February statement on 11 March
- Please let me know if Area plan to include **promotion of the Flower Arranger magazine at shows** - to allow me to order additional copies of magazines, forms etc. We can ask for supplementary delivery at additional delivery cost

Flower Arranger Table Cover and Roller Banner

- A new 'The Flower Arranger' banner and table cover are being distributed, to Areas, free of charge. Additional covers and banners will cost £103. Kathy Stangaard asked that these be used at Area events and shows
- HQ have asked for a photo to be shared with them when used at meetings or shows
- Area are still awaiting delivery of the banner and cover, but they should arrive in good time for the RCCS

Key points from AFAO meeting

AFAO Cluster Groups to be set up to allow opportunity for greater sharing of information and ideas.

Each cluster to include member of Editorial Team. Pat South is the lead for Cheshire.

FA & NAFAS News content is agreed by the Editorial Team. Some articles have seasonal

focus & held over, whilst others are of greater interest to NAFAS members, so considered for NAFAS News

Deadline for receipt of articles shown in NAFAS News, though does not guarantee inclusion Design content ongoing process & subject to change. Team consider the overall balance of the magazine. This may result in changes in content, with planned articles not included

Edited extract from Editorial Board Minutes

The cost of paper has increased which has been reflected in the new cover price.

Subscription rate have stayed the same for 2022.

FA editor works with NAFAS Social Media company to maximise coverage

Latest news

Cheshire Area RHS Tatton exhibit and hats demonstration feature in the summer magazine, the fashion show is featured in NAFAS News

FA Award has been obtained for class at Cheshire Area Show at RCCS

9. Demonstrator's Update -Beryl Cotton

Area Report

The electronic Cheshire Demonstrators Directory is now live on the Cheshire Area website Thanks to Janet Schofield and the webmaster. It can easily be downloaded by Programme Secretaries into a Word document. All Demonstrators listed have signed a consent form for their name and postcode to be published on the website. Demonstrators on the list are willing to demonstrate to Clubs in the Cheshire Area.

Unfortunately, we have seen a recent drastic rise in fuel prices at the pumps. To clarify, Demonstrators and club Treasurers should refer to the matrix published (see below) Demonstrators should not be out of pocket and should not feel restricted to only claim the 45p allowance. Demonstrators are aware of the HMRC guidelines and as individuals are responsible for their own tax situation.

NAFAS Recommended Mileage Rates

Judges, Demonstrators, Speakers and Teachers may claim mileage rate based upon the following scale:

Price Per litre	Price per mile
Up to - 131.00p	45p
131.1p - 133.00p	46p
133.1p - 135.00p	47p
135.1p - 137.00p	48p
137.1p - 139.00p	49p
139.1p - 141.00p	50p
141.1p - 143.00p	51p
143.1p - 145.00p	52p
145.1p - 147.00p	53p
147.1p - 149.00p	54p
149.1p - 151.00p	55p

Note: For each additional 2p in the price per litre, the mileage allowance will rise by 1p If the cost of fuel should fall below £131p per litre, NAFAS recommends that HMRC approved rate of 45p per mile is the minimum offered/claimed by presenters.

I am always pleased to hear from any Cheshire Demonstrator with an upbeat story from their demonstrating travels or to discuss any queries they might have. I plan to hold a "social" zoom meeting in the very near future for Cheshire Area demonstrators to ensure they do not feel isolated.

I urge every member, at all times, to be on the lookout for someone whom they feel has the qualities to be a demonstrator. Once a person is identified, they can be nurtured. Please let me know if you know of someone who might identify as a potential candidate for demonstrator training.

