

Minutes of the Roehampton Garden Society Committee Meeting held on Sunday 1 December 2019 at 9.00am

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

Apologies: Charles Gillbe and Greg Willcox.

HF stated that CM-B had completed the AGM Minutes.

2. **Minutes of meeting held on Sunday 3 November 2019** agreed ex committee and signed.
3. **Declaration of AOB items:** AL and VF
4. **Matters arising** (not agenda items)

(i) **Lease Renewal (PC)**

Since the last Meeting PC has had further discussions and correspondence with Cllr Steffi Sutters. It was agreed with her that it would be beneficial not to have further meetings with Wandsworth Borough Council and Peter Tiernan until Wandsworth Council has confirmed that they will undertake the renewal of the water supply to Site 3 and, preferably, the work has been completed. PC will continue to progress matters with the Council.

(ii) **Renewal of Water Supply to Site 3 (PC)**

PC reported that despite requesting an update from Wandsworth Council, he has not heard further as to whether the work will proceed. He again confirmed that tenders for the work had been sought and that he was informed they were returned in mid-October. Again, he will continue to chase Wandsworth Council for an update.

A question was asked as to whether it would be possible for a new electrical supply to be installed on Site 3 when the water supply was renewed. PC stated that this may well depend upon how the Contractor proposed to undertake the work. Again, he will progress this once a decision has been taken for the works to proceed.

(iii) **Withholding £40.24** from Enable for printing debt

EB said that it seems the bank has made a mistake. It occurred three years ago when the account had been with Capita. She would check if Joanne Kettle is still at WBC. The money has not been paid to Enable. **Action EB**

iv) **President of RGS:** It has been the RGS practice to have our local MP as President but with Justine Greening standing down at the next election she will no longer be our MP. It was decided we would like to keep Justine as our President if she is

willing and review when we become an independent Charity. **Action HF**

v) **Payment for new plot labels** – It has been suggested that we could ask The Council to pay for our new labels. HF said she felt it was the Committee's decision that Enable had no part in, so it would not be reasonable to ask them to pay. The Committee agreed.

5. Chair's report

i) **Lock contract v ad hoc:** The price of the Securifix contract has gone up again and is now £387.60 including VAT. For this we would get all the gate locks serviced twice a year and 2 additional call outs within a year. This contract was reassuring when the locks were new to us and we were having a lot of problems, but experience has shown on average we probably need 2 cylinders changed a year at most which would cost about £200 if we were to call out Securifix. HF said she was unconvinced that taking the locks apart and cleaning them is worthwhile as the cylinders tend to wear out as they are used so much. When plot holders start to complain they are having difficulty with a lock HF suggested we get the cylinder changed. A plot holder, who knows about locks, has been consulted about cleaning the locks and his advice is to replace the cylinder when the lock is worn – it is a very simple 'a few minutes' job and we should be able to do it in house with Securifix as emergency back up. HF recommended keeping a small stock of cylinders and replace any failing locks and to not renew the contract with Securifix. This strategy was agreed.

ii) **AGM:** Thanks to Marc and Elaine who made the evening work so well and thanks to all who provided lovely food. Cost of drinks to RGS was £200 then it was a cash bar. The approved rule and policies have been put on the website as agreed documents. The draft minutes are done and will be circulated to the committee initially for any comments. Once agreed by the committee they will be put on our website in Draft form and the membership will be invited to comment. HF asked if they could be approved ex-AGM while is fresh in members' minds. This was agreed by the committee so once the committee have approved the minutes they will be put on the website in draft form and the membership will be told to comment before a reasonable deadline, then accepted as a true record ex-AGM. **Action HF** HF suggested it might be better to have the next AGM next during October so we arrive in daylight. An October AGM would tie in with the accounting year better too. EB said we need to look at all events over the full year before deciding. HF invited ideas for entertainment at the next AGM.

iii) **Site 2 secretary:** Catherine Maunsell- Bower has agreed to join Liz Smart in the role of Site 2 Secretary. Welcome to the role.

iv) **Site 3 shed:** This was raised at the AGM in response to the information that we had RGS money in the bank. EB said there is about £20,000 available to spend. There are various things that money could be spent on as well as a tea shed. Please would all committee members email HF with suggestions with some idea of costing. It was agreed to set up a sub-committee to prioritise the suggestions and decide the

best way to proceed. Volunteers to join this sub-committee were MC, ES, PC, VF, AL, CM, EB HF. HF will coordinate a meeting. **Action HF..**

v) Committee contact list: HF asked if all were happy with the list – no complaints.

vi) Turning off water: Thanks to Albert Tuin on site 3 and Charles Gillbe on site 2 for turning off the water.

vii) Increase RGS membership sub: The last increase was about 3 years ago. HF proposed increasing Full RGS Membership from £5/year to £6/year and Associate Membership from £2.50 to £3/year. The rationale was that it was a step to be more in line with other similar gardening organisations and would raise money that could usefully be spent. The Committee agreed to the proposed increased subscription.

