

ALLY PALLY ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION
Draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting Saturday 6 August 2016

PRESENT: Alison Liney, Sally Chubb, Bob Hare, Peter Campbell, John Wilkinson, Jill Pullan, Harry Pullan, Jenny Bourne Taylor, Jill Ellis, Pamela Harling, Angela Silva-Jones, Annie Elliott-Evans, Pam Jackson, Sara Leviten, Anne Whalley, Theresa Ball, Christine Heath, Ron Brooks, Neal Jones, Roland Ward, Geoff Palmer, Sandie Walker, Michael Harrison, Steve Shaw, Fred Fitzke, Cathy Baxter, Chris Fox, Joanna Kelly, Alex Lynch, Lili Jailler

APOLOGIES: Dick Tomlinson, Sarah Fenn

MINUTES OF AGM 2015: Minutes agreed. Proposed: John Wilkinson, Seconded: Sally Chubb

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair – Bob Hare

As last year, I want to thank all those Committee members and tenants who keep the Allotments going. And thanks of course to Alison who does an enormous amount of work as Site Secretary.

The Plant Sale: Thanks to Colin who started off plants early as seeds or plug plants and to Angela who also grew and nurtured a large array of flower and vegetable plants for the Sale. Thanks to Annie and Sally for help with potting on. The first Plant Sale was an experiment but it has now become an important event on the site and we have raised money for equipment such as the ploytunnel and gazebos, and additional repairs and maintenance to the sheds and site. Angela has grown on plants also for the Sunday plant sales and endeavours to grow plants specially requested.

Monthly Café - The Café has continued to flourish and raise money for Charity. It is currently raising money for the new meeting shed fund. Thanks to the Café Team – Annie, Sally, Pamela and Pamela, Jill, Jo and Evelyn.

Composting Toilet - Thanks to John for maintaining the Toilet and thanks also to Alison for doing most if not all the cleaning and to Sally for being toilet roll monitor!

Mentoring- This scheme is for new tenants who would like to be linked to a more experienced tenant for some initial advice and help to start them off on their plot. We will get this scheme going again in the Spring and if anyone would like to volunteer to be a mentor, please let Alison know.

Training and Workshops - Thanks to those who ran workshops this year. Peter and his family ran the apple-pressing days and Chris and Cathy ran one session and produced the most juice! Colin ran a workshop on growing Dahlias and Chrysanthemums. Peter and Sally ran two workshops on improving the soil and composting and Steve will be presenting the composting workshop with Sally next time. Annie ran a morning's workshop on Christmas wreath-making. There was a request from Steve for a workshop on pruning soft fruit and Bob offered to plan a workshop on grafting.

Art Group - Thanks to Peter for organising the Art Group which meets weekly on a Friday.

Scaffolding Planks - Bob organised this delivery of very useful planks to the site but the lorry broke down in the car park after the delivery and remained there for several days. Second hand planks are difficult to source and new ones are more expensive.

Compost – We had a delivery of Council compost in the Spring and Bob is hoping to book another for late October or mid November. We are dependent on the Parks Dept. for the timing and availability of the deliveries. We could book a commercial lorry at £250.00 and would then need to charge more per barrow, say £1.00 a load. The meeting thought this may be rather expensive especially as there are free compost give-aways in the Park. Jenny Bourne Taylor wondered if we could arrange a delivery of horse manure and Bob will look into this. There is also a possibility that North London Waste will deliver direct?

Bob specially mentioned Colin Roberts, who died earlier this year. Many tenants attended his funeral. We need to decide the best way to commemorate the great contribution he made to the site over so many years, so please let us know your views and ideas.

Site Secretary – Alison Liney

The waiting list – now 153, including 12 people on the long list. The long list is those people who come to the top of the waiting list and want to defer getting an allotment or those who give up a plot voluntarily but may want to come back later. They need to contact Alison. They rarely do. The list has moved 33 places since the last report. Alison is now seeing people who came on the list in

August 2008. We have 10 new tenancies: Angela Silva-Jones, Michael Harrison, Sean McGrail and Annette Morrison, Eric Olsen, Ali Beale and Tim Powis, Jim Duke, Ellen Li in Alexandra Park and Polly Mortimer, Kay and Stravros Nicolaou, Michelle and Haroon Jogee in Grove Lodge Meadow. In addition, there are 9 probationers.

When plot 34 GLM, behind the meeting shed, became vacant the council agreed to give the part of the plot containing what were Bernard's two sheds to APAA. Plans for a larger meeting shed are under discussion.

Security – There has been the usual occasional pilfering but no major incidents. Geoff, who is using Colin's shed for the moment, has found it necessary to lock it again. I was alerted last Saturday to a large hole which had been cut in the fence between the bottom of the site and Buckingham Lodge. Peter, Geoff and Stavros repaired it on Sunday. The vehicle gate is still left open occasionally and you will all have seen the photos of the men who were caught investigating the chicken shed on Joe's plot. Now that Joe has removed his chickens that particular temptation no longer exists but Alison has another 'Lock the Gate' notice to put up!

