

## RGS Committee Distance Reports and Zoom meeting: Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2021 9am

1. **Sign off the record** (attached) of the distance meeting reports from Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> December 2020.

2. **Matters arising not on the agenda:**

**Present:** Helen Finch (Chair), Emma Blackwell, Patrick Crawford, Dorcas Johnson, Brenna Lattimore, Ali Linton (host), Carol Martinez, Catherine Maunsell-Bower, Jackie Savage and Gill Tamsett  
**Apologies:** Vivien Fowler and Greg Wilcox

3. **Chair's report: (HF)**

- i) **Members only area on website:** I have been in contact with Jean about this issue. It became increasingly clear to me that our decision made at the last committee meeting of having a committee only page to store the minutes and offering copies of edited version to members requesting minutes was not such a good idea. All minutes are sent to all members of the committee so they can be kept on your own password protected device. Communication amongst the committee is done by email. Obstructing members' access to the minutes could result in a feeling of mistrust amongst the membership which is particularly undesirable now we are spending a lot of RGS's money. I would prefer to carry on the same as we have for the last few years. [Currently the minutes are typed up in black, any confidential issues \(in green\) are not posted on the website. It was agreed that financial matters will be printed in red/orange and also excluded from the website.](#)
- ii) **Toilets:** No immediate plans to open yet.
- iii) **Council Rubbish Collection:** The rubbish was collected more or less to plan without incident. There was a lot of green rubbish left for collection which would be sent to landfill.
- iv) **Communal wormery:** I contacted Diana McCann who floated this idea. She understood it was not a project we thought would be practical.
- v) **AGM:** The Cricket club has been booked through Elaine for Friday 12/11/21. She said we may not have access until about 6.15 as the Forest Folk Nursery don't finish until then. Would be good if we could have some entertainment of some kind.
- vi) **Water charges:** All RGS plot holders paid £2/rod for water which over the last 3 years about £1,500 was collected each year for water. The cost of water used on site 2 averages at about £1,000 a year but Site 3 has not been metered and therefore we have not been paying for water used on site 3. Logically since site 3 is twice the size of site 2 we should expect the water bill to be about £3,000 therefore we should increase the charge x2 = £4/rod. In the rest of Wandsworth Enable are charging £5.42/rod for water so RGS would be getting off comparatively lightly. I think this is not an unreasonable increase partly because it is accompanied by a very modest increase in the rent of 40p for full rate and 30p concessions this year. [There was a full discussion concerning the annual water charge - £4 or £5 per rod? A vote was taken and £5 per rod was agreed \(7 votes for £5 and 3 for £4\). Emma Blackwell agreed to look into water providers to ensure that Castlewater give us the best deal.](#)

4. **Projects:**

**Project 1: Communal cabin site 3: progress (HF)** There are still a number of tasks outstanding that need to be done by volunteers. We plan to have working parties to complete some of the work probably in March. The water supply will be connected once the electricity supply is connected so we can prevent freezing of the water heater by using a greenhouse tubular heater in the cupboard under the sink.

**Project 2: Power on site 3: progress (HF)** We had booked EDF to install the meter for 15/01/21 but the electrician asked for a postponement again. The electricians have now been done enough to have the meter installed. HF contacted EDF but they are not doing any bookings at the moment as so many engineers are ill or isolating. EDF will contact HF when a booking is possible. A small instant under sink water heater has been bought and will warm the water on demand. There is a risk it may freeze so a tubular heater will be installed underneath it. This device can be set to kick in if the temperature falls to say 5°C but must remain plugged in at all times. It just takes 250watts. A commando socket for the shredder will be installed on the post that has been set in concrete near the main path. The plan is to construct a shed around this post so the socket will only be available to those who have had the shredder training. Another outdoor socket will be placed high up in the veranda area out of the reach of children. This will be for plot holders to recharge strimmers etc.