National Report

Report from minutes of zoom meeting on 26th January 2022

- 1) Plans well in hand for the Demonstrators Symposium will be held at Telford Golf Club and Spa on 21st to 24th April 2022. Tickets are still available for Angela Turner's open demonstration on the Saturday afternoon entitled "Colour my World"
- 2) The committee reviewed the recommended minimum flower allowance. Statement below issued by Chair Elizabeth Graham following the meeting – this should be read out in full at Clubs.
- 3) The National committee asked the Board to produce an extension of the recommended mileage grid. The matrix is used by Demonstrators and Club Treasurers. The matrix has not been published in the new National Discipline List but will be put on the NAFAS website.
- 4) The D Forms are being updated and a new memory stick will be issued when completed. (Form D14 – plant list name changes Rosmarinus to Salvia and Hebe to Veronica.)
- 5) Virtual Area Demonstrators Representatives meeting will be held on 27th June
- 6) A new National List has been published. Amendments: Margaret Fairhurst should no longer be on the list of Adjudicators and Instructors. Andrew Grisewood is no longer a trainee adjudicator.
- 7) The next zoom committee meeting will be held on Tuesday, 28th June, 2022. Further to the circulated report for this meeting, Beryl would like to add that all the Area Demonstrator Reps had been sent an announcement via the National Demonstrators Committee from National Chairman, Catherine Kear MDP. -Update to NAFAS Travel and Expenses Policy April 2022. Forwarded to all Demonstrators on Cheshire List.

10 Judges update – Sue Clissold.

1. Circumstances have necessitated a change of venue for National Judges Test both for second in person training day on 25 August and actual Test on 30 October. Will now be held in Tarvin, Community Centre Cheshire.
2. Panel of Judges agreed for National Virtual Show 2022. Great anticipation from both judges and competitors.
3. Competitions manual – sub committee has been established and draft will be circulated to all National judges for comment before ratifying. No firm date given.
4. Dromantine Judges Conference – date rearranged to 18-20 September 2023.
5. National Show 2023 – site visit to Gloucester Cathedral taken place -for staging considerations and accurate measurements taken.
6. Almost full attendance at zoom Adjudicators & Instructors meeting when it was agreed the allocation of marks for Judges Test needed to be reviewed. Notified of changes in due course.
7. Full details and cost for Judges Refresher day, 15 October, at Plumley will be circulated.

11 Speakers update – Kathleen Williams.

The National Speakers Committee new Chairman Brenda Eyers, East of England Area contacted all Area Reps to introduce herself and to discuss issues concerning speakers. Some of my thoughts give me personally a dilemma as I have some concerns about the training, the subject matter and props or equipment used. All of these require a fresh approach as they are rooted well in the last century.

No refresher days have been possible and few flower clubs have met so our Cheshire "pool" of speakers mainly have only the one title to offer and there are very few of them.

Zoom led many clubs to have a zoom speaker and out of necessity speakers who were not NAFAS speakers but were relevant to their members e.g., a herbalist, a commercial grower of British flowers, a bee keeper. Once the clubs have begun to meet those clubs who like to have a speaker for their AGM booked our speakers but now have the problem members of more than one club are not attending their AGM because they have already heard that talk.

A different approach

- Make the subject matter relevant
- Don't put the emphasis on props as an AGM does not necessarily lend itself to using a stage, a few illustrations are enough and the ability to interact with the audience is essential
- Possible use of illustrations using a lap top and a screen
- Each speaker should have a "bank" of titles – even old demonstration title re-vamped.

These points may be in the NAFAS guidelines but to date I have not received them. I have contacted the Chairman of Speakers but so far, I have no file and no "D forms".

This is quite understandable given the turmoil there has been surrounding HQ, the pandemic etc. but they would be useful and I will continue to pursue them.

If we are to continue to have a speaker's rep and co-ordinator for the area there are

- Have a refresher day for Speakers
- It is essential we inject some "life" into speaking using humour, tone of voice and
- body language
- Present the clubs with a re-vamped programme for Cheshire Speakers aimed especially at AGM s or social events

I feel a zoom meeting with our current speakers is not enough we need a face-to-face session which would incur the cost of hiring a small hall – preferably the one at the rear at Plumley and then afterwards zoom meetings would continue the process.

The alternative is not to have a speakers branch in Cheshire.

Contact Kathleen on: speakers@nafascheshire.org.uk if you need to discuss this further.

12. Education Update – Sharon Nolan

Sharon attended a Zoom meeting of Area Education Reps on 23/2/22. Included updates of current initiatives, e.g. Ofqual accreditation, leisure classes, potential teachers conference 1&2/4/23, increased use of social media, job descriptions, basic teaching manual. Minutes available.

National Education Committee meeting 24/2/22 included updates on current initiatives, etc And updates to current publications with many being reviewed, young flower arrangers clubs, basic teaching certificate. Contact Sharon if more information required.

Janet Schofield had contacted all tutors listed in current Cheshire book and updated Area Website with those who replied to give their consent. Some have not yet replied – discussion required what should happen in this instance.