Maintenance and Rubbish collections – We have had a tragic year with the deaths of Pete Oliver and Colin Roberts. Angela has taken over Pete's job of green maintenance. We have yet to find someone to do plumbing repairs. The Committee paid Angela to remove the two metre thick bramble hedge round three sides of Pete's old plot, Tommy dealt with the hedge at the back and assorted work parties removed sheds and an unbelievable amount of rubbish. The Autumn rubbish collection consisted of three lorry loads. Angela has since given her plot at Shepherd's Hill to the next person at the top of our waiting list and taken on the bottom half of Pete's then derelict plot. The Parks Service has since restricted all sites to one lorry load per collection. In February the Council agreed to pay Graham Thompson, who has the plot at the bottom of the hill, to replace the broken fence along the top path. The trees and bushes he removed went on Tommy's bonfire but the posts, old wire and rubble, together with yet more rubbish from Pete's plot and from the back of the meeting shed, made up a full lorry load at the spring rubbish collection so we were not able to extend the service to individual tenants. In fact, the Tenancy Agreement clearly states that we are expected to remove our own rubbish and the privilege of two free collections a year may not continue for long. Graham replaced like for like as I had asked, and put up a lovely fence which turned out to be too low to keep neighbouring dogs out so another work party, under Colin's instruction, used the left over materials to increase the height (and save my face!) at the cost of a few wooden posts.

Alison was asked why some plots have been allowed to get so overgrown. Alison acknowledged that this problem needs to be managed but in Pete's case it was very difficult to see how much of the plot had been obscured by bramble hedge. Our current council Allotments Officer, Claire, is more vigilant about overgrown plots.

Allotments Forum and Devolved Management – As you should all know, Haringey Council is hoping to save money by devolving responsibility to individual allotment associations. Several of you replied to the letter requesting our opinions on the subject. This was our Committee's response, echoed by most site associations in the borough:

'We are in favour of raising allotment rents to cover all costs of managing allotments. We feel that the pensioner discount should be available only to those in receipt of pension credit. Income from rents should be ring-fenced for use on allotments only. Payment by Direct Debit should be an option. We are in favour of resourcing sufficient dedicated staff to deal with the administration and day to day management of allotments but think that it would require at least two people. We are not in favour of transferring some or all of the management of allotments to the sites themselves or a federation. As one Committee member may have already told you it 'could be a recipe for conflict and unhappiness'. However, we are prepared to help with the ongoing improvements to the allotments data base so that we can lighten the administrative load. The Committee also worry that equal opportunities would not be maintained without the backing of the Council.'

Since then – Alex Fraser, head of the Allotments Service, has decided to try to appoint one dedicated allotments officer to deal with all aspects of managing allotments. He has still to get this past his boss, let alone anyone else. He attends the Allotments Forum which meets four times a year and recently attended the smaller steering group which meets a further four times.

Treasurer – Peter Campbell

Peter presented the accounts for the year ending March 2016. He particularly thanked Harry Pullan without whom there would not have been a tidy set of figures for the meeting. There is a healthy balance in the bank thanks to events such as the plant sale which generated over £1,500. We have used money from the plant sales to buy community items such as the polytunnel, gazebos and other equipment. We currently have approximately £5,000 in our funds which could be put towards the new meeting shed. Peter hopes to stand down from the role of Treasurer but so far no one has volunteered to take this on.

HARINGEY TEACHING APIARY – Sarah Leviten and Fred Clarke

Despite our optimism at the time of the last AGM unfortunately our colonies all showed signs of disease and so were destroyed. Our total harvest amounted to 15 pounds of honey in the end. Last summer we hosted two events at the apiary with children and families. We also had a table at our own plant sale with an observation hive. This year we managed to get one swarm late in the year from Palmers Green. Unfortunately the queen did not mate properly as she was a drone layer so we had to destroy the hive. We have joined forces with Roland and Dave, both of whom have allotments on site and will continue their training with us. Rob is continuing to be part of our team. We are in the process of clearing and cleaning and getting ready for the next season. We have been promised a small colony (nucleus) headed by a young queen. This will allow us the worthwhile experience of caring for a colony throughout the winter and building up our hives again. We were recently guests at the North London Apiary at Kenwood where we met the new North London bee officer and shared notes.

After some discussion it was clear that Roland's view of his and David's role on the Bee plot was different to Sara and Fred's understanding of it, and this would need to be resolved. Bob gave a vote of thanks to Fred and Sara and hoped that the Apiary could continue in a spirit of cooperation.

NEW SHED – John Wilkinson

Why do we need a new shed? We need a bigger and more effective building as a meeting place, café and venue for workshops. We also need lots of ideas from tenants about the sort of shed they want and lots of help for building work, design and landscaping around the new shed. We hope as many people as possible will get involved. We are having a number of planning meetings throughout the year – they are all enjoyable, short and informal and sometimes involve a glass of wine!! We have already organised a work party to clear the site behind the shed and discussed exciting suggestions for the design and insulation of the new shed. We want it to be as energy efficient as we can make it. There will be no building until next year as we also need to apply for Planning Permission and a Lottery Grant. Please come along to the meetings and offer your help for this exciting project!

