

ALLY PALLY ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION
Draft Minutes of Annual General Meeting Saturday 29 July 2017

PRESENT: Alison Liney, Sally Chubb, Bob Hare, Peter Campbell, John Wilkinson, Jill Ellis, Annie Elliott-Evans, Pam Jackson, Anne Whalley, Christine Heath, Ron Brooks, Michael Harrison, Steve Shaw, Jessica York, Yusuf Gilgil, Jim Jenks, Ros Jenks, Cathy Brogan, Jim Duke, Liz Granirer,

APOLOGIES: Angela Silva-Jones, David Till,

MINUTES OF AGM 2016: Minutes agreed. Proposed John Wilkinson, Seconded Jess York

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Chair – Bob Hare

Thanks: As always I want to thank all those Committee members and ploholders who help with everything that keeps our site running. We normally hold 4 meetings a year and the regular meetings and this AGM take the tens of day to day decisions about every aspect of maintaining the site and running events. The Committee members this year have been: Alison Liney, Angela Silva Jones, David Craig, Jill Ellis, Jill Pullan, John Wilkinson, Michael Harrison, Pam Jackson, Peter Campbell, Sally Chubb, Sara Leviten (now resigned). It would be invidious and there isn't time to thank everyone by name, but as you will all know, we all owe huge thanks to Alison as Site Secretary and to Peter, who has also done and organised a huge amount of practical work with repairs to fences, plumbing and improvements to our social shed, and managing our Trading Shed.

I'd also like to thank those not on the committee who make other things happen. Our first Sunday Cafes are organised by Annie, Sally, Pam, Evelyn and Jill, with help from Jill's friend, and Hilary and Pamela who helped with the Plant Sale Cafe. Thanks to Nigel for his baking for the Cafe. Peter Falzon, Stavros, Geoff and Peter organised the new window in the Top Shed and other improvements. Stavros has taken on plumbing repairs, with Geoff and Peter Falzon helping with other repairs. Steve's friend Keith is now our auditor of the accounts. Alison and Sally attend the Haringey Allotments Forum. Thanks to Suzie and Peter for hosting the December Committee meeting.

Compost: The Alexandra Park team continue to be unable to deliver this.

Scaffold Boards and Manure: Thanks to Bruno for organising deliveries of both to the site.

Hedgehogs: Researcher Chris Carbonne has been surveying hedgehogs on our site and around the area. Our site appears to be a 'hot spot' for hedgehogs and may be supplying the nearby area too. Chris is looking for more volunteers who would be prepared to let Chris fix a camera on their plot. He has also agreed to give a presentation of results so far, later in the year, which will be a great opportunity to find out much more about these vulnerable but wonderful little creatures and our site's place in the local ecology. We will publicise this nearer the time and hope to find a time that will suit most people and especially the children on the site.

CHADAHS: As most of you will know the decision was taken to wind up CHADAHS. There are site committees at both Shepherds Hill and Ally Pally and the Trading sheds now operate independently, so this third organisation, which was once the only society for the two sites, has become something that didn't justify the efforts needed by its committee to run it. The hope is that the CHADAHS show will continue, but perhaps with a different name and perhaps different focus.

Sunday Cafe: This happens the first Sunday of the month and is a special and lovely event. If you have never been, do try and get there. People from Shepherds Hill and other allotments regularly come.

Potato Day: A very successful event organised by Peter. A wonderful range of potatoes were on sale which could be bought singly so tenants could try out new varieties. There were activities for kids and the Cafe was open.

Plant Sale: Especial thanks to all those who helped sow seeds and grow on plants or donated plants – Peter, who also took on the task of organising the growing team of Stavros, Angela Steve, Annie, David and others. Thanks to Ros and Jim who allowed us to use their greenhouse for potting. It was a hugely successful day.

BBQ : Our BBQ has become an annual event and this evening's promises to be the best organised yet, with 51 tickets sold (kids come free) and Peter, Stavros and Yusuf organising the food and cooking.

Trading Shed: Thanks to Peter, Trading Manager and all those who volunteer in the shed every week.

Produce Sales Table: Geoff has very kindly offered to make us a table to stand outside the Trading Shed, where you can put excess fruit, veg, plants and perhaps even tools to give away or for sale towards site funds.

