

MINUTES OF RGS Committee Meeting 9 am Sunday 6th October 2019

1 Helen Finch (Chair) welcomed Gill Tamsett, Ali Linton, Catherine Maunsell-Bower, Patrick Crawford, Elizabeth Smart, Mike Cooper, Carol Martinez, Vivien Fowler, Elaine Barnwell, Greg Willcox and Jackie Savage (Minutes)

Apologies: Marinagela Renshaw, Charles Gillbe, Janis Humberstone, Brenna Latimore

2 **Minutes of meeting held on Sunday 1st September 2019, agreed ex committee, signed.**

3 **Declaration of AOB items.** GWT cups in Store

4 **Matters arising (not agenda items)**

i Water on Site 3 (PC)

Wandsworth have completed the survey of water on site 3 and the work has gone out to tender. Tenders are due to be returned mid Oct. A plot holder has asked if (looking to the future) it might be possible to add an electricity cable to be run round the site. In theory this could be done but it depends on how the trenches would be dug (eg if they are "moled" then this would not be possible). If we did add a cable circuit then we would have to pay for that cable ourselves.

ii Renewal of Lease (PC)

PC reminded the committee that Steffi Sutters has suggested that we get the capital works done first before going back to the council regarding the lease. As the roof is now complete and the water out to tender, PC will write to SS mid Oct and ask her to raise the Lease again with the council.

iii Harvest Festival (BL)

BL was unable to attend the St Margaret's Church Harvest Festival today. CM has taken her produce to the church and will return after the meeting to represent RGS.

iv GDPR Audit (HF)

We have started implementing the actions that Pat Dark recommended from the audit. EB has created email accounts for each allotment site for the site secretaries to use. We will be discussing implementation at our meeting on the 29th October. Having RGS emails out of private email accounts should make the process of deletion easier.

The Privacy Policy has been updated to include RGS email waiting list applications deletion process. Applications will be deleted after 4 years as the applicant would expect to have reached the top of the waiting list by then.

v New Plot Labels (VF)

VF showed the committee some very elegant and sustainable 1.2 galvanised steel plot labels that she and AL had designed and sourced. The vinyl plot numbers and letters will be applied by AL and VF and committee were assured of their longevity. There are approx 287 plots so it was agreed that VF should purchase about 300 at a cost of £400 all inclusive) and she and AL propose to put them on all plots over winter.

It was debated whether the cost of these labels should be defrayed by asking plot holders to pay for them. However it was decided that this cost would be carried by the RGS, as clear plot labels are to help manage the plots rather than a benefit to the individual plot holder.

5 **Chair's report.**

i) **New Rule 32: the flag controversy:** The sub-committee formed to resolve this issue met on 24th September. Since there were no RGS members who supported banning flags other than the original complainant but there were 7 members who had been keen to allow flags, it was decided that the new rule should not even mention flags. It is recommended that the new rule reads:

"Allotments are not to be used for the display of commercial advertisements, political or religious slogans or symbols."

The committee agreed to recommend this new rule so HF will ask for it to be put on the website in draft form so the membership can view it before the AGM when it will be offered for approval by the membership along with the new Behaviour Policy and Complaints Procedure.

Action HF

ii) **Plot holders who move out of borough:** CG contacted Valerie Selby at Enable to ask what their policy is regarding plot holders who move out of the borough. She replied they had not formed a policy about this as it was not an issue they had come across but she would let us know. HF recommended that the RGS should not change its practice of allowing plot holders who look after their plots well and move out of borough to continue their tenancy for the reasons given at the last committee meeting. The committee agreed we should continue our current practice.

iii) **Renaming 'Minutes':** HF recommended that the record of these committee meetings is called 'Notes and Reports' rather than 'Minutes' as this is a more accurate description of the documents. The committee did not agree as they felt our Minutes are comparable to those kept in other official contexts.

iv) **Confirm Committee:** Other than MR and JH who are standing down, HF requested confirmation that all committee members were happy to stand for the committee for another year. HF thanked the committee for all their hard work and loyal support over the last year and looked forward to another year of working together as a well-functioning team.

