

# Cross-Party Group on Gardening & Horticulture

Tuesday, 12th March 2023 - Q1.04, the Scottish Parliament

Minutes

Present

MSPs

- Rachael Hamilton MSP (Convenor)
- Annabelle Ewing MSP
- Christine Grahame MSP

Non-MSP group members

- David Lydiat – HTA
- George Gilchrist – CIOH/SRUC
- Stan Green – HTA
- Stuart Simpson – BALI
- Christine Grahame MSP
- Simon Fraser – Ben Reid/ HTA
- David Knott – Royal Botanic Gardens Edinburgh
- Dougal Philip – HTA
- Lewis Normand – Bernhard's Nurseries and The Caley
- Ruth Richos – SRUC
- Ann Steele – National Trust for Scotland
- Liz Stewart – Scotland's Garden Scheme
- Juliette Camburn – Keep Scotland Beautiful
- Emma Martindale – Trellis
- Niall Evans – Lantra
- Katie Neenan – HTA

Apologies

- Alex Rowley MSP
- James Barnes
- Claire Ghee
- Amy Lawson
- Raoul Curtis-Machin
- Anne Webster
- Lou Evans

## Agenda Item 1

Welcome and apologies

The convenor welcomed everyone to the meeting and apologies were noted

## Agenda Item 2

Election of office bearers

Annabelle Ewing MSP was elected deputy convener

Christine Grahame MSP was elected deputy convener

Rachael Hamilton MSP was elected Convener

## Agenda Item 3

### **Reflections on the day's visits**

Stan Green fed back on the days visits, highlighting the role of horticulture in delivering wellbeing for communities. The discussion included the role of garden centres in community engagement, and the limitations of community hospital grounds contracts for green spaces. Details of Trellis projects can be found on the map on Trellis website so MSPs can find projects near them.

## Agenda Item 4

### **Presentation video from Trellis on health and gardening**

The presentation included case studies from various projects and also outlined the obstacles and challenges faced by practitioners in therapeutic gardens. There was a discussion on the need for an accredited course in to train people to become Social Therapeutic Horticulture practitioners. Trellis' work to establish The UK Association for Social and Therapeutic Horticulture was also covered, which aims to support practitioners and provide a register of practitioners, code of conduct, and quality standards.

## Agenda Item 5

### **HTA Industry Update**

Challenges posed by the BTOM and April date as well as unknown costs for example, the Common User Charge. Untested system with a tight timeframe and known challenges with unloading. A balanced approach to biosecurity needed.

New Scottish Peat Minister to visit McLaren's Nurseries.

Rise of retail crime.

## Agenda Item 6

### **Scot gov update sent in from Claire Ghee**

Produced a progress update where Scot gov is delivering on the HTA Environmental Horticulture Growth Strategy. National Adaptation Plan consultation flagged.

## Agenda Item 7

### **Roundtable discussion and Q&A**

Current import processes and the BTOM were discussed in more detail. Horticultural skills, education and training also covered. Future topics were agreed upon, including commercial challenges and skills/education. Urban gardens, allotments and derelict areas for planting also raised as a point of future interest.

## Agenda Item 8

### **AOB**

The meeting closed with a discussion on the need for continuous career development and support for gardens to keep up with the evolving sector. BALI Go Landscape initiative flagged, alongside an update on the horticulture degree and its recent validation process.