

Friends of Ascott Allotments
Minutes of Annual General Meeting
Date of Meeting: 3 November 2018

Present:

David Johnson
Tom Alley
Elizabeth Adams
Helen Marriage
Donna Moore
Lynne Casey
Robin Bowden
Judith Cannon
Sid Jackson
David Asirvatham
Benny (Bernie?)
Tom Challenor
Clive Herring
Debbie Fogarty
Jean-Marc Callant
Latif Abdullah

Jean Newson
Stephen Cole
Andre Harbert
John O'Neill
Paul Carter
Jack Lalor
Ian Symonds
Safi Ferrah
Viktor Gyebrovsky
Jack Wright
Jane Challenor
Mateen Zaki
Henryk Pycz
Kevin Newson
Olwyn Inskip

Apologies:

Jerry Foulkes
Sion Edwards
Antony Watkins
Chris Hutchings
Andrea Miller
John Kenton
Marina Cassimati

Action

1. **Minutes of Summer General Meeting** were agreed and accepted as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. **Annual Report – Paul Carter**

Paul listed this year's annual achievements which help to make the allotment a nice place to be and a good community asset; these include installation of CCTV, a new storage container, a tractor mower, signposts and signs on gates, tool grinder, heavy roller, Victorian lathe.

Events: We were rated as 'Outstanding' (the highest level, with an individual score of 94/100) in the RHS It's Your Neighbourhood campaign, managed by London in Bloom.

Environmental: wildlife pond, dead hedges, bat boxes
Communication: facebook followers have doubled, quarterly newsletter on gates.

Wildwood Tree Services have been given an exclusive right to supply wood chip to the Ascott site on a trial basis. As part of the arrangement, some pruning services will be provided for community trees

Composting toilet: will be up and running soon, thanks given to Clive and Debbie for organising.

3. **Waiting List – Helen Marriage**

Currently 99 on waiting list; 28 plots have been let this year over 3 sessions plus a few smaller ones. There are 16 vacancies and 10 unresolved notices to quit.

9 plots to be viewed on 4 November then more 2 weeks later.
The 30 at the top of the list were to be emailed with invitation to viewing.

There were 15 responses to request for help strimming vacant plots.
Thanks were given to those who come to help with plot letting sessions.

4. **Financial Report – Ian Symonds**

Report attached.

In summary £3k has been spent on security, specifically CCTV, and £1k on the composting toilet.

Storage container paid for by the Council.

2 insurance claims were settled at £2.5k.

Overall expenditure exceeded income by £1,117, net available funds are £1,616.

This will be supplemented by 15% of the rents collected in October 2018.

Rent collections will continue to be face to face by cash or cheque which enables communication.

Next year the Council have announced a rent increase of 3%, and there will be a 10% or £10 charge for those who choose not to attend work parties which are normally on first Saturday of month; a list of jobs is on the board in the Orchard for those that cannot make these and other ways of helping are available eg. Plot letting and strimming.

Thanks were given to Jennifer Woodhouse and Lynne Casey for their generous donations, and to Jean-Marc Callant for auditing the accounts.

5. **Future Proposals**

5.1 **Apple Press**

Paul Doig has done some research – 20 litre press costing £500 – could be acquired ahead of next harvest. Discussion around 2 other apple presses which were bought for the site and disappeared. Ealing and Hanwell Allotments have a press which can be used communally; apple pressing day notice could be posted on facebook.

There is also a small press at the Friends Hut.

To be picked up again at the summer 2019 meeting.

5.2 **Rotavator**

Proposal for community rotavator for people to turn over their weeds at a rent of around £5. Cost £250, petrol (noisy?). Could propagate weeds. If ground particularly heavy cost of machine required would be in order of £1k.

A show of hands indicated that this proposal was not of general interest at this stage.

5.3 **CCTV**

The CCTV at the Queen Annes Gardens gate is working well.

Proposal to extend CCTV to Ranelagh Road gate. Power source required; need to persuade the Council to provide a line. Solar panel

has been explored but they do not provide enough power for motion sensor.

Incidents outside the gate in that area are a concern.

5.4 **Barbecue**

Requires replacement. 3 barbecues were offered by Debbie Fogarty.

5.5 **Path edgings**

Treated wood could be used as temporary edging to make decent paths. More people involved in work parties could improve the paths. Weeds and stones get dumped on west path making it difficult to trim; this could be tackled at a work party.

6. **Produce theft**

Paul Carter introduced a proposal to change padlocks. Pitshanger have changed their padlocks; it is also possible to get locks that need a card to get keys cut. A more substantial deposit could be put on the deposit for the keys. More research to be done then review at next meeting.

7. **Plot inspections 2019**

To be carried out during 1-19 April. Notices to be put up and an email sent out to remind plot holders of dates of inspection period.

FoAA

8 **Getting involved**

Proposal to adopt part of the site, or an entrance or part of the hedge etc.

To be discussed further at the next meeting.

9. **Election of Coordinators**

A proposal was made that coordinators should have a maximum period eg 5 years, as well as the annual election, to encourage turnover. This should not exclude anyone from returning as a coordinator. Notice would need to be given and the constitution changed. To be reviewed.

Coordinators were elected as follows:

Communications: Paul Carter and Safi Ferrah

Finance: Ian Symonds and Elizabeth Adams

Meetings: David Johnson

Waiting List: Helen Marriage

Lynne Casey gave thanks to everyone who volunteers.

10. **AOB**

Clay oven needs untreated wood – pine cuttings are good.

Paul noted that the water was to be turned off on 4 November; Clive offered to help Tom.

11. **Next Meeting**

Winter General Meeting will be held in the Orchard on 15th December 2018 at 3pm.