6. Treasurer's report (given by HF in absence of JH)

- Enable have been sent the information regarding rent we need to pay so they will be invoicing the RGS soon. The Council owe us a VAT refund of £40.24. It related to VAT they charged in error when they used to do printing for us. They acknowledged the error, but we have not received the money back. JH has periodically chased but no one has responded. The solution she has proposed is that we deduct this amount from our next rent payment. CM pointed out that the contract the Council had with the printers has now expired so it is very unlikely the money will be recovered.
- Once the accounts are complete, JH will also report on RGS expenditure compared with the amount we get as a management fee. Someone from the Council/Enable (probably Valerie Selby) did say that they would look at the figures and consider reimbursing us for any excess expenditure over income, because of the delay in agreeing the terms of our lease when we first pointed out that we were not being paid enough to cover our expenses and were reluctant to agree the amount of net rent payable to WBC because of it.
- Since store takings are low at this time of year JH proposes to leave the store takings in the till until her return on the 19th October. In fact EB has been collecting it.
- JH has been looking into why the Castle water bill is so high and has found that, having read the meter, usage seems to have been extraordinarily high recently. Castle water presentation of the bill is opaque so there still is uncertainty about the correct amount owed but if it is correct it may be necessary to increase the charges we make to plot holders. Enable charge plot holders £3/rod for water.

7. Trading Secretary's Report (GT)

The Spring Bulbs are selling well. However, fewer bulbs should be ordered next year but more of the well known varieties.

JS and GWT did Store stock taking on Friday for the end of year.

JS added a thank you to Georgina O'Reilly for her help with the Seed stock Check carried out on Tuesday.

8 Allotment Secretaries' reports

Site 2 (ES)

The fence between a back garden and Site 2 has finally been completed.

Plots 17, 27A and 34B now have new tenants. 2 plots: 13C and 33A, both 3.5 rods, will be vacated in the next few months and will be re-let. ES to start showing these plots as soon when she has the dates when they will be available.

Plot 37A has been relinquished and will be let as soon as possible.

Site 3 Inner Area (plots 101 to 127) (AL)

Lettings: Plot 115C has been let

Problems:

Plot 103A 4 rods has been relinquished. The plot will be divided into 2 and relet

Site 3 Outer Area (VF)

Lettings: Plot 89B let and Plot 92B to be let today

Other matters: Woodchip delivered but apparent problem with Site 3 manure delivery. New source needed possibly.

9 Bulletin Editor's Report (CM)

The on line version will be on the website and the email link will go to all members shortly. The AGM papers will need to go out separately, rather than as part of a Bulletin as in the past. Deadline for next Bulletin 18 Nov.

10 Show Secretary's Report (CM)

There was a problem with using the Hall on the Friday evening before the show. It was decided that because of this and other possible changes next year (mainly around the movement of the tables) we should look at alternative venues to hold the Autumn Show.

There were many new faces both as entrants and visitors and the show was excellent and enjoyed by all. However the children's tombola didn't really work.

EB will design a questionnaire to send to all members to survey their thoughts and ideas about both our Shows. This will be sent by email so will unfortunately not reach about 10% of members who have no email address.

11 Site Manager's report. (No report)

12 **PR Enable allotment update.** CM's article and photos taken at our Summer Show "New Variety" was sent to Enable before the 4 Oct deadline.

13 Events and Diary dates:

KNIFE SHARPENING EVENT: Sunday 20th October (notices posted)

AGM: Thurs 14th November (Cricket Club)

Planning for this event was discussed. Notices to be posted and emailed regarding location and timing details, as well as request for committee nominations, a month before. (ie by mid Oct)

Papers/committee reports will be required a week before (ie by 7 Nov).

AGM Open doors at 7pm. Business from 7.30. Prize giving 8.15. Video shown after Prizes.

Item for next Agenda: Catering arrangements and Prize Cup returns

SEED SWAP: VF will organise a seed swap in January in the store.

14 AOB: GT suggested we have a “mug amnesty” for store cups. We have lost about a half of them over the year. EB to email site 2 plot holders asking for their return.

Date of the next meeting Sunday 3 November 2019 9am at the store.