

HAA Committee Meeting, Sunday 5 December 2021: Agreed Minutes

Held at the HAA picnic area.

1. Welcome /Present/Apologies:

Apologies from Jim Greenhill. The Committee sends him all good wishes.

Maggy Meade-King (MMK) Chair

Don Adams (DA)

Dan Hackett (DH)

Hinchee Hung (HH)

Geoff Kemball-Cook (GKC)

Sara Jolly (SJ)

Graham Laurie (GL)

Hilary Laurie (HL) Note-Taker

2. Minutes of meeting of 19 January 2020: these were approved.

3. Committee Posts and Volunteers:

Hinchee Hung was co-opted to the Committee and will act as Treasurer, allowing Graham Laurie to retire. Graham was warmly thanked for his excellent work over several years. HH will issue the year-end timetable. GL reminded Committee that all 2021 sales and expenses must be banked in 2021 and the Shed Shop closed for the year-end stock take.

GKC is willing to continue as Site Secretary and MMK as Lettings Secretary. This will be revisited at the next AGM in spring 2022. How to encourage new committee members at the AGM was discussed: HH felt it important that there should be a clear indication of jobs to be done, roles to be filled.

4. Spring 2022 AGM:

Proposal to move AGM from autumn to spring has already been announced to tenants, and if necessary a Zoom meeting could be tried. GKC will contact Highgate Primary School to ask permission to use the school hall in mid-March 2022 (after clocks change) in case a physical meeting looks possible.

5. Accounts/Finances (GL):

(a) GL reported excellent sales during 2020 - £8800 as compared with £4600 the previous year. But margin was a little lower than the target of 15%, due to some goods having to be bought from the Sunshine Garden Centre and higher costs not passed on to tenants.

(b) Sales down a little for first half of 2021 (in comparison with 2020) but still above previous years: margin up at 14.7%. We currently have £23K in cash, £1300 in stock value.

(c) Notable expenditures during 2021 have been c. £2600 for the new steel equipment store and c. £2000 on new equipment (wood chippers and strimmer). This is offset by the £2K HAA receives annually from Haringey Council to help with such capital costs.

6. Shed Shop: GKC continues to take orders and payments and to deliver to individual plots. He is happy to continue doing this and was warmly thanked.

Now that the Shed Shop has been cleared of equipment, it is hoped to open it at weekends as a social space when safe to do so.

GL now to hand over his Shed Shop keys to HH.

SJ suggested planting on the side of the new metal equipment shed. MMK will convene a small group to decide on structure and plants. AGREED that this would be paid for out of HAA funds.

7. Site Secretary's report (GKC):

Vacancies and Waiting List: since last meeting in January 2020 we have had about 13 confirmed voluntary terminations, a very slow rate of giving up plots: in addition three tenants have moved plot. As of 1 Dec 2021, there are about 250 entries on the Waiting List. The list was closed to new applicants in May 2021, as we estimate those at the bottom of the list will have to wait perhaps ten years or longer to rise to the top.

Equipment Container Area: Following construction of paving slab supports by a working party, a steel flat pack container was ordered and finally delivered on 24 June 2021. After sealing the underside with bitumen, the container was assembled by eight volunteers on 26 June. The floor was painted twice with floor paint, then equipment and tools (including petrol stocks) were moved in from the Shed Shop during July.

HAA Equipment: During 2021 HAA purchased (new) a small Forest Master FM6DDES chipper (£560) which is used for fresh tree prunings; a Masport 6.5 shredder (£1000) which can process both fresh and old dried tree prunings; and a Stihl FS55R strimmer (£265), plus various parts and accessories. In addition, two used trimmers were brought back into operation, and three mowers serviced by Fixit 4U. Currently, therefore, we have two chippers/shredders, three trimmers and three mowers, all available for hire. We also have various other items such as long-handled loppers, a pruning saw, and a posthole auger and post driver available. We purchased three new blue wheelbarrows in 2021 and continue to repair our older stock.

Hire of HAA Equipment: Hire of the trimmers, mowers and chippers continues by arrangement. Chipping is the idea way to deal with annual fruit tree prunings and returns the carbon to the plot. Plottolders are always advised not to use bonfires if possible and the pro-environment message is getting through.

The Shed Shop: Following removal of all the equipment and tools from the Shed Shop, all remaining contents were pulled out and cleaned, and the sides and rear walls of the Shop largely repainted. Shop stocks have been moved to the rear of the Shed so that tables and chairs can be set out in the area near the door ready for increased use as a social hub when pandemic precautions permit.

Shop Sales: Since March 2020 almost all sales have been made via email ordering and hand delivery to plots. About 75% of payments have been made online, the rest in cash. Sales

appear to have benefited from these arrangements, with a modest profit being returned to HAA coffers.

HH queried how hire rates are set: GKC confirmed this was determined by the time taken. Aim is to cover petrol, consumables and servicing costs: Haringey Council give a grant for maintenance so we should not be expected to cover capital purchase costs. It was **Agreed** that a small sub-committee (GKC, HH & DH) will organise and supervise the hiring and use of HAA equipment by plot holders, and that HH should draw up a list proposing rates.

ACTION: GKC to schedule a meeting with HH and DH to discuss hiring arrangements.

HH suggested regular times for equipment use – both at weekends and on a weekday plus ad hoc appointments): perhaps also at the same times tenants might be able to bring and maintain tools.

8. Lettings report (MMK): There have been eight new lettings this year of which one has been deferred for two years.

9. Probationers (DH, MMK): nothing to report

10. Tenants' Newsletter: Need for a "Mailchimp" type newsletter queried, and **Agreed** to drop this format for now as GKC's frequent, very informative emails keep tenants well informed.

Anyone wishing to write an item for inclusion in a pre-Xmas issue should contact GKC. DH offered to write an article on wood management, biochar and carbon sequestration. Other items suggested (1) include a reminder to tenants that if outside suppliers are delivering to plots, suppliers must be made aware by tenants of regulations governing opening/closing hours of streets around the school. (2) Reminder to tenants that common paths need to be maintained, particularly in the colder months: there are often free wood chippings available for this, and MMK agreed to contact several tree surgeons for more supplies.

11. Website (GKC) & Facebook (IS): GKC continues to update the website. MMK to check with IS if he is willing to continue operating our Facebook account, although no longer on the HAA Committee.

12. Environmental management and Maintenance (DH): DH will work on checking taps and posts, and carrying out repairs if necessary. GKC to send DH a plan of tap locations on site. If help needed, a small working party will be set up.

13. Rubbish Removal (DA): nothing to report

14. AOB: none

15. Next Committee meeting: possible dates to be circulated.

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