6. Treasurer's report

EB has the account in a new system called "Wave". She suggested that we might move the money in Scottish Widows into the RGS Lloyds account as it is only earning about 50p interest anyway. She explained that we now have two debit cards to enable purchasing particularly for the store.

Since Janis Humberstone no longer needs access to the RGS bank account her access needs to be removed.

Action HF

7. Trading secretary's report

GWT reported that a store clean and tidy up would be arranged before the store reopens on 5 January 2020. GWT will email regular helpers to ask them to participate.

JS mentioned that mice were rampant and that approximately £10 worth of stock had been lost. She explained that the Rep had given her credit for the loss. She also thanked John O'Reilly for setting the traps. She added that she would keep seeds for sowing over the winter months.

EB wondered about the cost of a cabinet to protect against mice.

GT suggested that we needed a cabinet as a long term solution.

ES suggested that the shelves on the sides be removed to prevent mice from using them to scale to the top of the display unit.

PC suggested we use poly carbon sheeting which GW could put up and we could then see if the mice are coming in from the front of the store.

HF suggested this issue should be placed on the project list.

8. Allotment secretaries' reports

Site 2 – ES (Mariangela has just stood down)

There were currently three vacancies and ES would be showing one of them to someone today. She mentioned that two of the plots were 3.5 rods which could be reduced as there were some plot holders who needed a little extra land.

HF mentioned that she had received an estimate for the toilet repair which was £200.00. The rusty bolts needed to be changed and 2 leaks fixed. The estimate has been accepted and the work will proceed.

HF then mentioned a complaint had been received about the Lime tree at the back of plot 40D which is subject to a TPO. The plan is for the offending branch, which is damaging the neighbour's outbuilding roof, is to be lopped once permission has been received. HF will seek permission to have the tree lopped and arrange for the work to be done

Action HF

Site 3 – Outer area - VF

Lettings: No lettings in November

Plot Inspections: November plot inspections - no real problems. Six emails sent out for minor items, with four responses

Other matters: Good deliveries of both woodchip and manure

New plot signs: Installation commencing on Site 2 and site 3 in December

Pot and plant recycling area to be reinstated once rubbish is cleared

VF said she went to the Site Managers' Meeting at Enable who confirmed the rubbish including any green waste would go to landfill and was concerned that this generates methane. She wondered if we could have a green waste skip.

Site 3 (plots 101 to 127) Site Secretary's report - AL

Lettings: - none

Plot inspections: _

The standard of cultivation continues to improve. 8 emails have been sent but no staged letters. 3 emails concerned trees and one has subsequently been pruned.

One plotholder is considering relinquishing his plot due to a shortage of time.

9. Bulletin editor's report

CM reported that the printing took about a week causing a slight delay in publication. The bulletin went out on the 30th November and the next deadline is 6th January 2020.

10. Show secretaries' report

Another meeting is planned immediately after the committee meeting to review the survey.

11. Site manager's report (Charles Gillbe)

CG not present.

HF will send out CG's notes from the Site Managers' Meeting to the Committee with the Minutes **Action HF**

12. **PR:** Enable Allotment Update: Our contribution to the Enable Allotment update was sent in and acknowledged 2 months ago, however the Update has yet to be published.

Gardeners' World allotment visit: JS advised that she will write to Gardeners' World again in February when the new team will be working on the programme schedule for 2020, suggesting a couple of plot holders on site 3 that they may find interesting.

Stratham Close Community Garden: Following a request for advice from this new community garden on an Estate off West Hill, JS visited and met the organisers. They would benefit from becoming RGS members and it is hoped they will visit us one Sunday and sign up.

13. **Events and Diary dates:**

- Trips/events (BL)
 - BL is planning another talk of interest. JS suggested a form of Gardener's Question Time again but just within house. She suggested we involve Raj and Georgina with coffee and cake refreshments.
 - EB suggested we should have TV gardening quiz event and it could be held at the Cricket Club.
- Seed swap (VF, CM) 19/01/20
- Alternative event to Guy Fawkes bonfire night: HF suggested that the alternative to Guy Fawkes must be kept on the agenda.

14. **AOB**

VF suggested that digging be kept to a minimum as it kills worms and disrupts soil structure.

Date of the next meeting Sunday 2nd February 2020