Sharon had contacted all club chairmen to ask about members who run workshops or teach at their club be they be qualified or not – still waiting for replies. The info requested was to identify anyone who should be added to Sharon's Education list, more extensive than those in the book.

List of workshops available in Area were held on Area website, but have disappeared with Development. Requires urgent update. Janet and Sharon will decide how to restore and maintain that information. Contact Sharon for enquiries.

Discussions underway with Ofqual for NAFAS to achieve awarding status. However, taking considerably longer than originally thought. Meanwhile NAFAS has no certificated courses to offer. All tutors being encouraged to progress leisure initiatives. HQ has updated the booklet Leisure Classes for All. Copies to all Area Education Reps. Sharon has forwarded this to everyone on the Education list she has which is why needs to know who runs classes and workshops in the Cheshire Area.

As an Area we need to run some Education Days and Members days. Proposals will be submitted in due course.

12a Young Peoples Group . – Judy Gratton.

I have been working alongside Tracy-Anne Clancy and Jean Jones to look at providing basic beginner's workshops for adults and children.

We have arranged, in conjunction with St Barts Church in Church Minshull, to provide a workshop for children in April 2022.

The aim will be to provide guidance on how to look after plant material and to produce an Easter arrangement which the children can take home. The children will be accompanied by their parent / guardian or carer and can either help or sit back with refreshments!

The children will be provided with everything they need to create their arrangement.

We are hoping to run similar activities in a number of primary schools.

If anyone is interested in running something similar for their own local schools please do get in touch. Judy Gratton 07506022709 or email judy.gratton@live.co.uk

For Area Show children's "hands on" Carol Baker and I considering the activities.

13. CAN Online Activity – Janet Schofield.

CAN Directory now Live

The new CAN Directory (Area List) went live on our website on March 1st with the Leadership Team page. This was followed shortly after by the Demonstrators. Judges and Teachers went live last week, and Speakers will follow soon.

Once the CAN Team roles and responsibilities are finalised, the CAN team members will be added.

Google Analytics and boosting visits

The website has had new Google Analytics code added and this will be rolled out across all pages as soon as possible. This will give us accurate data about the number of page visits on every page and enable us to decide where it is worth spending more to improve our profile.

In order to boost traffic to the website we have started to include website links on our Area Facebook posts. If you are sending items to the website please copy in

facebook@nafascheshire.org.uk so we can share on Facebook with a link back to the website to keep improving our figures. We are looking at increasing posts on our Area Instagram and Twitter pages too. If you use any of these Social Media channels please follow us!

If you have a club social media presence please promote the area website whenever you can as all our clubs will benefit from new visitors and it will help improve our search engine rankings too.

Competitors Support Group (CSG)

The CSG relaunched in February with a talk on the Elements and Principals of design by Louise Jones.

Our next meeting is March 22nd when Gill Davies will lead a session on reading a schedule, looking at both the Cheshire Show schedule and the National Virtual show.

Please encourage potential competitors to attend these sessions; they are open to all affiliated members. They are great fun and very informative – individual club members should contact canonlineevents@gmail.com for more info.

14 Clusters

Sunflower Cluster – David Mason.

Meeting fairly regularly. Happy to continue as group and share information.

Rose Cluster – no lead.

Hoping to meet up soon and must appoint new lead. Some not sure if cluster necessary

Peony Cluster -no lead.

Get together planned

Lily Cluster – Collette Dunkley

First face to face at garden centre. Networking gives support for each other. Need basic Lessons in Area

15Shows Updates

RCCS – Joan Wilkinson

Following consultations with Louise and her team and Rob Davenport Chief Executive of the Cheshire Agricultural Society we have changed the name of the show to the Cheshire Area Show held at the county show ground. The show will be run slightly differently to previous area shows in that we welcome entries from outside the area but Gill and I felt that to call it the Area Show gave it more kudos and hopefully would attract more competitors. We have also changed the name of the marquee and it is now The Theatre of Flowers. Not many people outside of our society have the slightest idea of what NAFAS stands for therefore the change of name should bring in more visitors to the show. NAFAS is well represented inside the marquee from the Publicity Team.