Dehydrating Loo: This is so well used that it has difficulty coping. John is keeping an eye on it and explained that it may need a different system for dealing with the excess liquid. Please help if you can by using your own liquid to fertilise your compost heap!

Allotment Cat: If anyone would be willing to go on the rota to feed our very friendly allotment cat Ming Ming, please contact Sally (sally@apaa.org.uk). Once a week, a fortnight or even once a month would be a help. We provide the food.

Bob's report was proposed by Alison Liney and seconded by Peter Campbell.

Site Secretary – Alison Liney

Lettings: The waiting list stands at 131 including 11 on the long list i.e. those who have come to the top of the waiting list and will contact me when they have time to work a plot. I have emailed all these people, deleted those who didn't reply and asked the rest to renew their interest every January, beginning in 2018. The list has moved 22 places since my last report, though 4 of those are now on the long list. The next person to be contacted joined in May 2009, so this means currently there is an 8 yr wait for a plot. 19 new tenancies have been confirmed since my last report. In Alexandra Park we welcome Ashlie Love, Shelly Pennell, Helen Hunt, David Baker, Ruth and Paul Wedgbury, Robin Howorth, Olia Hercules and Joe Woodhouse, Mehmet (Jim) Mustafa, James and Ros Jenks, Sheila and Tony Reynolds, Luke Warren and Tracey. In Grove Lodge Meadow – Anthony Carney, Matthew Rich, Yusuf Gilgil, Mark Pountney, Georgia Kavanagh, Dianna Harvey and Liz Woodford. In Alexandra Park Nursery – Bridget Leach. There are two probationers and two plots vacant at the moment.

Communal Plot: Plot 29A Alexandra Park, which houses the toilet and the poly tunnel, has been given to the site association.

The Bee Plot, 7b The Nursery: Sara Leviten and Fred Clark have given up their tenancy of plot 7B The Nursery. The committee and the council have accepted a proposal from North London Bee keepers to run the plot, beginning with clearing and sterilising the site and working towards, in the medium term, keeping bees on the plot next year and holding short 'Taster Sessions in Bee keeping' and sessions on 'Forage for bees and bee friendly planting'. We are in the process of drawing up a contract to deal with a situation not fully covered by the usual tenancy agreement.

Giving up a plot: Just a reminder that 30 days notice must be given before giving up a plot. If you intend to relinquish a plot on 31st December the council must be notified by December 1st. Otherwise, the rent for the following year will be charged irrespective of whether invoices have been sent out at the date late notice is given.

Security: There have been occasional thefts from sheds. A large drum barbecue was taken, possibly in January, from a shed bordering Alexandra Palace Way towards the bottom of the hill and shed doors in Grove Lodge Meadow have been forced open. The council is responsible for maintaining the security of our boundary; two sections of fence were replaced earlier this year and two more are in the pipeline. We have also been promised a new wooden fence and gate between Grove Lodge Meadow and Alexandra Park and new fencing and gates at the vehicle entrance.

Keys: We are not obliged to continue using the no. 2 fire brigade key. Several allotment sites now have specially cut keys which are issued to tenants on payment of a substantial deposit. Further discussion under A.O.B.

Site Maintenance: Angela no longer has time to do the green maintenance so we are now employing Tim Laskey to do it. Peter Campbell, Stavros, Yusuf and Geoff Palmer have all helped to sort out plumbing repairs as well as putting in the new window in the social shed with Peter Falzon.

Rubbish Collections: We had our last collection in December. I had booked it as usual and we all turned up to load the lorry but it didn't arrive. Fortunately Bob, our chairman, was able to bring his influence to bear on the powers that be and another date was eventually arranged. **However**, there will be no more rubbish collections. Please take your unwanted items away yourself. Please do not leave anything other than plant pots by the trading shed.

Plot 2 Alexandra Park: Responsibility for clearing the plot rests with the council. The matter has still to be resolved.

Allotments Forum: I normally chair the quarterly forum meetings but was unable to attend on 8th July. I'll send the minutes round. I attend the smaller forum steering group meetings with Alex Fraser, head of the allotments service. You will all have received the council letter proposing a 75% increase in rents. This has been agreed with the forum. If our maintenance grant is doubled, as promised, we may be able to organise our own rubbish removals. The business case for the appointment of a Dedicated Allotments Officer is awaiting the approval of the head of the Parks Service, after which HR will assess and approve the grade before advertising the post in September.

