

Minutes of the Haringey Allotment Forum – 13 January 2018

Forum website: www.haringeyallotmentforum.org.uk

Present: Alexandra Palace (Alison Liney – **Chair**); Creighton Avenue (Lindy Berkman); De Quincey Road (John Porter-Weiss, Murielle Porter-Weiss); Golf Course (Simon Padfield); Quernmore Road (Richard Bornat); Shepherds Hill (Annie Griffiths); Shepherds Hill Railway (Helen Killick); White Hart Lane (Bob McGill-Watson); Wolves Lane (Iain Drury - **Notes**; Gina Webster); Alex Fraser (LB of Haringey)

Apologies: Sally Chubb (Alexandra Palace); Elmar Road Allotment Association; Clare Winstanley, George Dunnion, (Golf Course); Geoff Kembell-Cook & Marc Haynes (Highgate); Julia Parker (Ranelagh Road); Kathy Riddle (Shepherds Hill);

1. Minutes of the 7 October 2017 meeting

- 1.1 Accepted as correct
- 1.2 Non Payers – Debt Management will issue a 30 day reminder followed by a second reminder. Debt will then be passed to the Allotment Office to pursue. List of debtors will be given to Site Associations.
- 1.3 2017/18 Capital Bid – £65,000 spent in 2017. £72,000 committed to priority works plus 3 further jobs to, be inspected and costed. Alex to send the 2018 capital works list to the Steering Group.
- 1.4 First Aid Training – There are now 15 on the list. TCV have been asked to arrange the training in March or April.
- 1.4 Outstanding bagged rubbish collections – All outstanding rubbish collections have now been carried out.

2. Allotment Service

- 2.1 Concessionary rents – there were 432 tenants claiming the State Pension and Disability concession at 1 January 2017. 457 tenants are claiming the State Pension, Disability and DWP benefits concession as at 12 January 2018.
 - Individual cases of hardship outside the scope of the existing concessions will be dealt with on a case by case basis.
- 2.2 Site Association Repairs Grant – Concerns raised about how the repairs grant is apportioned between allotment sites. Smaller sites feel that the amount they receive is inadequate for their needs.
 - Steering Group to revisit the basis on which the site association repairs grant is apportioned between sites to ensure that it is both transparent and equitable.
- 2.2 Online copy of the Draft Tenancy Agreement and other documents – site association training and access to Colony delayed until after the Allotment Co-Ordinator has been appointed.
 - Copies of the revised Starter Pack (including Tenancy Agreement) and application form will be put on the Forum website.

3. Changing the Way Allotments are Managed

- 3.1 Appointment of dedicated allotment officer – not yet advertised. Going through due diligence process with HR, Finance and the Unions as this is a new post. Recruitment will be carried out by Hayes, an employment recruitment agency.

- 3.3 Service level agreement/Site Association devolved management responsibilities – the Forum noted that the successful implementation of the Allotment Co-Ordinator role was dependant on a defined partnership between the Co-ordinator and Site Associations/Site Secretaries (Service Level Agreement).
- Site Associations/Site Secretaries to be asked to map current devolved management capabilities.
 - Steering Group to consider the revised “Guidance note on the duties and responsibilities of site associations assisting in the devolved management of allotment sites”.
 - Service Level Agreement to be drafted based on the agreed split of devolved management responsibilities.

5. Any Other Business

- 5.1 Site Security – a number of reports made about organised break-ins and other security issues on allotment sites.
- Agreed that the Steering Group draw up a best practice guidance note on improving site security.
- 5.2 Direct Debits – Noted that low income tenants who do not qualify for the concessionary rate would benefit from a monthly direct debit facility as with the payment of council tax.
- Agreed that the direct debit facility should include a monthly direct debit facility.
- 5.3 Occupation of allotment plots – concerns raised about co-workers and casual helpers effectively taking over the plot in the absence of the registered tenant.
- The Allotment Service “Guidance note on Sole Tenants, Joint Tenants, Co-Workers and Casual Helpers” states that ‘occupation’ is dealt with by the termination of the tenancy without appeal and re-letting of the plot.
- 5.3.1 Eco Compost deliveries – a number of reports made about North London Waste refusing to deliver eco compost to certain sites following a loss of access due to the height of new gates and fences.
- Forum to consider making arrangements for eco compost giveaways to allotment tenants at say Alexandra Palace or other suitable sites across the borough.
- 5.5 Rough sleepers – a number of reports made of rough sleepers on allotment sites. London Street Rescue provides help for people sleeping rough in Haringey. They work with rough sleepers to help them access services and accommodation.
- To report a rough sleeper call StreetLink on 0300 500 0914, or complete the online referral form at www.streetlink.org.uk

Next Meetings: 7 April, 7 July, 6 October