

MINUTES OF RGS Committee Meeting 9 am Sunday 14 July 2019 (postponed from 7 July and held at Carmalt Gdns as store roof not completed)

Present: Helen Finch (Chair), Gill Tamsett, Mariangela Renshaw, Ali Linton, Catherine Maunsell-Bower, Patrick Crawford, Brenna Lattimore, Elizabeth Smart, Janis Humberstone and Jackie Savage (Minutes)
Apologies: Mike Cooper, Shirley Gillbe, Carol Martinez, Vivien Fowler, Elaine Barnwell and Greg Willcox.

1 Minutes of meeting held on Sunday 2 June, agreed ex committee, signed.

2 Matters arising (not agenda items)

i Renewal of Lease (PC)

HF, Alan Strowger and PC had helpful meeting with local councillor Steffi Sutters (SS) on 12 June to update her on negotiations with Peter Tiernan of WBC. SS asked that she be given time to progress the lease further before RGS met with Peter T again. She wants it to be "done deal" at the next meeting and all the capital works (namely store roof and water on site 3) at least agreed if not completed.

PC has chased up on this as he hasn't heard from SS yet.

JH spoke about the progress of the situation regarding the Roehampton Playing Fields which is back in consultation. Similarities were discussed but PC felt that the cases were not particularly analogous, especially as we are already a set up and long running body whereas the Playing Fields Group are not.

ii Site 2 Store Roof Replacement Project (PC)

The roof has been replaced and we are waiting for the roof Velux windows to be fitted. PC was in a long meeting with the contractor about this recently and work is due to start on this tomorrow (15 July) and be finished by the end of the week. Difficulty for us is that we are not the client, WBC is.

PC was thanked for all his work and time spent on this much need project.

PC agreed to keep GT informed of progress so she can schedule the store clean up to ready it for re-opening, which hopefully will be Sunday 21st July.

iii Water on Site 3. (PC)

PC had a very positive meeting with the council official involved. The Schedule of Works (and maps) that PC put together with Robert Linton has been passed to the contractors. Next step is for them to carry out a survey and trace all the places where the water comes into site 3.

iv Rules and their enforcement

It has been suggested by Valerie Selby (Enable) that we might consider at next rent time asking members to read the Rules/ Policies and sign up that they have read them. The committee decided this was not something they would want to do.

iv. Gardeners' World contact re allotments (JS)

JS has gathered a few interesting Site 3 plot holders but has yet to contact them to see if they would be interested in taking part in the programme. **Action JS**

v. DVD of BBC programme about allotment sites.

HF's husband will edit this and it will be shown at the AGM.

3 Chair's report.

i) Website posts: Jean Crawford is working on a feature for the website that members actively sign up to that draws their attention to all the new items on the website over the previous month. These alerts/ postings are automatically generated and are not a substitute for RGS emails or the Bulletin. The intention is just to draw attention to the website and what's new. JS and HF have signed up as initial pilot volunteers. The committee members were asked if they would like to join HF and JS in the pilot and all present said they would. HF will ask JC to send those present the sign-up email. **Action HF**

ii) Plot labels

AL reported that VF has been researching long lasting, sustainable and eco friendly metal plot labels that are large enough to be seen above the plants. VF is currently refining the design and negotiating the cost with a guttering specialist in Morden. **Action VF**

iii) **MSc research project:** want members to fill in online questionnaire which he/she claims will take about 10 minutes to complete or be interviewed about allotments. He/she says *'I will be grateful if you could circulate the link to the survey to your mailing list, WhatsApp or Facebook groups, and/or allow me access to the allotments to survey some allotment holders at their plots. Your help in circulating and completing the survey will be of great help to this research.'* It was agreed to forward the email to all plot holders. HF will ask Yifan Zhang for results.

Action HF

MR has not heard from another student who we agreed could carry out a study on our allotment plots. He has a key. **MR action to follow this up**

iv) **Facebook page:** HF had a request from a plot holder on site 3 who emailed asking: *'I only occasionally meet my neighbours, but having chatted to a few people, we feel that we could be more social. (Maybe those who have been here for years ARE more social, but us newbies feel on the edges). I wonder if I could organise an informal group chat/Facebook page for the allotment holders? It would be organised by an invitation (I was thinking about posting an invite on each gate). Would this be ok?'*

HF has discussed this with EB. We felt we would need a committee member to monitor the traffic on Facebook to stop any rumour mongering or fake news circulating. No one present was willing to take on this monitoring role nor is EB. There was some discussion about forming WhatsApp groups but it was felt although no one could stop that happening amongst RGS members it was not something the committee would want to be part of. HF will get back to the member who made the request pointing out various social events run by RGS. **Action HF**

v) **Locks:** These have been serviced. GOR thought the outside lock on the Pleasance entrance tends to stop/hit and not turn. MR agreed there is a problem. HF phoned and emailed about this but no response so has sent another email. It may need the cartridge replacing. HF will follow up. **Action HF**

vi) **GDPR Audit:** Pat Dark has prepared a questionnaire and she went through it at HF computer to ensure GDPR compliance. HF has done some further deleting. Pat will be making some changes then arranging to visit committee members. The Privacy Policy will be updated to include the website manager (Jean Crawford) as data processor.

