

# **BARNES HORTICULTURAL AND ALLOTMENT SOCIETY**

## **AGM MINUTES**

**Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> June 2019 – Communal Garden at Hertford Avenue**

### **Present:**

John Padgett	Diane McLellan	Keith Norton
Desmond Millen	Rachel Walker	Frances Burbeck
Maureen Millen	Pam Islip	Helen Lawrence
Derek Lawrence-Brown	John Edgar	
Alex Clarke	Deborah Genders	
Sophie Kennedy	David Foster	
Hans Weisskopf	Tally Foster	
Ronnie Bendall	Penny Cowell	
Richard Ward	Michael French	
David Abel	M Vidor	
Sheena Clark	Emily Jacob	
Isobel Kimber	Marietta Scott	
Percy Kimber	Halina Kessler	
Jenny Jefferies	Mark Gourlay	
Fiona Heath	Alastair Kennedy	

### **1) Welcome and apologies for absence**

John Padgett (Chair) welcomed everybody.

Apologies received from: Janet Bostock, David Clark, Sarah Willard, Dino Franz, Nadia Mackenzie, Mary Enache

### **Minutes of the AGM 16<sup>th</sup> June 2018**

There was one amendment – Aileen Izett resigned, not retired as was minuted. The amendment was accepted. It was proposed (Pam Islip) and seconded (Derek Lawrence-Brown (DLB) that the minutes of the last meeting be accepted as a true and correct record.

## 2) Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

## 3) Reports

John Padgett (JP) read the **Chair's Report (attached)** - amendment for Chair's Report; Deborah Genders was also thanked for her work compiling the shed volunteer rota

Sophie Kennedy (SK) read the **Treasurer's Report (attached)**. There were no questions regarding the accounts. No suggestions were made regarding charitable donations.

## 4) Appointment of Committee

The post of Allotment Secretary is vacant. No candidates came forward at the meeting. Please contact JP if you would like to know more about this role.

Paul Edelin wrote announcing his retirement. No candidates came forward at the meeting and as a result the post of Site Rep for Palewell Park site is vacant.

All other committee members were willing to stand for re-election. It was proposed by Alex Clarke (AC) and seconded by John Hynd (JH) that there be a block vote for the Committee posts. The vote was almost unanimous with one abstention.

## 5) AOB

AC is a plot holder on Palewell Park. When the **mulch** gets delivered to the Hertford Site, there is never any left by the time she gets here, even if she is told it has just been delivered. Some plot holders take more than a fair share. JP explained it comes in small quantities on an ad hoc basis from Richmond Park, so we never know when it will arrive. In future, we will endeavour to find out and send a communication to everyone. It was suggested we introduce a limit of one barrow load per plot holder.

JH had a question about the **bonfire ban**. He noted that we have to accept this but wanted information on disposing of diseased plant matter. It has always been recommended that diseased plant matter is burnt. Will LBRUT arrange to have a collection for the diseased plant material? JP responded that this is a live topic at the moment. All the allotment sites in the Borough sent reps to the Borough of Richmond Allotment Group (BRAG). JP & DLB are members of BRAG and will feed this back, along with the results from the Bonfire impact survey conducted at the end of May. Invasive weeds can be immersed in a bucket of water, where they will decompose after a few weeks, or hot composted in a reused compost bag. Penny Cowell commented that bonfires were still allowed in private gardens – JP said that was the case. DLB said the ban was challenged at the last BRAG meeting but the Council representative was clear that the decision had been made and as we are tenants on Council property they had the power to do this and are enforcing it. Michael French (MF) commented that it is possible to take your waste material home from the allotment

and then it's collected by the Council if you have a green waste bin. Tally Foster (TF) asked if it was possible for us to have a green waste bin on site. Sophie Kennedy (SK) said payment will be required for a green waste bin and the residential scheme is quite separate to a commercial scheme. JP added that as a starting point, anything brought onto or grown on the plot that is not put back into the soil, is the responsibility of the plot holder and that everyone is expected to take their own material home. Other sites have tried communal green bins and communal composting and regrettably they get abused. SK noted bonfires happen on bonfire night on Council ground, surely if we had one bonfire a year then the pollution can't be argued about. JH stated that in the past when this had happened the fire brigade have been called out. JP said that strictly speaking allotment rules state that we shouldn't be on site after dark. He added that plot holders will be kept in the loop regarding the ongoing consultation on the impacts of the bonfire ban.