Alison's report proposed by Bob Hare and seconded by Christine Heath.

Treasurer's Report – Steve Shaw

Steve presented the Accounts for the year 1st April - 31st March 2017. The accounts show an improved surplus for the year (£2,692) from the previous year (£986), largely due to an increased plant sale surplus and donation from the monthly Cafe sales, combined with lower expenditure. This is reflected in an increased Bank Balance (£8,019 vs £3,914) and overall Net Assets (£8,242 vs £5,550). Given the improved cash situation £3000 was transferred from the Current to the Reserve Account and this, together with a £1000 donation from the monthly cafe sales, resulted in a Reserve of £5,611 at year's end.

Since the last meeting the major expenditure has been on emergency repair to the boundary fence (£840) which LB Haringey have refunded. There has been some minor expenditure on plumbing repairs and green maintenance. Most noteworthy the Annual Plant Sale again raised a surplus of over £1,800 thanks to the efforts of many volunteers. This is now our main money earner. Thanks to all. Current account balance is £4,065. Reserve Account balance is £5,611.

The main issues anticipated to affect our finances are:

Wind up of CHADAHS: This could potentially result in a transfer of funds as the surplus CHADAHS money is divided between APAA and Shepherds Hill. APAA will take on the running of the Trading Shed and potential underwriting of any losses arising from whatever replaces the Annual Show.

Haringey Council: The current Annual Grant may increase (currently £966). The Borough have agreed to fund some fence repairs/gate replacements.

Top Shed refurbishment: This could potentially be the biggest call on our reserves.

Allotment internal road: The condition of the road is gradually getting worse – Alison pointed out that the Council say they have no responsibility to provide a vehicular road on the site, only a pedestrian path.

TOP SHED UPDATE - John Wilkinson

We have had meetings throughout the year to discuss and plan a new shed and several people in the new shed group spent time and energy researching the surveying the site. A kit-form shed seemed to be the best option. However, the extra space created by removing the Show tables and the recent new window in the shed have already improved the building so much so that there is now an enthusiasm for refurbishing and extending the present building instead of a complete re-build. Suggestions for this include building an extension at the back and right hand side of the shed with open sides, but providing shelter from the elements, and a wood burning stove. Bob pointed out that a group from the allotments had visited various meeting sheds elsewhere, such as Railway Fields, Clive's shed and a cob and strawbale building at Meadow Orchard. The cob building was very time

consuming and not practical for our site, but Bob felt we should not forget the idea of a new shed and consider it in the future.

GATE KEYS - Alison

The Council are proposing to give us new gates at the top and bottom of the site but the keys would probably remain the same. We do not have the full specifications as yet. Some sites have installed new more secure locks with a restricted number of keys which cost a lot more than our present ones, involving a £20.00 returnable deposit, for instance, per key. It is unclear whether thefts from the site are because sections of our border are fully secure, or because thieves have had access to keys. If it is the former, then having new secure locks would not solve the problem. The feeling of the meeting was that it is a combination of both. Some large equipment has certainly been stolen from the site which must have been taken through the gate. Michael reported that Bounds Green allotments had a very good secure lock and he will find out the details of this. Our bottom gate lock is still occasionally left open!

A.O.B.

Rotavator: Christine wondered if we could purchase a rotavator for communal use. Others were concerned about the maintenance and storage of the machine and also whether rotavating your plot actually encouraged weeds by chopping up the roots and spreading them.

Trees: Alison confirmed for Jess that the Hornbeam on her plot was going to be cut back.

Water: Ron passed on a message from Sarah Fenn who could not be on the meeting that she was regularly unable to access the water supply and Ron and Sarah wondered if there was a way of improving the water distribution on the site. Bob had heard of a pressure regulating valve and the committee will investigate.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE

Bob asked for volunteers to join the committee. We always welcome new members and have lost members this year. There are only 4 meetings a year and it gives members a chance to find out how the site ticks and contribute ideas. Christine Heath and Annie Elliott Evans both volunteered. The current committee was also re-elected en masse. Proposed by Ann Whalley and Seconded by Liz Granirer.