

HASLINGFIELD ALLOTMENT GARDENS' ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held at 7.30 p.m. at The Little Rose, Haslingfield on Monday, 5th December 2016

Present: Dick Kingshott, S Stewart, Julie Seekings, Gary Salmons, Ron Van der Hoorn, Diane Heard, C Milner-Moore, Barbara Robinson, Fae Southwell, Bill Schwartz

Apologies: Jon Spain, Linda Brown

1. **Chair of Committee Welcome** Dick welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **Minutes of Previous Meeting** The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting were accepted unanimously.
3. **Chairman's Report** The Chairman's report was as follows:

'Welcome everyone to this auspicious occasion which I believe to be the 10th AGM of Haslingfield Allotment Gardeners' Association. A special welcome if you are a recent addition to the gardeners on the site. If this is your first AGM can I inform you, and remind others, that this evening the officers and committee members officially step down and all positions become vacant. Anyone interested in joining the committee, or willing to fill any of the offices of the Association, would be most welcome to put their names forward. The Committee meets four times during the year, usually here in The Rose, to carry out the business of the Association, and generally it is a quite sociable evening, so it is not an onerous task to be a Committee member!

It has been another interesting gardening year on the plots. Spring planting was delayed a bit by the more seasoned gardeners but things moved along quite quickly as the temperature crept up. Early germination of small seeds was poor but once things warmed up, crops were pretty good for most people. Asparagus was good. There were good harvests of soft fruits but, as it turned wet, blight again hit potatoes and tomatoes. The micro orchard fared well with a good crop of apples although the pears were somewhat disappointing.

We have lost a few gardeners at this years end and so have several vacant plots. If you know of anyone who may be interested in having a plot, or even half a plot, get them to contact the Membership Secretary.

Jon Spain has done fantastic job advertising and recruiting new tenants over the years but has decided to relinquish this post. He has been on the Committee since we first set up the Self Management Group and has held various offices over the ten years, despite the early teething problems we had in the set up! Jon also co-ordinates and encourages people to attend our working parties and will continue to do this. These enable us to keep the site in good order. Volunteers for these working parties have been variable with one or two being well attended and others consisting of just a couple or so people! I remind you that it is YOUR site, the Committee endeavours to administrate it on your behalf. We need everyone to 'pitch in' and help with site maintenance and send out a plea for you to offer your services for one or two of these working parties in the coming year. The odd communal bonfire in the winter months provide an excellent opportunity to chat and watch the world go by! May I take this opportunity to say 'thank you' to those of you who have attended a working party in the last year and to those of you who have helped with the mowing of the site.

The Parish Council kindly donated a mower to the Association, which many of you have used,

to both mow round your plots and to help maintain other grass areas on the site. Sadly this, along with some hand tools, has recently been stolen from the shed. If during the last couple of weeks you noticed anything suspicious, please let me know so that I can pass on any relevant information to the police although the chances of anything being recovered from the thieves is pretty remote!!

On the subject of sheds, you will no doubt be aware that the Parish Council has given permission for the erection of sheds by the plot holders. These must not exceed a 6 x 4 feet base and 6 feet in height. However, in light of the theft of the mower, I have to remind you that the security of these is your responsibility and anything left inside is 'at risk'. Our insurance does not cover contents of the sheds. Our site is somewhat remote and not overlooked by houses so dubious visitors are not spotted.

Just a reminder that, as part of your tenancy agreement, it is your responsibility to keep the grass paths around your plot mown and safe for others. Remember that the path should be approx. 1 m wide so that a wheelbarrow can be comfortably wheeled along it without shredding your hands on adjacent wire fences. If your plot has 'encroached' onto the path over the years, now is a good time to realign your boundary fences. The original boundary can easily be established by looking along the boundary fences of adjacent plots.

Our Treasurer, Ron, has again steered us financially through the year and he will present his report shortly. He has ensured that we continued to provide manure over the year at a very small charge, for everyone's use. He has kept us supplied with water, fuel for the mower and made sure that we remain solvent. My thanks to him for the work he has done this year and many before.

I must also thank Diane, our Secretary, who has done an excellent job of the meeting minutes and all the rest of the Committee for their support and enthusiasm over the year. These people make a huge contribution to keeping this show on the road for all you gardeners. Thanks to Bill for some serious remedial work on the notice board at the site. It is put to good use keeping gardeners informed of committee meetings, scheduled working parties, and summary of Risk Assessments. It also has useful emergency information which may be important for new plot holders not familiar with the locality. The letterbox is a useful way of contacting any of the Committee members and for dropping off payment for manure.

When it comes time to elect the new Committee for the coming year can I remind you that the Parish Council requires that it is composed of number of Haslingfield residents. So, if you live in the village please help us by putting your name forward. Wherever you live we welcome anyone who would like to join us.'

4. **Treasurer's Report** Ron presented the balance sheet for the period December 2015 to December 2016. He informed the meeting that the October bill of £13.62 for Water rates was an estimate and that the final figure was likely to be higher. Ron pointed out that due to the recent theft, a mower and wheelbarrow needed to be purchased. Several plots were now vacant causing a drop in income.
5. **Membership Secretary's Report** Jon was unable to attend the meeting but had submitted the following report which the Chairman relayed to the meeting.

'Apologies from Jon who is at the moment in France, so I will relay his information. I will also incorporate Agenda item 9.

As I said earlier we have 'lost' a few plot holders. We currently have 29 plot holders, but this

may drop to 28 which means that we have 7 full size plots vacant and 2 half plots. One of these half plots may become a future 'delivery point' for manure and wood chippings, as we are looking at a more convenient place for delivery. Half of one of the full plots, closest to Harston Road at the East corner of the green road, may also be incorporated into this 'Delivery Area' and the turning area expanded. So we probably have 5 full size plots and 2 half plots available.

It is envisaged that future working parties will concentrate on the West boundary area to possibly make plot 24 a full size plot and also bring plots 49 & 50 back into possible cultivation by removing the overgrowth of brambles' etc. If we were able to achieve this it would be possible to concentrate our efforts on plots, 42, 43, 45, 46, 47 & 48 with a view to making these available for cultivation. The 'Wilderness Area' plots 35, 36, 39, & 40 are a more challenging prospect!

Over the winter months it is hoped that the East Boundary green road will be improved by cutting back the bushes growing HAGA side of the fence, allowing better access for delivery of manure.

The Composting Areas will also need some attention by future working parties.'

6. Dick announced all offices vacant and handed the meeting over to the Ron to declare nominations for the office of Chair of the Committee and election of other committee members.

7. **Election of Committee**

Nominee	Post	Proposed by	Seconded by
Dick Kingshott	Chairman	Ron van der Hoorn	Barbara Robinson
Ron van der Hoorn	Treasurer	Dick Kingshott	Fae Southwell
Julie Seekings	Membership Secretary	Dick Kingshott	Ron van der Hoorn
Diane Heard	Minutes Secretary	The meeting agreed to these six candidates' appointment to the Committee.	
Barbara Robinson	Committee		
Fae Southwell	Committee		
Bill Schwartz	Committee		
Jon Spain	Committee		
Gary Salmons	Committee		

8. **Plot Rents for 2017 – 18** It was suggested that the required one year's notice be given to tenants informing them of a rent increase of around £3 p.a. - the figure to be decided by the new committee at their next meeting.
9. **Any Other Business** Fae raised concern regarding the number of mole hills on the site. Dick replied that this would be investigated at the next working party.
10. **Date of Next Meeting** The next committee meeting will be held at 7.30 p.m. on Monday, 16th January at The Little Rose, Haslingfield. Dates of future meetings would be decided at this time.