JH – **Fox Problem.** Recently someone was bitten on the hand by a fox, crops have been ruined and there have been discussions about the issue over the years. JH asked if people could be discouraged from feeding foxes. JP agreed, and stated that LBRUT would not trap, remove or kill foxes as they were territorial and others would soon move in to replace them. Foxes can cause damage and mess; however, they naturally predate pigeons, mice and rats which is helpful to gardeners but plot holders should not place additional food down for them.

Keith Norton (KN) told the meeting that he has a plot on Priory and that he had been quite unwell over the past year and was surprised to still have the plot. He gave his thanks to JP, DLB and Mark Gourlay who have been supportive. KN has suggested to MIND that the Society be recommended for a Respect and Recognition Award for the way he has been looked after. This was his way of thanking the Society. KN was warmly welcomed back by the gathered company.

JP closed the meeting at 12:50 by inviting everyone to enjoy the refreshments available.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

I am delighted to reflect on another good year for the allotment society. Our principal concerns are the well-being of the allotments and promoting the interests of our members.

We manage the 5 East Sheen allotment sites on behalf of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames and liaise with Council on letting plots to new tenants, managing the standards of cultivation and most of the on-site maintenance, as well as organising the Open Day and Annual Show and providing a convenient facility for plot holders to buy most of their allotment materials.

I'd like to thank the members of the committee, without whom, we wouldn't be able to

do all the things we, as allotment holders, have come to expect, enjoy and benefit from.

Mark Gourlay – who manages the Trading Shed, where we aim to sell most of the goods at a small margin above the wholesale cost to us, enabling us to be about 25% cheaper than nearby garden centres. I would also like to thank Deborah Genders for her work compiling the shed volunteer rota and all the Shed volunteers who open up each weekend between 11.00 – 12.00 to serve us.

Sophie and Alastair Kennedy the joint Treasurers, who manage the financial position of the Society.

Sheena Clark the Minutes Secretary ensuring we accurately record our meetings

Janet Bostock as membership Secretary who keeps the current members details up to date and works hard to remind us all to renew each year!

Halina Kessler who as Events Organiser gets everything in place for our Open Day in June, and the Annual Show in September and in particular produces much of the excellent food that we have on these occasions. I'd also like to thank everyone who helped and contributed in any way to supporting these events

Rachel Walker and Sarah Willard who share the role of Social Media and Website Manager have made a huge difference this last year. The website has been transformed and we now circulate a dynamic newsletter every month which interacts with our own and other websites.

And to all the Site Reps who enable us to liaise at a local site level with plot holders and who organise much of the on-site maintenance.

There are some additional people to also thank;

Mary Enache who we thank each year for tending the magnificent flower border in the communal area beside the Shed and for cutting the grass in the surrounding communal areas.

Desmond Millen who repairs the recycled wheelbarrow fleet and extends their lives by a further few years

You may have noticed that the wood bays were refurbished over Winter. The rotten wooden pallets were removed and replaced with sturdy sleepers, smartening up the main entrance to the Priory and Hertford sites. I'd like to thank the small team that helped me to do this work – John Hynd, Rashid, Desmond, and Dino.

Whilst talking about making improvements to the allotments, I'm pleased to be able to let you know that the Turkey pen at the back of the communal grass area next to the Trading Shed, which hasn't been used for about 4 years, will be dismantled, hopefully by the end of June, allowing us to create some more communal facilities up to and overlooking Beverley Brook.

Dino Franz has donated 2 solar panels which we plan to install on the Trading Shed roof. These will charge a battery which in turn will enable us to light the shed.

If you have any ideas or suggestions around how to best use this area, please let me or one of the committee know, so that we can ensure they are considered.

In July 2018, we conducted a survey of plot holders to find out what plot holders think of the allotments and what more the (BHAS) Society can do to support you. Thank you to everyone who took time to answer the survey.

The main findings were that plot holders liked - growing their own food, socialising and the peacefulness of getting away from the pressures of modern life. However, matters which need improving are - dealing with uncultivated and neglected plots, and pruning of vegetation and weeds on neighbouring plots.

There was a good sense of community, scoring an average of 7.2 out of 10.

When asked '**What types of activity would you participate in if they were available at the allotments?**' over a third of people said they would like specialist talks and demonstrations.

