

## RGS Committee Meeting – Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 8.45am

1. Jackie Savage (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming 15 minutes earlier than our usual start time of 9am. There were apologies for absence from Pat Dark and Liz Chrominska.

Present were: -

Elaine Barnwell	Mike Cooper	Patrick Crawford
Vivien Fowler	Helen Finch	Shirley Gillbe
Janis Humberstone	Ali Linton (minutes)	Carol Martinez.
Georgina O'Reilly	Mariangela Renshaw	Gill Tamsett
Greg Willcox		

JS thanked the committee for all the extra work that has been going on behind the scenes for the last couple of months. In addition to normal activities: rent collection, plot inspections on both sites, additional store openings, on the website (thanks also to Jean Crawford who is not a committee member), the new email as well preparation for the June show.

### **2. To note the agreed minutes of the meeting on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2018**

These minutes, agreed ex committee, were signed as a true record.

### **3. Matters arising**

#### **i. Water – interim measures on site 3**

It is very unlikely that we will get a new system in the next 12 months. JS asked 3 site holders to quote for installing supports for the standpipes. GW was the only one who expressed an interest in the work. JS and GW are going to see what is required.

**Action: JS GW**

#### **ii. New letting agreement update (& Data Protection issues)**

JS sent out the papers last week and asked for notes and suggestions to be sent to her by Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May. Ideally it will be agreed by the committee at the next meeting and then used in draft form before being ratified at next AGM. It was noted that WBC are responsible for any issues to do with the land and Enabledeal with the administration of that land.

**Action: Everyone**

#### **iii. AGM venue 2018**

JS, EB, VF, AL CM and GT visited the Roehampton Cricket Club pavilion Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> April. It was agreed that its excellent facilities should be used for the RHS Q&A evening on Friday June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The charge will be £50. JS suggested using it for the AGM. This was discussed and agreed by a majority vote. It is easier to access on light evenings so the committee agreed to bring AGM forward to Thursday October 18<sup>th</sup> (before clocks go back). JH said she would have time to prepare the accounts following the end of our financial year on 30<sup>th</sup> September. JS will cancel our booking at the church for 14<sup>th</sup> November.

**Action: JS**

#### **iv. Store Structure**

PC reported:

He had done a very temporary mend with tapes following recent heavy rains. It was agreed that a leaking asbestos roof might contravene WBC's Health and Safety regulations, and "patching it is inadequate. He said that replacing the roof would cost about £10,000, this would include having the asbestos removed by a specialist firm, roofing sections incorporating insulation, 3 velux windows and guttering. JS will negotiate with WBC for the cost of refurbishing the whole store (£42,000 Inc. vat) and highlight the necessity of replacing the roof as a matter of urgency.

**Action: JS**

#### **v. "Better plot Competition"**

EC has said that her preferred date is July 16<sup>th</sup>. JS will contact Enable to see if this is possible. The closing date for nominations is 30<sup>th</sup> June.

**Action: EC**

#### **vi. Hedgehog talk 22<sup>nd</sup> April**

This had been well attended, the committee thanked Brenna Latimore for organizing it and accepted his

offer of organizing more wildlife events. A full account is available in the May Bulletin.

**vii. RHS visit Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 7.30 – 9.30**

EB reported that she has liaised with the RHS and prepared posters. She will send emails to “save the date” asking for RSVP’s as we need 40+ for the event to go ahead. Initially it will be RGS members (plus family and friends) then she will open it up to other allotments in Wandsworth and the Putney Society. It was agreed that there will be no charge but a donations box at the door. The cash bar will be open and those profits will go to the cricket club. **Action: EB**

**4. Chair’s report**

**i. Lease / Charity update**

JS reported: We are waiting for an answer to the Freedom of Information request sent to council on 29<sup>th</sup> March and chased on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2018 – still no reply regarding the valuation of the land. At the last meeting with the council Justine Greening MP was shocked that we have still not received this information. Councillor Ian Lewer who held his seat in the local elections and continues to support our efforts.

**ii. New email address [rgs.sw15@gmail.com](mailto:rgs.sw15@gmail.com)**

JS thanked EB (and Jean Crawford) who have set up a new email address, gmail allow group emails of up to 500. EB reported that there have been “teething” problems, and if these don’t resolve mailchimp is free and will send group emails. Root will continue to work and forward emails to gmail. Sales details (sheds etc.) should be done via the Bulletin to ensure that RGS members do not get bombarded with minor issues. The Bulletin will now be sent as a link to the website and not an attachment. **Action: JS EB**

**5. Treasurer’s report**

**i. Rent collection** Please find attached the statistics for rent collection. 3 invoices are still outstanding and must be paid by 10<sup>th</sup> May, 2 of whom will face eviction. It was agreed that next year all invoices must be paid by bank transfer or cheques sent directly to JH. Rents will not be collected in the Store and cash will not to be accepted.

