

Shepherd's Hill Allotment Association Committee Meeting Minutes 23rd June 2020 by Zoom		
	<p>Present; Juliet Mann, Ian Potts, Annie Griffiths, Jill Russell, Trevor Wyatt, Julie Yogasandram.</p> <p>Apologies Nick Finlay, Gary Sycamore</p>	
1.	<p><u>Minutes of last meeting: accuracy</u></p> <p>The April and May minutes were approved.</p>	
2.	<p><u>Matters arising</u></p> <p>Ian is keeping an eye on the water running off the hillside at the top end of the plot, but doesn't think it's a leak.</p>	
3.	<p><u>Site inspections</u></p> <p>There have been no site inspections, and there is as yet no news from Haringey about when they may re-start.</p>	
4.	<p><u>Trading Shed</u></p> <p>Annie sought the committee's views on re-opening the trading shed on a Sunday morning in a covid-safe way. This would replace the system Annie and Liz have been operating in responding to emailed requests and then meeting tenants 1-1 at pre-arranged times, which has worked well but is time-consuming.</p> <p>Annie has emailed the trading shed volunteers to ask their thoughts on re-opening. Annie is happy to do the slots of any who don't feel ready to return to volunteering yet.</p> <p>Jill referred to the National Allotment Society guidance on re-opening shops on sites, and we discussed the necessary safety precautions we would take: no customers allowed in the shop, safe social distancing at all times (and if the queue looks like it's getting busy we would ask tenants to come back a bit later), have hand sanitiser and/or soap and water available and ask tenants to ensure they sanitise before and after handing over cheque/cash, which can be put in a bucket. The shed will only be open for tenants – Montenotte gates will remain closed.</p> <p>We agreed to open the shop on this basis from the beginning of July for one hour from 11 – 12 on Sundays. Annie to send something to Jill to put in newsletter.</p>	AG/JR
5.	<p><u>Maintenance</u></p>	

	<p>Ian reported that the fence repair above plot 40 where the poplar tree fell has been completed. The tenant and the house owner on Shepherds Hill to agree a replacement shed.</p> <p>Some rubbish has appeared at the Wood Vale gate. We will put a photo of this in the newsletter with a strong reminder – again - for tenants not to dump rubbish anywhere.</p> <p>Ian will contact Shepherds Cot about the need to cut back a dead oak tree branch overhanging the site.</p> <p>Locks – Bruno gave Annie some and Gary has looked at them and mostly they work. So at the moment we’re OK but in the long term we will need to do something as these locks aren’t made anymore.</p> <p>Wheelbarrows – a range of views were expressed on whether we should continue to provide trading shed wheelbarrows. On the one hand, we’re short of funds to replace the old and broken ones and could encourage tenants to get their own or to share with neighbours. On the other hand, this is a communal service we’ve provided to date, and space to store bulky items like wheelbarrows can be a problem on some plots. Ian offered to donate one of his wheelbarrows and also to maintain them (after the social shed has been built). We agreed that at this stage we will just remind tenants we’re not replacing wheelbarrows at present and some are in a poor state of repair so we encourage people to consider donating one.</p>	<p>AG/JR</p> <p>IP</p> <p>JR</p>
6.	<p><u>Communication</u></p> <p><u>Waiting list</u></p> <p>We discussed communication about the waiting list. One view is that it’s unfair to those who have been looking at the website regularly, maybe for years, that they are in the same position as someone who looks for the first time when we do open the waiting list. Juliet reported that Ally Pally don’t close their waiting list for this reason. And Trevor reported that the nationwide consensus is that as long as there are fewer applicants than number of plots then you can keep the waiting list open. Julie pointed out that if we are concerned about fairness then logically we should never close the list as we will always get the same ‘unfairness’ issue that we have now whenever we close it.</p> <p>We confirmed that when we do re-open the waiting list only Haringey residents will be eligible (but this rule will only apply to new applicants, not to those already on the waiting list).</p> <p>There are currently 121 people on the waiting list.</p> <p>One possibility suggested by Ian, is that we set a threshold, e.g. at 75 we re-open the waiting list, and then close it again when it reaches e.g. 120,</p>	