As we have outlined in our monthly newsletters, the Committee has already started work towards addressing some of the points raised and will continue to do so this year.

All the hard work does pay off, as we were nominated in the London in Bloom Allotments Awards last July and judged the best kept and well cultivated Allotment Site across the whole of London! The judges noted the allotments were well used with a broad range of cultivation and praised the activities which included 3 organised community events each year. They also commented that the site was well organised and maintained, especially the communal areas and that green waste was composted and a regime for the use of woodchip as a mulch is in place.

The Council's long awaited 10 year Allotment Strategy was eventually published earlier in the year and it's available to view on the Council Allotments website.

The Allotment Terms and Conditions have also been recently updated. The most significant change has been the banning of bonfires on Allotments because of air pollution and also the nuisance they can cause to nearby residents. We recognise that whilst many plot holders support this ban, there are those who will now find it difficult to deal with non-compostable material.

We have given out information and suggestions on how to manage non-compostable materials going forward, in the newsletter and we also sent out a survey to everyone to help inform us about the support you might require in the future.

We will summarise and circulate the survey results in due course.

We mention it each year, but with the bonfire ban now in place, it is perhaps more important than ever to ensure you prune any trees on your plot in good time, before they get too large and also to keep on top of removing those small self-seeded saplings.

## **Membership**

This year, since May just over 70% of plot holders have re-joined the Society, up from just over 50% at the same point last year. Thank you to all those who have already re-joined. Membership can be paid at the Trading Shed at weekends and at any time directly via Janet Bostock our membership secretary. Details are on our website; [eastsheenallotments.com](http://eastsheenallotments.com)

As a reminder, members are welcome to use the logs, wood chip and mulch from the bays by the main entrance as well as the non-green waste bin by the wood bays.

Members also benefit by being able to use the Trading Shed and also receive a 10% discount from Adrian Hall

We re-let 28 plots, up from 20 plots the previous year.

## **Financial Position**

Our Accumulated Fund position remains very healthy. The Treasurer's report provides more detail on the income streams and it's pleasing to see the Trading Shed income in particular, increase for the second year running.

Our reserves decreased slightly this year due primarily to the expenditure on the materials for the refurbished wood bays I mentioned earlier. Your further suggestions for maintenance and improvement projects that the Society can fund will always be welcomed by the Committee.

Last year we made a £100 donation to each of 5 local charities (Glass Door who provide overnight shelter for homeless people, at local churches, FiSH, Citizens Advice, East Sheen Primary School PTA and Animal Rescue and Care). Charitable donations must be from Open and Show Day profits (not from subscriptions) which last year were just over £1,100. The identity of the charity and the proportion to be donated must be discussed and voted for at the AGM, so please give this some thought ahead of 29th June.

## **Events**

The Annual Show at the beginning of September 2018 was well attended with a record amount of exhibiting space. The number of categories represented and the quality of exhibits was exceptional.

The May Open Day last month saw us trying a new format by opening in the afternoon between 2pm – 5pm and offering sandwiches, rolls and cakes, teas & coffees instead of the usual BBQ. The weather remained dry, if a little cloudy and was well attended. Additional interest was provided this year by the Twickenham and Thames Valley Bee Keepers Association live demo of a bee hive and also the Friends of Barnes Common. The mobile tool sharpening service proved extremely popular and despite starting at 10.00am and working solidly through lunch, Adam Bennet from Surrey Sharpeners didn't finish work until 6.30pm!

I would like to thank the Committee, show judges and all the helpers who have assisted with the events over the last year.

## **Committee Members**

Your Committee are all volunteer plot holders and we meet formally every 3 months or so to discuss the 5 Allotment Sites with respect to maintenance, lettings and neglected plots as well as general matters of finances, membership, planning events and to report on dealings with the Council.

This year there were no changes to the membership of the Committee.

The role of Allotment Secretary is still vacant. I have been acting Allotment Secretary in addition to my Chair duties and I would like to encourage anyone in the Society who would be interested in knowing more about this role, to let me know.

Paul Edelin has informed me that he wishes to retire from his site rep duties for Palewell Park allotments at this years AGM and I would like to invite anyone from that site who would like to take over this role or know more about what is involved, to let me or Paul know, before 29<sup>th</sup> June.

On behalf of the Committee I would like to thank Paul Edelin for all his diligent support over the past years.

