

ROYAL PADDOCKS ALLOTMENTS, HAMPTON WICK

Minutes of the annual meeting of the Management Committee, held on Thursday 30 November 2017 at 8pm at 82 Langham Road, Teddington TW11 9HJ

Present: Councillors Mark Boyle and Jerry Elloy.

Plot holder representatives: David Harnden (Plot holders' Committee chair), Carol Dukes (Plot holders' Committee treasurer), Dylan Baxendale, Susan Saunders, Janet Baylis (Management Committee secretary)

Apologies: Councillors Gareth Evans and Kate Howard

1. Election of officers: Chair: David Harnden proposed Jerry Elloy. Vice-chair: David Harnden proposed Dylan Baxendale. Janet Baylis agreed to continue in the role as Secretary. The meeting agreed unanimously to these appointments.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 21 November 2016: The minutes of that meeting were considered by those who had been present (Cllrs Elloy and Evans, David Harnden, Carol Dukes, Susan Saunders and Janet Baylis. They were agreed to be a true record (proposer Jerry Elloy, seconded by David Harnden).

3. Matters arising from the minutes: Susan Saunders asked if there had been any use of the £500 windfall payment reported on in the 2016 minutes. David confirmed that no expenditure had occurred.

4. Plot holders' Committee chairman's annual report: David Harnden, chair of the Plot holders' Committee, reported.

2016-17 has been a quiet year of steady progress, in the main business as usual.

David mentioned the work of allotment volunteers who generously give their time and make a contribution in so many ways: Plot holders' committee; Social committee who run the weekly cafe and social events during the year; the cafe and social events volunteers; the website contributors and the pumps, gates and hedge-laying teams.

He highlighted our social events including the second annual *Plot holders Question Time* in January. It was a great success with a packed-out Seed Store with a good number of new plot holders in attendance. PQT is now firmly established in our calendar of social events and the Autumn Social and Produce Show was widely regarded as one of the best ever. Cllr Jerry Elloy who attended commented that it was very impressive and enjoyable.

The current waiting list for a plot is <10 and the waiting time now only several months. The catchment area for new plot holders remains Hampton Wick and South Teddington though there is some interest from people living outside the boundaries.

Projects carried out during 2017 have included: work carried out on water pumps and pump spare parts bought; pruning of trees overhanging the boundary walls with Church Grove and Park Road, organised and paid for by the Royal Parks Tree Officer; audit to identify plot holders' not displaying a visible plot number which is a requirement of tenancy.

Projects carried over or identified for 2018 include: purchase and installation of a new incinerator; remedial work required to the inner metal entrance gates; repairs to the roads (led to discussion about cars on the allotments).

David flagged up the intention to charge £10 for a plot number (wooden stake with metal numbers) to plot holders who continue not to display a number. Motion was agreed at the AGM with implementation to take place after next plot inspections. David stated the rule relating to colour of sheds. They should be stained/painted brown or green. One blue shed had caused some controversy.

5. Plotolders' Committee treasurer's annual report: Carol Dukes, treasurer of the Plotolders' Committee reported.

Our income and reserves continue to be in healthy balance. Income for the year to September 2017 was £12500 from 3 main sources: rent and related income of £7500; Seed Store Café net income of £2,700; and from social events, £2250 (Includes income from Autumn Produce Show 2016 and 2017, there was only one year's proceeds in the previous year's account). Carol reminded us that social events are not primarily run as fund-raising activities. Nevertheless, they make a significant contribution to income each year.

Expenditure was considerably up- mainly due to a spend of £1800 on pump parts: £4,800 in 2016-17 compared with £2,500 in 2015-16. Our surplus for the year is £7700, bringing our bank reserves to a very healthy £30000. Our reserves have risen year on year during Carol's tenure as Treasurer, recovering well since the high expenditure years of 2012-13 and 2013-14 when we rebuilt the Seed Store.

Carol emphasised that we are in a good place financially to proceed with infrastructure projects as outlined in David's report above. Carol is stepping down as Treasurer of the Plotolders' Committee to be replaced by Dan Read after a handover period. She was given a vote of appreciation for her hard work and good stewardship over the last 6 years.

6. Royal Paddocks Allotment archive: Janet Baylis, reported on the archive project

Janet has completed the indexing and cataloguing project (>150 individual records) of the RPA documents dating from 1918. It is now available in Excel spreadsheet format. She believes that a digital conversion project of paper documents and the minute books is a possibility but it would be a major undertaking if to be done by plot holder volunteers and costly if we had it done professionally.

What is apparent from the documents is the struggle to acquire the land and set up the Royal Paddocks Allotments on the current site. There was opposition from local residents and disputes between the Urban Districts Councils of Hampton Wick and Teddington which caused delays for several years. It was only in September 1921 that the Royal Warrant was finally granted. Would suggest that during 2018 we start to plan for when and how we want to celebrate the centenary of the RPA.

7. Date of next annual meeting: The next annual meeting will be held at 8 pm on Thursday 22 November 2018, location to be decided nearer the time

8. Any other business: Cllr Mark Boyle asked about our contact with the Richmond Council allotments at the Hampton site. His particular concern related to the case of a disgruntled plot holder who had been evicted following their appeals process. He gave a heads-up to be in case this plot holder applies for a plot with the RPA.