ALEXANDRA PALACE AND PARK CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE– Jenny Bourne Taylor

Jenny is our representative on this Committee. The regeneration of the East Wing of the Palace is under way. The Victorian theatre, the TV studios and the west yard storage area are being restored. Sustrans are involved in a plan to improve the cycleways and put a new cycle route on the southern boundary of the Park. The siting of the station for Crossrail 2 in Alexandra Park or in Wood Green is under discussion. Planning Permission for a 'Go Ape' course in the park has been approved.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

The Committee supports Alison in the day to day running of the allotments and all sorts of other activities on the site. Being a member of the Committee is not too arduous – there are four meetings a year. This year Jenny Bourne Taylor is standing down and Peter would like to stand down as Treasurer. We also need a Wildlife Officer to encourage good practices for wildlife on the plots, such as planting flowers for bees. Currently a researcher from the London Zoo has placed camera traps in secret locations on the site to photograph and monitor our hedgehog population. We are hoping to continue this project with Chris and have asked him to give a talk to the site about his

findings later in the year. As no one has come forward for the posts of Wildlife Officer and Treasurer, we shall put out a request out for volunteers on the News Email. All the rest of the current Committee are prepared to stand again, i.e. Alison Liney, Bob Hare, Peter Campbell, Sally Chubb, John Wilkinson, David Craig, Pamela Jackson, Jill Pullan and Jill Ellis. We were very happy to welcome Steve Shaw, Sarah Leviten, and Michael Harrison as new members to the Committee and for Angela Silva Jones who was co-opted last year onto the Committee to stand as a full member. These elections were proposed by Jenny Bourne Taylor and Seconded by Pamela Harling.

THE NEW TENANTS HANDBOOK

Tenants are given a copy of the allotments tenancy agreement by the Council which sets out tenants' responsibilities. The Committee have put together a Handbook for tenants which describes some additional **local rules** for the site and also reinforces some of the council's rules. At the AGM we raised those local rules not in the Tenancy Agreement for discussion at the meeting, as follows:

2.1 Bonfires are not allowed between 1 April and 30 September and should never be lit on Sundays and Bank Holidays. **Agreed**

3.2 BBQ and picnic parties, you may have an occasional BBQ or picnic on your plot for a small group of family and friends provided that you consider your neighbours and do not spoil their enjoyment of their plot. **Agreed** (once any reference to a specific number of people had been omitted)

5.4 Items with sharp edges (e.g. metal fencing or spikes) should not be used alongside paths. **Agreed** once 'or spikes' added.

5.6 Stoves using cylinders of gas above 1kg may not be used in sheds. **Agreed**

6.2 Tenants with plots bordering the Top Path or the site roadway must control the plot edge alongside these rights of way, removing any gardening wastes. **Agreed**

6.3 Maintenance of the site boundaries is the responsibility of the Council and the APAA, including the fences side of the Top Path. **Agreed**

7.1 By concession, you are allowed to park your motor vehicle in the car park at the top of the site, except when association events are taking place in that area (e.g. the café on the first Sunday of every month, the AGM, or the annual Plant Sale). Priority is given to members with severe personal mobility problems. Public parking is generally available at The Grove car park in Alexandra Park.

7.4 You are not allowed to create any new parking space on your allotment garden. **Agreed**

8 Pesticide use on Allotments – Peter was asked if the Shed still stocked Metaldehyde slug pellets and he said they had not been stocked for some time now as they are poisonous to wildlife.

9.1 Petrol-driven power tools such as strimmers, mowers and cultivators create a noise nuisance. They may never be used before 8am or after 8pm. On Sundays and Bank Holidays they may not be used before 10am or after 1pm. Period of use on Sundays and Bank Holidays – one hour maximum.

12.3 Anyone entering the allotment site should be officially authorised to do so. If you ask a friend to look after your plot during your absence please inform the Site Secretary.

15.3 Hosepipes, if used, must be hand-held at all times. Standalone sprinklers are not allowed. (Some discussion about this point ranging from the need to access more water from the Water Company, sprinklers not being the real issue, and the the need to limit the time anyone uses any kind of watering to 20mins. In the end a vote was taken – 19 for, 6 against) **Agreed**

AOB

Weeds – Neil pointed out that tenants allow invasive weeds to spread on their plots and the seeds then infest other people's plots. He suggested a list of invasive weeds is given to new tenants so they know which ones are the worst. A leaflet about good practice as opposed to allotment rules could be useful if someone is willing to draw this up.

CHADAHS Show – The Annual Show at the Moravian Church Hall, Priory Road, is on 10th September at 2pm. It is an enjoyable day but does require a large number of volunteers to help with the many jobs the days before the Show and on the day, including moving tables from the Shed, setting up the Hall, putting up gazebos and helping with the teas.

CHADHAS Outing – This year the outing is to the RHS gardens at Wisley. £15.00 for entry ticket and travel.