

Shepherds Hill Allotments Association

Minutes of the AGM

20 November 2022

Present: Julie Yogasundram (chair), Annie Griffiths, Ian Potts, Jo Sheehan, Garry Doyland, Juliet Mann, Nicola Woodward, Andrew Lidstone, Jackie Cooper, Jane Shallice, Sue Aldam, Sonia and Tim Macnaughton, Catherine Tully-Tarr, Simon Tarr, John Robinson, Julia Grant, Andrew Wright, Bruno Dore, Alex Zhuravlyov, Jeff Somerfield, Sharon Webber, Ian Wright, Lou Wright, Vivienne McNaughton, Richard Rogers, Charlie Sweeney, Jill Pack, Natalie Jones, Jane Bywaters, Nevil Yildiz, Joy Pamo, Anil Yogasundram, Eugene McConville, Ginny Ludlow, Maria Jennings, Sue Webster, Gary Sycamore, Marie Mangan, Elizabeth Hess, Jo Murray, Alice Bennett, Gillian Reynolds, Frances Johnson, Hugh Bateman, Susan Teece, Pauline Stockmans.

Apologies

Jill Russell, Trevor Wyatt, Kathy Riddle

1. Welcome

Julie welcomed everyone to the AGM and expressed how delighted we are to hold the AGM in the barn. She thanked everyone for coming and thanked all those involved for setting up the AGM and the preparation of the lunch and sale that would follow the AGM.

She reminded everyone that the papers had been posted on the website.

2. Minutes of the AGM 2021

These were agreed.

Matters Arising: Julie informed the meeting that progress to sort the Japanese Knotweed has been slow, responsibility for progressing the issue lies with Haringey.

3. Annual Report

Julie highlighted the key points from the Annual Report:

The barn has been a welcoming place to hold coffee mornings and lunches throughout the year, along with many interesting talks. The first workshop was the willow workshop which was a success and enjoyed by all participants. In addition, the cider making took place in the autumn.

There has been significant activity maintaining the site. There has been tree pruning especially around the boundary and recently work on the tracks at Montenotte Gate and the Wood Vale entrance.

We do not have a toilet on the site, this restricts things like all day workshops and longer events. The committee will explore the possibility of installing a composting toilet.

The trading shed will need work at some point as the building is showing signs of significant infrastructure problems. This will be a large project requiring additional funding. The committee will look into what whether any grants may be available. It was also suggested we should look at crowd funding amongst allotment holders.

We welcomed new tenants during the year – as 13 new lettings were made. The waiting list is closed and stands at 113 with an average wait time of over 6 years. At the beginning of the year, it will reopen and a small number of people will be allowed onto the waiting list, matching the number of plots let in the previous year. Given the long wait time, Julie reminded plot holders to let the committee know if they were struggling to maintain their plots so that they can be divided. It was suggested that we could get people from the waiting list involved in helping people who are struggling. However, it was pointed out that this is very difficult to administer and we do not have committee capacity to deal with such a scheme.

We now have the communal garden and this has the potential to be used as a facility for people who can no longer maintain their own plot but would wish to remain part of the allotment community.

Now that the barn is open for events, Julie asked those present to consider volunteering for activities. Many individuals help with preparation of food, setting up events and the trading shed. However, there is always a need for more support and this would be welcome.

It was suggested that we set up a WhatsApp group or Facebook group to improve communications with allotment holders. It was pointed out that although people complain about not having information the newsletters go to the majority of plot holders and we can monitor when they are read. Any further developments in communications such as those suggested could only happen if we had volunteers to help set that up.

4. Treasurer's Report

Jo Sheehan presented the Finance Report and summarised the financial position. The Accounts show a year end surplus of £13k. The barn was completed during the year and in total cost £22k. Jo thanked everyone involved in the barn project and in particular Ian and Tim.

The annual grant from Haringey LA has been received of £2k and we have funds to take forward the plans for the forthcoming years which include continuing the maintenance programme and exploring how we could replace the trading shed.

The sales from the Trading Shed continue to do well and Jo thanked Annie and Liz for their work and all the volunteers that help run the trading shed.

5. Plans for 2022/23

The committee will prioritise options for the trading shed which is showing serious deterioration. The plans for the remainder of the year will focus on general maintenance of the site including boundary security, tree pruning and water taps and troughs as well as investigating the installation of a composting toilet

6. Election of committee members

Julie informed the meeting that Stephen Cushnir had stood down and thanked him for his work on the committee.

The following committee members stood for re-election:

Julie Yogasundram, Annie Griffiths, Jill Russell, Ian Potts, Juliet Mann, Trevor Wyatt, Garry Doyland. Jo Sheehan was elected as Treasurer.

Jane Bywaters proposed and Vivian Macnaughton seconded the election of all those nominated and this was approved.

7. AOB

Julie sought approval to move the AGM to the spring. The programme of activity usually begins at this time and this would coincide with the beginning of the financial year.

This was approved.

Juliet reminded those present that there would be a plot inspection in the spring.

Julie thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting.