

Agenda Item 3

Annual report for 2017/18

The new Committee was elected at the AGM on the 15th November 2017, so this report covers the whole year since the AGM. Nine committee members were elected, the Treasure was coopted to assist the committee with its work.

This report covers the key areas of activity over the year.

Relationship with Haringey Council

The very sad news in the autumn was the sudden death of Dick Tomlinson who had worked hard with us as our key council contact for several years. He was always very enthusiastic about the allotment site being a keen allotment holder (at Ally Pally) himself. He will be missed by all of us.

A good working relationship with Haringey officers is essential to the smooth running of the allotments. During 2017 Haringey reorganized the way they intended to manage the allotment service, moving towards having a single dedicated officer for the allotment service and we hoped that post would be filled at the beginning of 2018. Unfortunately, that did not happen, there were various delays the most significant being the elections in May 2018.

We continued to have a good working relationship with Dick Tomlinson who had been the designated officer for the Shepherds allotments for some time. However, the service was very over stretched during the year and there were numerous staff vacancies which meant it was difficult to achieve some of our usual tasks. There were no site inspections carried out by the Council in 2018 and therefore no Non-Compliance Notices (NCN) were issued. Inspections were carried out by the committee in expectation of Council action and prompts were given to those allotment holders who looked likely to receive an NCN. Many of these led to plot holders taking action to improve their plots or in some cases giving up their plots voluntarily.

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The new allotment officer has been appointed, begins work at the end of October and we are told to expect the first site inspection in April.

Several Committee members have attended the allotment forum over the year and this has been very useful in picking up ideas from other sites as well as policy discussions.

Trading Shed

Running of the Trading Shed transferred from CHADAHS (a joint organisation of Shepherds Hill and Alexandra Palace allotments that is now dissolved) to the Shepherds Hill site committee 1st January 2018.

The overall aim of the Trading Shed is to provide a service to tenants. Not only does it supply allotment gardening essentials, it is a source of gardening and allotment information and a meeting place to exchange news and views. There are approximately twenty tenants who support the running of the Trading Shed. Many thanks to all these volunteers and welcome to the new volunteers who have joined this year.

There is a mark-up on prices and the surplus is available for Trading Shed running costs, insurance and other site activities. The level of mark-up on prices was carried over from CHADAHS; this mark-up has stayed constant for approximately ten years. Under CHADAHS, this surplus was boosted by an annual Trading Shed subscription.

From January 2018, a £2.00 voluntary contribution was invited of tenants using the Trading Shed. A decision on a formal Trading Shed annual subscription is contained for decision in the Future plans report to the AGM. In the period January – September 2018 ninety tenants have paid the voluntary contribution.

Figures below exclude income from sales on stock that the Trading Shed had not been invoiced for by end September (seed potatoes, incinerators, manure).

The balance is boosted by £392 compensation received for inferior stock.

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April – September 2018		
Costs	Income <i>Sales, keys, voluntary contributions, donations</i>	Balance
£2,547.42	£4,180.39	£1,632.97

Maintenance

One of the big activities this year has been the clearing of plot 15 of which there is more detail in the future plans report as we need to make some decisions about how to proceed.

During the year three notice boards were replaced with new ones. Several large areas of bodpaving were completed taking the bodpaving right through from the Queens Wood Gate to the path which runs down to the Wood Vale Gate. Shoring up of the main path was also completed adjacent to plot 64.

Three water taps were replaced. The perimeter fence by plot 22 c and b was repaired following storm damage.

Two new bays for holding woodchip were constructed in the carpark by the trading shed and this has made the area much tidier.

Security continues to be a problem with both rough sleepers, partying teenagers and fruit thieves causing problems. We have a long boundary fence and keeping the whole length repaired is a problem but there are some proposals in the future plans report designed to help with this.

Lettings

So far this year we have let 20 plots. Seven of these were probationers who started in the previous financial year and were confirmed as full tenants. Thirteen are new probationers who began in this year all of whom have passed their probationary period. There are an additional three plots with probationers on them at present.

The waiting list is currently closed to new applicants and there are approximately 160 people on the waiting list.

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Events

Potato Day on Sunday 18th February is always the opening of the events calendar and this year saw the largest sales to date.

Then the Plant Sale which we feared would suffer because it was abnormally early this year on 13th May, to avoid clashes with Ally Pally and the Royal wedding also proved another record breaker with takings of £1453.15. Half the takings were donated to the Harington Scheme in line with previous years.

We then tried a first- a Harvest Fair on 22nd September- a day when the long-awaited rain poured down though didn't dampen the enjoyment of those who pitched up with their brollies and enjoyed some scrumptious food on our hot and cold buffet. Considering the conditions, the £270 we made was very good.

It was too wet to include the seed swap which happened a week later during the trading shed hours.

During the year we have had several working parties and a record number of people volunteered their time and energy to site maintenance work. These social events are what help to create a good community feeling on our Site and we hope to develop and build on these.

A few people from Shepherds Hill attended the joint outing with Ally pally allotments to Barnsdale in July. It was a very interesting visit and SHAA is due to organize the joint visit for 2019.