

Minutes of the Haringey Allotment Forum – 9 April 2016

Present Alexandra Park (Alison Liney – **Chair**, Sally Chubb); Aylmer Road (Mariela Diaz, Alvaro Mozun, Helen Parkinson); Creighton Avenue (Lindy Berkman); De Quincey Road (Yvonne Say); Elmar Road (Helen Steel); Golf Course (Clare Winstanley); Highgate (Geoff Kemball-Cook); Marsh Lane (Jane Anderson, Larry Campbell); Quernmore Road (Annette Pennington); Risley Avenue (Colleen MaClaren); Shepherds Hill (Rachell Allison, Esther Coles, Kathy Riddle); Wolves Lane (Iain Drury – **Minutes**, Gina Webster); Haringey Council (Alex Fraser)

Apologies Demos Constantinou (Rectory Farm); Jeff Cloke (Golf Course); Julie Parker (Ranelagh Road); Bob Watson (White Hart Lane); Olufemi Lodge (Courtman Road); Richard Bornat (Quernmore road); John & Muriel Porter-Weiss (De Quincey Road); Rory Budd (Creighton Road)

1. Minutes of the 16 January 2016 Meeting

1.1 Accepted as correct.

1.2 Storage of inflammables – Tottenham Fire Station will be contacting the Site Secretaries on 6 of the larger sites to arrange fire safety checks before the end of April.

1.2 Haringey Food Assembly – Any ploholders or site associations interested in selling surplus allotment produce should contact the Food Assembly which meets on Tuesday nights at the Salisbury Pub on Green Lanes 18.30 – 20.00. Organiclea has published a note on the legality of selling allotment produce – www.organiclea.org.uk. Mention was also made of OLIO, a free food sharing app connecting neighbours with each other and with local shops and cafes so surplus food can be shared.

1.4 Forum website – www.haringeyallotmentforum.org.uk – any suggestions about the content of the website should be made to the Steering Group via Iain – iaindrury@aol.com

2 Allotment Briefing Note

2.1 Capital bid - £100,000 over the next 4 years has been secured to carry out asset works identified and prioritised during the April site inspections.

2.2 Eco-compost – a giveaway at Down Lane Park (Staff depot) N17 will be organised for those sites that cannot get deliveries direct from North London Waste. Details and map to be sent out idc.

2.3 Waste Collections – only one load of bagged rubbish will be removed by the Parks Service team. Iain asked if it would be more cost effective to arrange bagged rubbish collections from the smaller sites on the same day as one collection rather than as a number of small collections over several days. Alex said that he would make enquiries but the collections had to be arranged around the normal duties of the Parks Service team.

3. Changing the way allotments are managed (formerly Devolved Management)

3.1 Tenant Engagement Letter – Alex said that only a small number of ploholders had responded to the engagement letter. Alex will share the feedback with the Steering Group but to summarise 5 were supportive of but 22 were not supportive of devolving management to site associations. 18 supported the appointment of a full time allotments officer. 13 said that they would accept a rent increase. Alex asked for further feedback from site meetings e.g. AGMs in which devolved management is to be discussed. Alex will contact each association.

3.2 Dedicated allotments officer – Alex said that he'd had 20 responses other London boroughs. Unfortunately the project officer post has been deleted and Alex has not yet had a chance to review the data. He will share the data with the Steering Group. A number of Site Associations

present supported the appointment of a dedicated allotments officer notwithstanding that the employment cost would be higher than the current customer support officer.

- 3.3** Expected cost savings – Alex said that £60,000 efficiency savings were expected to be made over the years 2015 to 2017. However, the allotment service was expected to become cost neutral i.e. all the costs of managing allotments would have to be met from allotment income (rent and water charges). Alex said that nothing had been saved following the departure of Andrew and Oliver last summer although he could not say how the recharged cost of the two unfilled allotment posts had been incurred. After further discussion it was clear that there is an incomplete picture of the cost of financing allotments. It was suggested that a budget based on known costs was essential to achieving a self funding or cost neutral allotment service. Employing a dedicated allotment officer at a given cost would be the starting point rather than the current estimated recharged cost of the time spent by the tree officers etc on allotment matters.

4. Allotment procedures for Site Secretaries

- 4.1** Iain said that the draft guidance for Site Secretaries was based on the Haringey Allotments Tenancy Management Procedures drawn up and agreed in 2009. Donna had checked the draft for procedural correctness.
- 4.2** Lindy said that the new procedures instigated by Donna had not been agreed by the Forum or Site Secretaries, for example the timing of when proof of address or proof of concession should be obtained. Lindy also said that the draft should make it plain that the listed duties could be carried out by someone other than the Site Secretary. It was suggested that the draft be re-titled 'The duties and responsibilities of site associations in managing allotments'.
- 4.3** Data Protection issues were also raised in respect of keeping personal details on waiting lists and site registers. Alex said that Site Secretaries would only have access to their specific site data held on Colony but agreed that Data Protection awareness should be a part of the Colony training for Site Secretaries. Alex said that he would consider the draft guidance in consultation with Donna and report back to the Steering Group.
- 4.4** Joint tenancies - Alex agreed to modify the tenancy application form to collect **formal joint tenant information** with a check box for 'primary contact'.

5. Election of Forum Steering Group

- 5.1** The following were nominated and elected to the Steering Group:

Alison Liney (Alexandra Park)
Lindy Berkman (Creighton Avenue)
Olufemi Lodge (Courtman Road)
Geoff Kembball-Cook (Highgate)
Demos Constantinou (Rectory farm)
Rachel Allison (Shepherds Hill)
Bob McGill-Watson (White Hart Lane)
Iain Drury (Wolves Lane)

It is expected that Steering Group members should attend most meetings and acknowledge group emails.

6. AOB

- 6.1** It was reported that the last inspection at Quernmore Road had taken place without telling the Site Secretary. Alex said that the Allotment Officer had simply posted a reminder about plot numbers before the April inspection was to be undertaken with the Site Secretary.

Next meetings: 9 July 2016, 8 October 2016