It was a huge honour and privilege to take on the Chairmanship of our Association at this year’s AGM held during Harrogate. I am under no illusion about the work I have ahead of me as BIGGA’s Maroon Chair, both of whom were the other half of the Edna and Elliott Chairmanship, and I want that to continue. We all owe Elliott a great debt of gratitude for what he has achieved over the last four years in the role of Chairman and I want that to continue. We all owe Elliott a great debt of gratitude for what he has achieved over the last four years in the role of Chairman, and I wish Elliott well. It has certainly given me the confidence to tackle the year ahead.

As I have said, I’m particularly looking forward to meeting as many of you over the course of the next 12 months but please feel free to pop into Walton Heath if you’re passing. I’ll be delighted to see you. Speaking of the gold, despite the wet weather and frost, we have got well into our tree and scrub clearance work which is ongoing work to keep the heathland open. I hope you have achieved what you set out to do with your winter programmes.

Well worth remembering.

Before I go, those of you who saw Richard Noble’s Keynote speech will, no doubt, have been moved by his inspirational words and the video clips which had us holding onto our seats, but I was interested in his final comments about the project which are common to us all. As we all know, education is the bedrock of the Association and the future of the profession. On that very point it was interesting to listen to Dr Paul Rice, of Michigan State University, who said he had 40 years in the industry and was still learning.

That I have been able to take on the role of Chairman owes much to the support of my family and Walton Heath Golf Club. Any doubts I may have harboured were swept away thanks to the number of people who came up during the week and wished me well. It has certainly given me the confidence to tackle the year ahead.

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