

## **RGS Committee Meeting – Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2017 at 9am**

1. Carol Martinez (Deputy chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting. There were apologies for absence from Jackie Savage, Pat Dark and Brad Sanderson. [Post meeting we heard that Pat had a fall on the way to the meeting and spent the morning in Kingston A&E. She is now recovering but on crutches.](#)

Present were: -

Liz Chrominska	Mike Cooper	Helen Finch
Shirley Gillbe	Janis Humberstone	Ali Linton (minutes)
Georgina O'Reilly	Mariangela Renshaw	Gill Tamsett
Greg Willcox		

### **2. To note the agreed minutes of the meeting on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2017**

The minutes agreed ex-committee have been posted on the web site.

### **3. Matters arising**

i. Thefts There have been no further reports of thefts on site 3 and site 2 will be mentioned in GOR's report.

ii. Best plot competition EC reported that there had been 85 entries, 35 from RGS. Congratulations to the members who took 4<sup>th</sup> 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> places. There is a full account in the September Bulletin. Enable are very keen to have a less competitive "competition" and would prefer to encourage plot holders to improve their plots and suggestions on how a BPC might be run next year will be gratefully received!

### **4. Chair's report**

i. Lease / Charity update

CM reported on JS's behalf: -

On 21 August we heard from Peter Tiernan who told us that the internal officer meeting was convened on Friday 18th August. The meeting flagged up a number of issues which will need to be considered and settled before it would be possible to finalise the report to Senior Members. Peter T detailed these and I think they are just administrative. However I have only sent a "holding reply" as Anthony Fitzsimmons is away and we need him to look over them. When I get back we will reply to the council as soon as possible so things are delayed no longer!

ii RHS "projects"

The RHS has been working harder for its "affiliated societies" lately. We have been invited to the Hampton Court Show lunch (see report in Sept Bulletin) and to enter competitions and send in articles for their Grass Roots magazine. I have sent an article about the Bins on site 3. I will let you know if anyone wins anything or we get anything published!

### **5. The Show - Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> September**

CM reported that Charles Gillbe has agreed to judge the produce as George Scandrett is too unwell. Sheila Konig will judge the flowers and Helen Sabieri the cookery. Charles Held is **unable to help move the tables but we have the use of his van. There is a possibility that JS's son Patrick might be able to help and CM requested as many as possible to come to the Store at 5pm on Friday evening (8<sup>th</sup>).** CM has had no response to the email asking for help and suggested that JS sends another one at the beginning of the week. Penny Murphy has agreed to help with the Tombola and CM will supply herbal teas from the Store as they were requested at the last Show.

Action: JS CM and everyone

### **6. Water**

i. **Report from visit to Pitshanger allotments in Ealing**

JS, CM, EC, MR and David Renshaw visited on August 7<sup>th</sup> MR reported as follows: -

We were met by Roger Davies who was the leading member of the allotment society at the time when it was decided to investigate a borehole for their water supply. He was very informative and gave us a tour of the allotment site which is probably twice the size of our two sites together. Their borehole supplied 20 taps and tanks in a contained circuit.

The borehole had been sunk to 70 metres and it is clear that there is a continuous water supply at 30 metres as the pump, located in the borehole casing, is sited at that depth and can only operate if completely submerged in water. The pump appeared to be fairly maintenance-free as when we went to look at where it was sited we couldn't see it because it was covered in old wheelbarrows, water tanks etc ...

A licence for the borehole had been procured from the water authority (or was it the DOE?) as, although the permitted 20 cubic metres a day of water may not be consumed, by obtaining a licence for the borehole the allotments are protected from competitive boreholes located too close to the site.

Several of the taps were tried for water pressure and it was clear that the pressure is forceful as people were watering from connected sites close by and the flow of the water appeared to be very strong.

The borehole cost Pitshanger £25,000 to install at that time (approx.. 15 years ago?) and was funded by loans from the members which were repaid with the funds eventually accumulated from the savings made, and a small grant from the local council.

Roger made the point that most companies who install boreholes are equally competent so it is important to put the work to tender to achieve the best price.

Roger also said that the water from a borehole is much purer and free from chemicals compared to water supplied commercially.

We also visited the Store on the allotment site. This is run exclusively by two members and is not as developed as our own. However, it did contain one or two good ideas for storage of items and Jackie took some photographs.

ii. **Report from meeting with Thames Water – 23rd August**

Robert Linton met with Tony Smith from Thames Water and we now have a quote for connecting a new water supply to Site 3 and disconnection the existing supply (excluding the Loo). They discussed the following in no particular order.

1. It would be cheaper if the new supply comes from the Huntingfield Road (West) side as the main is on the far side of Dover House road and it would be expensive to dig across such a busy road.

2. The feed pipe can be 25mm, 32mm or 50mm. Obviously you get the best flow from the biggest pipe, but the standing charge for a 50mm pipe is about £200 p.a. whereas for a 32mm pipe it's about £45 p.a.

3. The cost of installing a 32mm pipe is the same as for a 25mm pipe.

4. He thought a 32mm pipe should be able to provide adequate flow for 10-15 hoses simultaneously.

5. We need to provide a pipe up to the boundary at the Huntingfield Road entrance for Thames Water to connect to. This needs to provide a stopcock and non-return valve, but as far as Thames Water is concerned it doesn't need to be connected to the rest of the circuit when they make their connection.

