

HAA COMMITTEE REPORTS FOR AGM 10 OCTOBER 2019

All reports can be downloaded from the HAA website at <https://www.highgate-allotments.org/documents>

Financial Reports

Graham Laurie

See separate papers on HAA website for formal calendar year 2018 Accounts, plus a summary of income and expenditure for the first half of 2019.

HAA Plot Lettings Report

Maggy Meade-King

18 plots have been let since the last AGM. Two of these were re-lets as two probationers decided they didn't have the time to maintain an allotment. Everyone else was recommended for a full tenancy to Haringey, except for five sets of people still carrying out their probationary period. It has been great to see so many keen new gardeners getting stuck in. Despite our long waiting list, people are only waiting just over two years for a plot on average.

Shed Shop Volunteers

Sara Jolly

One or two volunteers have been assisting Jim in the Shop on Saturdays. We could do with more so that it is not too much of a commitment for anyone. Please talk to Sara Jolly, or one of the other committee members at the end of tonight's meeting if you want to know more about volunteering.

HAA Site Secretary Report

Geoff Kembell-Cook

It's been a relatively quiet year, yet notable for many quiet acts of generosity and kindness from one tenant to another, which is as we would hope.

Reorganisation of Haringey Allotment Administration and Tenancy Rent Rises

Following reorganisation of the Haringey Council Allotment service, we are now served by a full-time Allotment Coordinator who started last November: this post has been created with sole responsibility for administration and inspections of all Haringey allotment sites, and has been fully funded thanks to our 75% rental increases. As part of the package, Site Associations received a significant uplift of up to 100% to their annual Repairs and Maintenance allocation from Haringey, so returning some of the monies raised to tenants' own sites. For Highgate this meant an uplift from £966pa in 2017 to £2006pa in 2018 and 2019 which enables us to continue with site improvements.

Plot Inspection June 2019

After a gap of over 18 months we had our first formal inspection with the new Allotment Coordinator in June 2019. Four Non-Cultivation Notices were agreed on grounds of weed growth/non cultivation: two tenants subsequently gave up their plots voluntarily and the other two were successfully re-inspected a month later. Five additional plots were remarked on by the Allotment Coordinator and we agreed that HAA contact the tenants giving a n informal warning – all tenants responded positively.

Highgate Allotments Waiting List

During the 12 months since the last AGM, 55 entries (ten more than last year) have been added to our waiting list, which now stands at around 145 entries. Currently the waiting time for those at the top is still less than two year and a half years, but this is likely to rise in coming years. This short waiting time is a testament to Maggy's efficiency in running the lettings process.

Equipment Hire

HAA own the following petrol-powered equipment, which are all available for hire by arrangement: a Stihl strimmer, two Mountfield mowers and a domestic shredder (suitable for smaller tree prunings).

Equipment Shed

After lengthy deliberation we decided against buying a secondhand shipping container in favour of purchasing an upmarket steel self-assembly container to house our equipment and tools. Thanks to Corporation of London Conservation Dept we have had the area to the left of the Shed Shop levelled, and concrete slabs for the base provided, all at no cost to HAA.

Communications with HAA Membership

Hilary Laurie

There are about 160 subscribers on the HAA Mailchimp email list: newsletters and other shorter news items have been sent out during the year. Members have supported fellow tenants in a number of ways and helped out in the Shed Shop, as well as enjoying our annual barbecue and plant swap. We continue to be a friendly and welcoming gardening community!

HAA's website at <https://www.highgate-allotments.org/> is accessible to all tenants and gives a variety of useful information, particularly on the Documents page, including information sheets, forms and Committee Minutes.

HAA also runs its own closed Facebook group. You can find us here: <https://goo.gl/fCw7Dy>

HAA Probationer Support Report

Dan Hackett

Each vacant plot as it comes up has a different profile. I make contact first by email and view the plots with Maggy or the prospective tenants and hand out advice according to the circumstances. In total 16 probationers have been approved for tenancy since the last AGM, with just two probationers who did not take up the challenge.

Environment Report

Dan Hackett

In the Newsletters I have advised on use of fertilisers, manures and composts, when and how to prune fruit trees and related issues. Newsletters are available to download on our website's Documents page here: <https://www.highgate-allotments.org/documents/>

HAA Compost and Chippings Report

Geoff Kembell-Cook

Compost Deliveries

Unfortunately LondonEnergy have redeveloped the Edmonton Waste Depot and the large aerobic digester which generated hundreds of tons of free Eco-Compost was put out of commission, ending our deliveries. However we continue to provide large quantities of Thompson's rotted horse manure throughout the year.

Chippings

These continue to be supplied without notice and free of charge by local tree surgeons, as and when they are working in our immediate area.

HAA Site Security and Maintenance Report

Don Adams and Daniel Hackett

Security

Happily we have had no recurrence of last year's site break-in which resulted in loss of valuable tools across the site, but tenants are advised that it is impossible to make the site perfectly secure and it is unwise to leave valuable tools in sheds on site. Such tools are unlikely to be covered by your insurance policy away from your own residential property and Haringey Council's insurance does not cover them either. Regrettably battery-operated power tools and petrol-powered mowers/trimmers are readily re-sellable and so are likely targets. Our best advice is either to bring them in from home as required, or at least make sure they are well-concealed.

Mains Water Leak

A mains water leak directly opposite the Shed Shop was excavated and repaired by excellent contractors organised and paid for by Haringey Council. Haringey continue to have responsibility for any mains water issues below ground level, while HAA deal with issues above ground.

General Maintenance

A number of small improvements and purchases have been funded in order to benefit tenants. Details of these can be found in the 2018 Accounts under "Expenses" and ancillary documents covering the first half of 2019.

Haringey Allotment Forum Representatives Report

Dan Hackett and Geoff Kembell-Cook

Dan attends the quarterly public meetings of the Forum where information exchange and discussions take place with reps from across all the Haringey allotment sites. We are now also both members of the HAF Steering Group which helps to monitor problems and formulate policies on allotment management across the Borough, with direct access to Council managers.