<p>so that it remains manageable.</p> <p>Annie reported that the time-consuming work is having to respond to people asking where they are on the list, and having to remind them that this doesn't necessarily tell them how long they're going to have to wait.</p> <p>Ian looked up an article online about the longest waiting lists in the country: https://www.loveproperty.com/news/94285/this-uk-allotment-has-the-longest-waiting-list (Bushey Park at 637).</p> <p>Annie pointed out that if we could get the list down to e.g. 50 then it's more likely that those would be 'eager beavers' in a position to immediately take up the offer, rather than people who had lost interest/moved away etc.</p> <p>We agreed to do some more research on this issue and discuss at the next meeting. Jill will do some research, and try and talk to some other associations to see how they manage their waiting lists to see if we can pick up any ideas.</p> <p><u>Plant sale</u> – we will continue with these, they have proved very popular; Annie proposed the next one to be on Sunday 5th July. Jill reported that some tenants had expressed some anxiety about how many people were around Annie and Jenny's plots at last months' sales, making it hard to socially distance. Annie will sell her produce from the trading shed from 10 – 11 to avoid this next time. And once she knows who is selling produce, if there are adjoining plots will make sure they stagger the times they sell.</p> <p><u>Covid 19 guidance</u> Since the last meeting the committee had exchanged many emails about the wording of the notices on the gates to give tenants guidance. The allotment officer had circulated Haringey notices for associations to display but Alex Fraser at Haringey had also stated the following: <i>"I acknowledge that sites across the borough are very different in their size, tenant ethnicity and that there are variations in local management rules, so I would support any slight variations that Site secretaries or Associations wish to put in place regarding their own particular site."</i></p> <p>We had produced our own set of guidelines, which we sent to Emi on 19th June, and Emi had responded saying they were "fine". Trevor had written separately to Emi asking him to confirm that the Council guidance about not permitting social gatherings and BBQs still stood, which he did.</p> <p>We discussed a letter that Annie had drafted that morning to send to Emi on behalf of the committee, identifying concerns with some of the contents of the Haringey notice (the advice about elderly people needing to stay at home and not visit their plots at all is out-of-date; that we have allowed in a few exceptional cases for tenants to give their keys to</p>	<p>JR</p> <p>AG</p>
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	<p>friends to tend their plot during lockdown if they've been unable to come themselves, and that the term 'social gatherings' is too imprecise to be useful and that while there may be a fire risk reason for people to be <i>warned</i> about bbqs, there's no Covid security reason for <i>banning</i> them). A variety of views were expressed and we then voted on the proposal to send the letter and to put up our own guidelines; the proposal was approved by a majority vote (5-2).</p> <p><u>Other reminders:</u> We will remind tenants of our guidance in the tenants handbook: "Remember that every tenant has the right to the peaceful enjoyment of their allotment plot at all times, free from noise, nuisance and smoke."</p> <p>We will also remind tenants of their responsibility to keep paths clear, particularly of brambles at this time of year.</p> <p>With the upcoming work on the social shed it may be necessary to close the car park when there are materials being delivered.</p> <p><u>Social shed:</u> Julie is drafting a special newsletter, which we will send out this week, before work begins next week.</p>	<p>AG/JR/IP</p> <p>JY</p>
7.	<p><u>Probationers and lettings</u></p> <p>We currently have one plot to let with another one probably coming up in July.</p>	
8.	<p><u>Future Plans</u></p> <p>Ian has now ordered the bulk of materials and work begins next week. About 10 people have volunteered to help with the self-build, and Ian has set up a WhatsApp group to coordinate a rota with these people as and when needed.</p> <p>Julie was aiming to send out a report on the finances for the shed, with the recommendation that we agree to an increase in the spend to cover current costs, but also put an upper limit on expenditure. She will circulate the report once she has incorporated Ian and Nick's feedback.</p> <p>We discussed fundraising for additional funds for the project. Various ideas were briefly mentioned – a year book, an auction, an events evening – and we agreed to put fundraising on the agenda for our next meeting.</p>	<p>JY</p>
9.	<p><u>Finance</u></p> <p>Julie will be sending out a report about the social shed costs.</p> <p>Nick is going to finalise our end of year figures.</p>	<p>JY</p>

10.	<p>Allotment Forum</p> <p>There have been no meetings.</p>	
11.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Annie reported that the potatoes that are being grown on plot 15 are going to go to food hubs that Fran is liaising with. We will put a note in the newsletter about this.</p>	AG/JR
12.	<p>Date of next meeting</p> <p>28th July, maybe outdoors, weather permitting. On 53A if possible. Annie to chair.</p>	