

Agreed**Minutes of Highgate Allotments Committee meeting
Saturday 8 July 2017, Highgate Primary School****1. Present:**

Jim Greenhill JG (Chair), Marc Haynes MH, Angelo Guarino AG, Geoffrey Kemball-Cook GKC, Graham Laurie GL, Hilary Laurie HL, Maggy Meade-King MMK, Rob Wilson RB

Apologies for absence:

David Gittings DG, Dan Hackett DH

2. Minutes of the meeting of 7 May 2017 approved.**3. Accounts and Finances GL**

3.1 GL issued half-year accounts which show a small profit on trading of £135.42 and indicate that the accounting is satisfactory. He drew attention to an adjustment of £150 between 2016 and 2017 for a supplier invoice error.

3.2 Banking arrangements and electronic payments are working well.

3.3 GL proposed that tenants should be asked for a voluntary contribution to HAA funds of £10 pa. Currently we receive a maintenance grant of £966 from Haringey Council but need c £2000 to meet our running costs. The 75% rent increase which Haringey Council will introduce in January 2018 will result in a 100% increase in our maintenance grant.

ACTION GL to propose a voluntary annual contribution by tenants at the AGM on 12 October 2017.

4. Shed shop JG

4.1 JG and GL did a stock count on 1 July 2017. We are now stocking mostly fast-moving items giving margins of 15-20%. The 25kg bags of fertiliser (sold by the kg) are not easily accessible or well displayed. GL was asked to make improvements.

ACTION GL will research buying storage bins or boxes.

4.2 JG expressed his appreciation of the help he is given on Saturdays and (by AG) on Sundays. MMK thanked for organising the rota of helpers.

4.3 GL drew attention to the need to refurbish the shed interior and remarked on the increasing number of machines stored there. It was acknowledged that there is a conflict between the shed as shop and as secure storage space. JG expressed concern over risk to HAA of injury to anyone using HAA machinery. GKC pointed out that tenants are advised in their tenancy agreement with Haringey Council that they are responsible for their health and safety, for those with whom they come into contact on the site and for their guests (see Allotment Tenants Responsibilities 1.1, April 2010). GKC and DG (joint Site Secretaries) have insurance cover for working parties they organise on site. **AGREED** that it is very important to ensure that anyone using HAA machinery knows how to use it.

ACTION GKC will post notice in the shed to the effect that anyone using machinery on site does so at his/her own risk.

5. Site Secretaries' reports GKC & DG**GKC**

5.1 Spring Plot Inspection: GKC reported that the April inspection by the Haringey Allotment Officer went well. Good weather in early spring seemed to have encouraged activity and the site was looking good. Only 14 plots identified as sub-

standard. Eleven NCNs were issued by Haringey Council; these were followed up with the result that 8 tenants got to work and avoided a termination. There were 4 tenancy terminations only issued by Haringey Council.

4.2 Lettings, Tenancies and Waiting list: There is at present a noticeably smaller turnover of plots and tenancies than in the recent past. There are currently no vacant plots and we have a waiting list of 80, with an anticipated waiting time of 3 years.

4.3 Main gates and fencing replacement: carried out in w/b 8 May 2017. AG was invited to cut the ribbon at the ceremonial opening held on Sunday 21 May.

4.4 School EcoHut: completion celebrated with a very good party on Sunday 25 June.

4.5 Top lane clearance: the lane has been cleared of ivy, brambles and tree branches and the waste removed from the site. Thanks to John, Leon, Mark and DG.

4.6 Main gate flowerbeds: Sue has planted perennial flowerbeds to left and right of the main gates, with help from John, Leon and Simon. These were much admired and thanks expressed to all involved.

DG

4.7 Plane tree at main gates: The trimming of the ivy on this tree has caused considerable upset, some tenants feeling it has destroyed an important natural habitat. However, there was a concern that the tree was not healthy and might prove to be dangerous. Following advice from the Haringey Tree Officer and an independent tree surgeon, the ivy stems were severed. The roots were not damaged. AGREED The committee approved DG's action.

4.8 Tree pruning in the south-west corner: this has been very successful, with the total cost to HAA no more than £175.

4.9 DG proposed a series of exhibitions (to be held in the shed) of art, photography, design and crafts. The inaugural show will take place in October 2017 and will be curated by DG, Marie Sabatier Khan and Olivia Silver. DG has discovered 'a wealth of talent' among the HAA membership and anticipates great interest. He suggests a maximum sale price of £150 with at least 50% shared between HAA and an appointed charity. AGREED The committee greatly liked his proposal. MMK offered to work with DG on the exhibition opening.

6 Probationers DH

Two new probationers have been placed on empty plots J4B and V2A and 2 successful probationers have been granted tenancies on plots K3A and R6A.

7. Newsletter MH & MMK

Newsletter safely delivered to 154 recipients. Opened by 68% of recipients, some opening it many times and from as far afield as the USA, Lithuania and Sweden.

8. Website JH

JH reported a standard amount of traffic with several hundreds of views per month, some coming from users of the Haringey website. He has simplified the link from the home page to the application form. He suggested the addition of the shed stock list and note of opening hours.

ACTION GKC will supply these.

GL suggested including a note on current expenditure, to inform tenants of costs of recent and current activity.

ACTION GL to supply this.

9. Environmental management DH

Nothing to add.

10. Site security and maintenance AG

AG feels the notices restricting car parking to blue badge holders are having the desired effect. However, access around the site is still a concern, with emergency vehicles likely to have difficulty accessing certain plots. AGREED to include a request in the next Newsletter that Disabled Blue Badge holders, before leaving their cars, prominently display their contact details, and that, if possible, they limit parking to three hours.

ACTION MH

11. Compost & chippings deliveries DG

Next delivery of Eco-compost will take place on Thursday 20 July.

12. Shed maintenance & rubbish removal

10 cubic yards of green waste from clearing the lane were collected and disposed of by commercial company Pro Junk at a total cost of £190.

The committee thanked GKC for his frequent collections and careful disposal/recycling of other smaller items of rubbish.

ACTION MH will continue to investigate hiring a “One-Day-Only” skip for the collection of non-recyclable rubbish. This would be ‘policed’ and would take place on a Saturday or Sunday, date to be agreed.

13. Allotment Forum MH

Allotment Forum meeting today; minutes awaited.

On 4 July Haringey wrote to all tenants advising them of 75% increase in rents from 1 January 2018, to go hand-in-hand with an improved service for allotment tenants.

14. AOB

- a. BBQ Sunday, 9 July
Preparations are in hand. MH has bought a second BBQ (for vegetarian food only). His mother has again kindly agreed to provide plants for the plant sale (proceeds to be split equally between HAA and the Harington Scheme). Everyone was encouraged to provide plants and produce for the sale and to bring food to share.
- b. **ACTION** RW to propose in the next Newsletter that tenants might like to donate excess produce for sale (at Alexandra Palace market) in aid of the Harington Scheme.
- c. **ACTION** MMK will ask Highgate Primary if they will want produce in the autumn term for their plant stall.
- d. JG asked for AGM planning to be placed on the Agenda for the next meeting on 10 September. **ACTION** HL to place on Agenda.

15. Next committee meeting 10 September 2017: JH will chair

16. Dates of future 2107 meetings:

Committee meeting: 12 November

AGM: Thursday 12 October

HL 10.09.17