6. The pressure in the main supply is about 2-3 Bar (I was surprised it isn't higher).

7. He thought a hose should be able to provide 10-15 l/min.

8. He asked if we would be keeping some of the existing mains supply pipes. I said I didn't know.

9. Thames Water will provide the connection to the mains and we employ someone else to do the pipework, tanks etc around the allotments.
10. He recommended the single ring rather than a double one.
11. I mentioned that in years to come we might install a bore and asked if an electricity cable can be put in the same trench as the water pipes (presuming that solar power wouldn't be man enough for the task). Answer: the water pipes need to be 750mm below the surface (to avoid freezing); the electricity cable needs to be 450mm below the surface and both can go in the same trench as long as there is a separation of at least 270mm; therefore brief answer is 'Yes'!
12. I gave him the Site 3 map showing the tanks/taps etc.
13. I asked if he could recommend anyone to do the work within the allotments area. He said he isn't allowed to do that, but there is a list of Thames Water approved plumbers on their website. If one of them does the work you then don't need a water regulations inspection. See <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/help-and-advice/no-water-or-low-pressure/find-a-plumber>.

**iii. National Allotments Society**

Please see PD's email to the committee dated 11<sup>th</sup> July.

**iv. Site 3 water – proposals for future development**

MC presented a written report (attached) from his brother who is a geologist and the report suggests that it is unlikely that we would be successful in finding a significant supply of water to justify the expense. MC was asked to thank his brother on our behalf.

AL suggested the formation of a sub-committee consisting of JS, HF, AL and RL. They would obtain quotes for new pipe work and they would look at digging trenches or using a moleing technique which would be less invasive. They will report back at the October meeting. Funding wasn't discussed at length but it was agreed that this project is urgent and we could fund it in several ways.

- i. We become a Charity with a peppercorn rent and use funds normally given to WBC.
- ii. Enable are asked to fund the works as they are our landlord.
- iii. We fundraise and or obtain loans from RGS members.

**Action: AL**

**7. Treasurer's report**

JH reported that her computer had caught fire and is out of action. John Lewis will take 6 weeks to repair it. The information has been backed up. EC will deal with any online banking in the interim.

**8. Allotment Secretaries' reports**

**Site 2** GO'R reported: -

**Plot lettings**

One plot has been vacated and will be let soon.

**Thefts**

A plot holder has reported further theft of some beetroots dug from a row. Another plot holder reported thefts of gooseberries, though has since acknowledged this could be down to animal thieves.

A third plot holder reported thefts of courgettes.

**Insecure fences**

The fence to the rear of Plot 4 is very dilapidated and has become insecure since the removal of the holly tree to the rear of the plot. A letter has been written to Geraldine to ascertain if this is a Council property and, if so, requesting she contact the appropriate department at Enable.

There has been no reply so far.

The fence on the rear of Plot 43A is falling inwards. The letting agent has been contacted and is waiting for a quote from her property maintenance people.

### **Dogs on leads**

Following complaints from 2 plot holders about different incidents where plot holders' dogs were seen on site roaming freely - on one occasion causing damage to a structure - an email and notices were circulated to remind plot holders of the terms in the letting agreement with regard to dogs.

### **The Shredder**

After an inconclusive discussion it was agreed to take this out of action. HF suggested that it could be "hired" to plot holders (in the same way as the strimmer) thus limiting its use to a small group of people who know how to use it for an annual fee.

### **Site 3** HF reported:

**Lettings:** Plot 71A (3.5rods) has been re-let

**Water points:** The leak at water point at plot 67 has been fixed by Alan Tribe; many thanks to him. The standpipe at plot 52B was flooding so the water has been turned off which also affects the tap at plot 67. Alan is not able to do this plumbing job but Ian Finch has kindly offered to do it. However the underlying problem is that the standpipe has no support. This needs to be fixed first so I am intending to ask various people if they can help.

**Toilet:** The flush buttons on the toilet have had various problems for about a year. Finally the remaining flush button was lost. Fortunately the information about the cistern had been left in the toilet hut so Ian Finch was able to contact the suppliers, obtain the necessary parts and fit them. It now is as good as new. The information sheet is now in the locked cupboard in the toilet hut.

**Thefts:** It has been reported that about 12 bunches of grapes were stolen from plot 116A.

**Bindweed:** There have been 2 complaints from plot holders saying that bindweed is invading their plots from a neighbour. Since I had noticed that there is a lot of bindweed on site 3 a general email was sent out with a link to an RHS website which gives advice about getting rid of bindweed.

**July plot inspection.** 13 plot holders were contacted as there were problems with standards of cultivation.

## **9. Trading Secretary's report**

GT reported: -

The Store has been fairly quiet over the Summer months but no less quiet than last year.

Activity should now pick up now that we have onions and soon garlic on offer.

We looked into changing our relationship with Dobies as there was confusion when our members phoned them. This is because Dobies have another discount scheme which operates by a membership number which they ask for when our members telephone to place an order. We looked into changing to this scheme but we could not guarantee that we would keep enjoying the current level of discount, which is 50% on seeds and 15% on other items. I have written an instruction sheet to stress that members should use the form available in the Store rather than order by telephone and if they do telephone they must state that they are members of the Allotments and Gardens Council Scheme (the AGC) and thus do not have a membership number. The new brochures are due this month.

The Spring bulbs have arrived and a few of us are bagging these up tomorrow to sell at the Show and then in the Store.

## **10. Bulletin Editor's Report**

Please can PD have all copy for the October Bulletin (which will mainly cover the Show) by 12<sup>th</sup> September.

**11. Site Manager's report.**

SG reported that the 2 problem plots on Site 2 are on going.

**12. Diary Dates for 2016**

Wisley - this had been a successful trip.

**13. AOB -**

GT had been approached by a parent asking if we had activities for children to introduce them to horticulture. In the past GO'R has accompanied schools visits (it was agreed that it is only worthwhile for a significant number) and CM thought that when we become a Charity it could be part of our outreach to the community.

The next meeting will be held on **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> October at 9am** in the store.