You will all have had the schedules by now, both electronically and by post. Gill and I both felt that it was necessary to print off some schedules for those of you who didn't have access to a printer. The title this year is "Beyond Imagination" and we have introduced a new mechanic which comprises of a five foot metal pole with two removable mesh plates. This class is entitled "Material World" and can be done by up to two people so we look forward to seeing some spectacular interpretations but please encourage your members to put their names down soon as we have a limited number in this class. The wooden boxes are going to be used again, one on the marquee floor which will be a still life and the other on its side on legs with deep insulation in the back for the class "Hidden Depths". The novice class is "Have a go at the Cheshire Show" which proved so popular last time that we had twice the entries that we normally allow but it was worth it to see the amazing designs from our competitors. A similar class for the more experienced entrants is "It'll Come In Handy" where all those things that have been bought on a whim and put in the back of a cupboard can be brought out and used. It could be a single item or multiple items the choice is yours. The petite class "Flight of Fancy" is there for the more nimble-fingered competitor and "Verdigris" for the foliage lovers amongst you. We have some really interesting bits and pieces for the imposed class "Fabrication" which the public really like to see as it is amazing just how different every design is using the same materials.

Following the success of our virtual show last year which attracted 174 exhibits from around the world, America, Kenya, Canada, India, Cyprus and Ireland we have decided to include a virtual class in this year's show. The title is "Defying Gravity" and is open to not only those who cannot be at the live event but to anyone who would like to interpret the class. The more entries we have for this the better, the winners photos will be enlarged as we did last time and put on the display boards in the marquee for viewing by the public. There will be no fee for this class nor any prize money but they will receive winning cards to keep.

The Area are running a Competitors' Support Group which meets at Plumley Village Hall. This is a confidence boosting group for those who are nervous about entering a show for the first time or more experienced exhibitors that just want to try something different with help from four experts in various fields of floral design.

They are having two sessions Saturday 30th April and 28th May the second session giving an opportunity to practice your design for the show. The course runs from 10.00am to 4.00pm and there is a nominal charge to cover costs.

Last but by no means least we are looking for volunteers to steward the show. The stewards' job doesn't just involve stopping little Jimmy from fiddling with the flowers or Fido cocking his leg on the drapes. It is an opportunity to engage with members of the public who show an interest in our craft. They will be handing out judging cards for the competition "You Be The Judge" where our visitors can vote for their favourite design in the show.

Anyone who would like to know more about our wonderful organization can then be directed to the Publicity Team situated at the front of the marquee where they can find out where their nearest flower club is and given free tickets for their first visit. Talking of free tickets, each steward is given free entry to the show for doing two sessions of one and a half hour stints giving them plenty of time to look round the show. Forms for stewards will be sent to each club so please encourage your members to put their names down and enjoy the show.

Arley – Louise Jones.

Since initial conversation in January, nothing heard from them since.

RHS Tatton Park – Louise Jones

Heard nothing more from RHS and time running out for planning etc .so not hopeful.

16. Club Day - Janet Schofield

A day organized by Area to help with any aspect of flower arranging from helping clubs organize workshops, open demonstrations, Vote of thanks etc – any topic. Chairmen, Treasurers and programme secretaries to start with – any discussions. No date yet and preferably a Saturday. Watch this space.

17. AOB.

1. **Wendy Mckeown** – asked to consider moving forums around the Area. Find different venues for face-to-face but large enough to take all club delegates and Can Team personnel. Discuss further with Wendy.
2. **David Mason** – website needed updating. Up to Clubs to check own details and update with 2022 dates.
3. **Pat Wood**- Re money for National Flower Arranging Day. Planting a tree instead to commemorate Platinum Jubilee Celebrations.

18. Date of Next Forum – Thursday 9 June 7.00pm

Louise thanked everyone for all they do and with National Flower Arranging Day, Area Show at The Cheshire County Show and National Tests happening in Cheshire there is so much to look forward to. Great to be back and enjoying flowers.

Signed.....Date.....

⋮



Statement on Flower Allowance

The National Demonstrators Committee have reviewed the recommended minimum flower allowance and have unanimously agreed that it should be increased to £150 (for a club meeting), in keeping with the 25% increase in flower costs caused by Brexit and Covid 19.

Some flower clubs may query this decision, this figure is a recommendation, it is not mandatory. Programme Secretaries can negotiate with the Demonstrator; respect and consideration should be given to both parties. The recommended increase is applicable from February 2022 and does not apply to previously signed blue forms.

Elizabeth Graham

February 2022