**ii. Credit card facility**

This is not a viable option as card machines must be linked to a Smart device (phone or iPad) and every volunteer at the store would have to learn how to use it. It was agreed that payments in the store should only be by cash or cheque and IOU’s must be discouraged. There is an ATM at the shops nearby. JS will make a sign for store. **Action: JS**

**6. Allotment Secretaries’ reports**

JS stated that plots are measured when they are re-let and haven’t been measured for several years or are being divided. They are measured to include half the surrounding common pathways and up to the fence line (if applicable)

**Site 2:**

**Plot Lettings/changes:**

**14C:** Plot was relinquished by previous tenant and has been relet.

**17:** The tenant of plot 17 expressed the wish to downsize. The plot was divided into two separate halves, the remaining half has been let to the next tenant on the waiting list requesting more land. This enabled two plots (15 & 17B) to be combined to form one plot of 4.5 rods. This also conforms to the policy of respecting the integrity of the site.

**21:** The tenant of this plot expressed the desire to downsize. The plot has been divided into a 3 rod plot - 21A : nearer the fence, and a 1.89 rod plot 21B). 21B was offered to the next person on the waiting list for more land who will relinquish plot 33B.

**33B:** This vacated plot has been offered to the next person on the Primary Waiting List who is viewing the plot on Monday,

**40D:** The tenant of this plot gave notice to quit at the end of March. This plot is now vacant.

**41:** The tenants of this plot expressed the wish to downsize. This plot is still vacant and attempts to offer it to plot holders who have requested more land have so far failed. It may be necessary to divide the plot into two, 2-rod plots and offer these to the next people on the primary waiting list. This is not the ideal solution as we prefer to retain these larger plots intact, but it may ultimately be the only solution.

**41C:** The tenant of this plot has moved out of the Borough and so this plot (3.5 rods) was offered to the next person on the Primary Waiting list .

**44A:** This plot has now been vacated and it has now been let to new tenants.

#### **Plot Inspection: 27 April 2018**

Two plots were identified as being neglected. Letters were sent to the tenants of both plots.

**Paths between plots:** I would like to suggest that an email is sent out reminding plot holders that the paths between plots should be well maintained (a joint responsibility between plot holders on each side). Any structure should be at least 12" from the edge of the path and that the path itself should be approximately 18" wide.

#### **Plot numbering:**

I noted during the plot inspection that several plots were not numbered. I would suggest that we remind plot holders about the importance of their plots being numbered.

#### **Site 3:**

##### **Lettings:**

**Plot 95A** (2.5 rods) This newly created plot has been let.

**Plot 84B** (2.5 rods) has been let.

**Plot inspection:** Took place on 4<sup>th</sup> May. 10 plot holders needed to be contacted.

The plan is to send out a general email about the paths, many of which were poorly groomed. Likewise for the proliferation of dandelions on site. Also a number of plots have box hedging/plants which are infested with box caterpillar so plot holders in a general email will be encouraged to remove them.

**Thefts:** Yet again particular plot holders have had produce stolen. This is on top of various thefts over the last 2 years. He says 'For the past 2 years every worthwhile crop has been stolen, we had 25 freshly planted strawberry plants taken, most of our apricot as well as blackberries and loganberries, and strawberries, a pair of stepladders and a wheelbarrow' have been stolen.

##### **Toilet shed repairs:**

The lower damaged timbers have been painted over with wood preserving paint to hold any further deterioration. The brambles have been cleared from behind the toilet shed.

#### **7. Show Secretary's report**

Please find attached CM's Action Plan.

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

GT reported:

The trial of opening the Store on Saturdays had mixed success. There was a slow start in March with business picking up in April. This may have been due to the cold weather in March. Some members came in at around 11 am thinking that the opening hours were the same as Sunday openings. Takings were lower in the main compared to Sunday takings.

There was a problem with the delivery of an order to the Store in March when the delivery driver failed to contact GWT half an hour in advance in accordance with the delivery instructions. As a consequence, he had turned right into The Pleasance and realised too late that the road did not accommodate large lorries. The driver then got stuck on the grass when he tried to turn round. GWT instructed our suppliers not to use this delivery company in future and there were no problems with the next delivery in April.

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

JS reported on PD's behalf. Pat will be away from 24 May to 5 June so **deadline for bulletin and show papers is 21 May**. June bulletin will be delivered to JS who will distribute to both sites. Comments on the

new format were requested, but most committee view the Bulletin online! Those who read a hard copy like it very much.

**10. Site Manager's report.**

SG reported that she has met the new co-ordinator for Enable, Val Selby, who is very committed and has a young team. She has a training day in June and will then construct her policies.

With regard to Data Protection all new members must agree or forfeit their right to a plot if they do not agree for us to keep their contact details.

**11. Diary Dates for 2018**

**12. AOB**

**i. Data Protection Policy**

JS, EB and HF are working on this and JS agreed to circulate details to all the committee. JS will ask Enable to approve it or offer advice. **Action: JS**

**ii. Use of plastics on the allotment sites**

This will be an agenda item at the next meeting GO'R agreed to lead in this. **Action: GO'R**

**iii. Granard Primary School**

JS will send an email as the school needs volunteers to listen to reading, 2 hours per day of your choice!

**iv. Richard Sudell**

A post graduate research student has visited JS to look at the old RGS Minutes books that we store. He was thrilled to find primary evidence of R Sudell's work and vision in setting up the RGS on 26<sup>th</sup> January 1922. If anyone would like to see these beautifully handwritten books please contact Jackie. Also we will be kept informed of the results of the research being carried out on our illustrious founder!

The next meeting will be held on **Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> June at 9am** in the store.