Action HF

v) A request for access to the allotments has been made from the owner of 166 Dover House Road to replace her fence and the fence intersecting 166 and 168 Dover House Road. Since it is very near the gate and only involves HF's and GW's plots access has been granted. A key will be sold/loaned for £22 with the usual £20 returnable deposit. She promised to return the key to the store in 2 weeks. The work is planned to take place on Tuesday 16th July 2019.

4. Treasurer's report (JH)

We have received another massive water bill from Castle Water for £995 as "an adjustment for the past 3 years". This was unsubstantiated and JH has now queried it. JH thinks it may be that they have not taken the £600 credit that we received this year. It was suggested that once this matter has been sorted we change suppliers.

5. Trading Secretary's Report (GT)

GWT confirmed that she will be arranging another date for cleaning and tidying up the Store following the work on the roof and thanked everyone who had volunteered to help. GWT and JS will be meeting in a couple of weeks to put the order together for bulbs sold at the September Show and then in the Store.

6. Allotment Secretaries' reports

i. Site 2 (ES)

No lettings in June.

1 problem is that a resident / tenant backing on to the site has removed his fence and is building a new brick and timber one. In the meantime this has meant the allotment site has been unsecure. WBC need to be informed.

HF to email WBC (Anna Marie Corey) tomorrow (15/7/19)

Action HF

ii Site 3 Outer Area (VF)

No lettings in June

Plot Conditions

Emails sent to worst offenders re bindweed out of control. Mixed response and action

Problems with Neighbour

real problem with weeds etc spreading onto site. Council monitoring situation. Fence problems – council have contacted re fence who have fences collapsing onto our site.

VF contacted Wandsworth again 12 July 2019, regarding bindweed Our proposal is to spray weeds with Glyphosate - up to neighbour's fence

Vegetables and chicken bones reported to have been thrown into garden of a house in Huntingfield Road from allotments

Other matters

New pot recycling bin delivered to replace existing recycling facility.

iii Site 3 Inner Area (AL)

Lettings: Plot 125A has been divided into a 2 rod plot now let) the remaining 1.5 rods has been let has also been let.

Plot 103A 4 rods has been let

Problems: Plot 115C

7 Bulletin Editor's report. (CM)

Finished and ready to go but EB has decided not to send until next week as there have been lots of emails this week and we don't want overkill.

Deadline for next bulletin is August 27th and will include all the details for the Autumn show.

8. Show Secretary's Report (CM)

A lot of people have told CM they enjoyed the Summer Show and others asked how it went and were sorry they could not come. CM will arrange a debrief / autumn show prep in the next few weeks but any feedback from others always welcome. Obviously the Summer Show was planned to be too long and it didn't quite work out with the idea of cutting up the competition cakes - and this will be discussed.

CM thinks with a few tweaks we should look to do this again. Only 2 categories had no entries - raspberries and elephant garlic. JH has been advised that the voucher total came to £31.60.

9. Site Manager's report.

Plot Inspections will be carried out on 22 July. Non committee members have been contacted to join the plot inspection team.

10 Diary dates:

Autumn Show: Sat 21st September (Church Hall)

AGM: Thurs 14th November (Cricket Club)

11 AOB:

- HF reported that sadly MR has decided that as from the AGM in November she intends to resign as site secretary and from the committee. MR said she would like to continue to contribute as and when she was able, particularly in the Shows and as a Store volunteer. HF hoped that all will decide to stay but if anyone intended to resign from the committee or from their current role, please let HF know as soon as possible so she can plan properly. JH reminded HF that she had already given notice both as Treasurer and Committee member. Many thanks to both JH and MR for their very valued contributions to the RGS.
- BL has been approached by St Margaret's Church with regard to RGS being involved in their Harvest Festival again this year. A competition is suggested and it was agreed that BL will liaise with CM and ask another plot holder who has young children and is a church member to work with her.
- BL reported that sadly a second young hedgehog has been found dead near the Store on Site 2. This has been reported to the local hedgehog preservation society. JS was pleased to say that a plot holder on site 3 has a family of hedgehogs in his hedgehog house.
- BL requested that a way of sharing produce might be found. She wondered why some plot holders don't harvest all their produce and it goes to waste. We have tried a sharing policy and any surplus can be left on table in store when it is open (or outside if closed). However HF said that the July plot inspections would make particular note of plots that haven't been harvested.

**Date of the next meeting Sunday 1st September 2019 9am at the store.
There is no meeting in August.**