Welcome to this years AGM where we will look back on the performance and activities of the Association in 2016 and look forward to our objectives for 2017.

This evening you will hear from myself as Chair and Philippa Campbell our treasurer. We will agree the minutes from last year's AGM, present the accounts and review and approve our updated constitution. We will vote on members of the committee and then at the close of the meeting we hope that you will all join us for drinks and nibbles.

Chairs Annual Report for 2016

I would like to start by saying thank you to the committee for making my transition in to the role of Chair and easy and enjoyable one.

All of the activities that we run are dependant on committee members and volunteers to function. The shows, talks and trading store at a conservative estimate consumes over 600 hours per year. This figure does not include committee meetings, newsletter and show schedule compilation and delivery, website maintenance and other work for the store garden, Britain in Bloom etc which must take us up towards 1000 man hours. That's a lot of commitment, passion and good will from a relatively small group of people to the benefit of TRHA. On behalf of the members and myself I would like to say thank you. We really couldn't function without you.

This year we have seen Graham Starkie join us as newsletter editor, Philippa Campbell join us a treasurer and Susan Pankhurst join us as Secretary. All three have made valuable contributions to guiding our decision making, organisation and communicating with our members.

We have also said goodbye to other committee members. I thank John Humphreys for his work as treasurer, Gemma Alford for her work as minutes secretary and also to Hugh Ranscombe who has resigned from his role as President after serving 50+ years with the Association. Thank you to all three for their service over the years.

Our aim for 2016 was to understand better the status of the Association in terms of finances and our membership so that we could identify areas to focus on and to inform our decision making.

Philippa will report on our finances for 2016 and the decisions that were made as a result of this.

With regards to membership; Jenny Wager has compiled an overview of our membership status over the last 3 years.

Our membership in 2016 was 476 equating to a 10 % reduction in membership compared to 2015, which was a 10% reduction in membership in 2014. This indicates a significant decline that we need to reverse in this coming year.

A membership questionnaire provided an insufficient number of responses to represent members opinions however the comments provided some reassurance that our thoughts on what our members value and our areas for development were along the right lines. Our members enjoy our shows, newsletters, talks and trips, they value the trading store and they are committed to the association as a community resource.

We know that a small percentage of members exhibit at shows or attend our events. We also know that we have regular customers at the trading store but that again it is a small percentage of our members.

I believe that we have achieved our aim for 2016. We have a clear understanding of the financial aspects of the association's activities and we have a better understanding about why our members are members. This has defined our focus for 2017 which has to be around engaging more of our members in our activities and to raise our profile locally to increase our membership.

On refelction I believe we have exceeded my expectations in 2016 as we have also been involved in other activities that we did not anticipate at this time last year.

We have reviewed our constitution to bring it in to line with changes to the Association and to reflect the constitution suggested for associations by the RHS.
We helped Polehampton Junior School to develop their quiet garden and we supported Twyford's bid for Britain in Bloom and played a key part in securing the Silver Gilt award.
We have also been able to support allotment holders in their bid to stall development on the allotments, resulting in the establishment of TATA. An association that I hop we will continue strong links with.

In short, we have demonstrated our potential!

And so to 2017.

As mentioned already - we know that we have to address our decreasing membership and we need to engage more of our members - to allow us the ability to succession plan for committee roles longer term and to secure revenues.

In brief our aims are to:
- develop our website to serve as a resource and to raise our profile.
- advertise in local magazines
- work with Twyford Together to raise our profile
- to increase footfall through the trading store and to shows
- increase our numbers of volunteers

We will have our work cut out. As always if you would like to play a part we would welcome your thoughts or support, the more the merrier and the less the load!