John Padgett

Chair BHAS

## TREASURER'S REPORT

### ANNUAL ACCOUNTS Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019

#### Year's Overview

The Society showed a shortfall of £1,037 in the year to 31 March 2019 (surplus of £454 last year). This is mainly due to planned expenditure on the development of new bay at the main entrance to the site.

Income streams were from:

Trading shed - £7,415 income and a profit of £1,585 (£6,801 income and a profit of £804 last year)

Subscriptions - £1,530, down against last year (£1,725)

Show/open day net income - £1,128 up on last year (£717).

Expenditure levels were significantly up against last year at £5,280. The major expenses in the year were:

2019	2018
£2,131 on new bays, £250 on tree pruning & £276 on a skip	£1,000 on tree pruning
£260 gifts to six committee members	£122 gifts to leaving chairman
£1,208 on events – this includes the cost of 2 volunteers suppers as last year's was delayed until the start of this year, plus the AGM lunch	£407 on events – this was mostly the cost of the AGM lunch. The Trading Shed volunteers supper was after year end
£500 charitable donation as agreed at the last AGM	£500 charitable donation

Our cash balances remain strong and stood at £11,348 (£13,349 at March 18). We will also be able to fund other projects as they come forward for the benefit of members and plot holders. Requests for expenditure should be made via the site representatives who will forward them to the committee.

#### Specific Performance

1. The Trading Shed made a profit of £1,585 on revenues of £7,415. This is an excellent result & reflects the hard work put in by Mark & the many volunteers throughout the year. Last year's profit was lower than usual partly due to a special members compost discount scheme.
- 6) Subscriptions are down against last year.
- 7) The events were very successful this year with a huge amount of work & many generous contributions. The profit we make is often due to weather on the day so tends to fluctuate from year to year.



- 8) The Society has maintained a solid cash reserve with £11,348 in the Bank as at 31 March 2019, a decrease of £2,001 due to the shortfall of income vs expenditure but also due to an increase in stock held due to a large purchase close to year end. The Society remains in good health financially.

## Summary of Accounts

	Year 2015/16	Year 2016/17	Year 2017/18	Year 2018/19
Bank Balance	10,712	12,832	13,342	11,348
Stock Held	1,316	2,084	1,615	2,579
Trading Shed Profit	423	1,351	804	1,585
Total expenditure	3,430	1,364	2,118	5,280
Excess of income over expenditure	37	2,482	454	(1,037)

## Looking forward to 2019/20

Our objective remains to maintain our cash reserves so that we can afford to consider larger capital projects (as we did this year with the development of the new bays).

We continue to be keen to hear suggestions from ploholders regarding projects for site maintenance & improvements which the Society could fund.

## Accountancy Note

The annual accounts for year ending 31 March 2019 have been prepared following accountancy rules for Societies & Clubs. The accounts have been compiled by Sophie Kennedy, Treasurer of the Barnes Horticultural and Allotment Society. The accounts have not been audited by a firm of accountants.



## BARNES HORTICULTURAL AND ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

**Balance sheet for the year ended 31 March 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Current assets</b>		
Cash	11,348	13,349
Stock	2,579	1,615
Total current assets	<u>13,927</u>	<u>14,964</u>
<b>Other assets liabilities</b>	0	0
<b>Net assets</b>	<u>13,927</u>	<u>14,964</u>
<b>Reserves</b>		
Opening Accumulated Fund	14,964	14,510
Excess of income over expenditure	-1,037	454
Closing Accumulated Fund	<u>13,927</u>	<u>14,964</u>

**Income & expenditure for the year ended 31 March 2019**

	<b>2019</b>	<b>2018</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
<b>Income</b>		
Trading shed income	7,415	6,801
Cost of purchases	-	-5,998
	<u>5,830</u>	
Net Profit from trading shed	1,585	804
Subscriptions	1,530	1,725
Annual show & Open Day net income	1,128	717
Other		
Total income	<u>4,243</u>	<u>3,246</u>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
Shed repairs	74	90
Rubbish collections	276	0
Site maintenance	2,632	1,138

Stationery, stamps, printing etc.	157		361
Gifts	260	2	122
Event expenses	1,208	3	407
Insurance	175		175
Charitable donation	500		500
Total expenditure	<u>5,280</u>		<u>2,792</u>
Excess of income over expenditure	<u>-1,037</u>		<u>454</u>