

Golders Green Allotment Association
AGM

Wednesday 26 March 2014 8pm

- 1. Apologies received:** Nick Jackson
Nora Perfect
David Feldman
Steven Wooster
Ros Osmond
Lynda Woodroffe
- 2. Minutes of 2013 AGM** received and were recorded as a true record of the meeting. Proposed Ken Brown, Seconded Audrey Brown. There were no matters arising.
- 3. Chairs Report:** Thanked everyone for coming. Golders Green Allotment Association is now self-managing and we are all systems go. There were a two clauses in the draft Lease where we were unable to reach agreement with Barnet Council.
 - Cutting of trees on Clitterhouse Park on a regular basis – could not get agreement and was dropped.
 - When the Lease is up or if we give up the site we need to get rid of any structures on the site – as there was no audit of structures in the first place and 38 years to go, not thought too important and they wouldn't take it out anyway.

Thank you to the Committee who put in hours of work to make this happen. Our Association took in Tretawn Gardens allotments as it was a small site (only 5 plots) that needed to be incorporated with a big organisation or otherwise they would have lost their site. There is encroachment of land at this site from one of the houses bordering the site and after successful negotiation Barnet have written it into the lease that the Council will sort this out within a 2 year period.

On the riparian rights to the stream, we won our negotiations with Barnet and are only responsible for the inner fence, the council keep full riparian rights for the stream and inside fence. The properties along the Hendon Way are responsible for the own fences and that boundary, and Amber Grove are responsible for their own fencing and that boundary. We are only responsible

for the boundaries along the entrance to Clitterhouse Park and along the Hendon Way.

The Leases will be kept safe and we still need to register them officially.

It has been a very busy year and we will now people need to get a bit more involved to help with maintenance of paths, working in groups on various projects and hut duty.

We have had a few more ploholders who have volunteered to do Hut duty and help in other areas on the site as and when needed which is great.

We will over the next few months make sure there is a copy of the rules, minutes, the constitution etc kept in a folder in the hut should any one wish to look at these documents.

- 4. Treasurer's Report:** The accounts are in a good state. The audited accounts attached. We are budgeting for more machinery for this year and plan to do some forward planning and plan in fence works, gate works/renewals. David Raeburn queried the loss showing on the hut takings for last year. The Treasurer will take a closer look however felt that this could be because David stocked up and also got new seed stock from a new company. It should balance out in next year's accounts but he will double check this. The accounts were signed off.

Formal notice was given for an increase in rents from 1st April 2015 from £6 to £6.40 per pole. Water rates will continue to be subject to usage in the previous season plus any price increases imposed on us by the supplier and so bills may be subject to an increase once we are notified of any increase and or receive our annual water bills.

- 5. Election of Committee, Officers and Auditor:** The Chair invited members to join the Committee. Members are also invited to join sub groups if they do not wish to be a Committee Member.
- Sara Bell proposed Ken Brown as Trading Hut Secretary and Audrey as Assistant Trading Hut Secretary. Philippa Goody seconded. Agreed from the floor.
- There were no other nominees for officer posts or committee members so those listed in the paperwork as wishing to stand again were agreed from the floor.

6. Plot Business: John Bell reported that he undertook a plot inspection on the main site and found 20 plots which were uncultivated. David Feldman, for the first time, sent letters to these plotholders which caused some positive and some negative responses. As a self-managing association we cannot afford to lose money on uncultivated plots nor have people think it's ok to pay the rent and not cultivate – those days have gone. There is a waiting list of 50 people. Plotholders need to be responsible for their own plot and we need to make sure all plotholders know that if they have a problem they must let either the plot secretaries or the chair aware of their problem either by email or letter as soon as the problem occurs – telling a committee member is not good enough. It is incumbent upon the plot holder to let us know if they are having problems, not for us to have to chase them. Plots need to be cultivated and grow produce to eat. Regular site inspections will be made. We anticipate getting approximately 10 plots back this year for re letting. There are currently 3 plots to let and people will be lifted from the waiting list. The committee decided that this year we would take a £50.00 deposit from new plot holders, this would only be used to help towards the costs of clearing a plot if it was abandoned, or given up for any reason. The deposit would only be refunded if the plot was left in a fit state for a new plot holder taking it over. We also will try our best get available plots cleared, rotivated and covered this year ready for new plotholders – this way we may stand a chance of keeping them before they give up because of the massive task and commitment ahead of them!

7. Any Other Business:

- The Chair invited help from members who may have the expertise and/or time to pursue grants for our site ie. compost loo.
- The Chair thanked David Raeburn for his many years of service and presented him with a gift from the Association.
- The barbeque will take place on the evening of 13 July from 5pm and all will be welcome.
- A letter had been received by a plotholder who couldn't be present tonight. She had received a letter re the state of one of her plots and felt that we could have dealt with the matter in a different way and had found receiving the letter very stressful. The Chair has taken this on board and plans to look at this for the future. On the positive side this plotholder has offered to help in future with trying a different way to contact plotholders considered not to be cultivating and has also offered to help with other jobs on the site that will need doing like mowing the

paths, pruning etc. On the whole, as John has already said, the letters proved positive outcomes but things do need to change now that we are self-managing and it is a learning curve for all of us to change the way things have been done for many years.

The meeting closed at 9.05pm.