**Project 5: Social area on site 2: Progress (CM)** Georgina and I are continuing to paint the inside of the shed but are reliant on it being a bit warmer than it currently is. There is also an issue with the varnish coming through the paint so it may need 3 or more coats. I will send a proposal for the picnic bench in the next few weeks.

#### **5. Water on site 3 (PC)**

As previously reported, all works for the new water supply have been completed by the Contractor including a few holes to expose a section of pipework which was requested by Thames Water.

PC met with Thames Water and Wandsworth Council representatives on 4 January. At this meeting Thames Water agreed that the works had been successfully completed to their requirements and would confirm this to Wandsworth Council. PC has now heard from Wandsworth Council that they are in a position to have their Contractor complete outstanding works next week (commencing 8 February) and they will confirm to PC when the works have been done. PC will continue to monitor progress and report further to the Chair.

**6. Lease renewal (PC)** PC would confirm that he, the Chair, Helen Finch and Alan Strowger met with Fiona Hallard of Richmond & Wandsworth Council Services on 8 December to discuss the renewal of the lease. At the meeting, the concerns and lease requirements of the RGS were presented to Ms. Hallard and these were then discussed in detail.

As requested by Ms. Hallard, the RGS, following the meeting, prepared a detailed and costed 10 Year Maintenance Plan. Additionally, a number of comments and clarifications were appended to the current proposed Heads of Terms by the RGS and both these documents were sent Ms. Hallard.

A subsequent meeting was held on 4 February with Fiona Hallard where the above documents were discussed in detail. She confirmed that she would now progress matters with the Chief of Environmental Services (CES) and Enable so that she can provide a revised Heads of Terms for consideration by the RGS. It was agreed that a further meeting between her and the RGS would be held in early March.

[Patrick Crawford reported that progress is being made and thanked Helen F for providing such a detailed and costed 10 Year Maintenance Plan](#)

**7. Notices on site:** VF is looking into getting noticeboards sited near each gate apart from the main gate on site 3 where the existing one will be moved to the front of the substation.

**8. Treasurer's report:** (DJ) See *attached* PDF for the current listing of all accounts. This shows a breakdown by category, income, expense etc.

- no new expenditure since end Nov.
- **Annual Rent Payments** — preparations are underway for the great rent collection!

**9. Trading Secretary's Report:** (GT) We had a delivery in early January which means that we are now fully stocked, ready for when we can reopen.

The Compost Centre have increased their prices, the first time for several years. This means that Country Natural now costs £3.75 per bag.

New Horizon All Plant is now sold in 50 litre bags. However, because of a price increase, both the remaining 60 litre bags and the new 50 litre bags will be priced at £6.75.

Loach have increased some of their prices effective 1 February which means that some other items may increase in price with our next order.

The clean/tidy-up of the Store has been put back to when we can reopen.

**Click and collect (JS)** It was decided that we would offer a click and collect service mainly for the seed potatoes, garlic and onions and then we added to seeds and the C Natural and seed compost. Firstly we

asked for emailed orders for a limited selection of goods and then Jean designed a user friendly order form for the website, which proved very popular and will be the way forward. A team of “baggers” worked on Friday getting the orders packed and ready for the Sunday collection. Payment on Sunday will be by card only and the queue managed to ensure distance is kept.

Greg agreed to deliver all the Country Natural direct to plots on site 3 (once the orders are paid for) so handling is minimised.

There was an enthusiastic response from member and over 40 orders were placed for collection in time slots on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup>. There were also several orders placed to be collected on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup>.

Many thanks to all those who helped make this work! Of course we can “tweak” the service once we have run it once and hope to offer a wider variety of goods while we are still in lockdown.

*It was agreed that these arrangements will stay in place until the Rules are changed, and be reviewed on a weekly basis. We have several willing volunteers many of whom have had their first dose of vaccine.*

## **10. Allotment Secretaries' reports:**

### ***i) Site 2 (C MB)***

#### **Lettings:**

**Plot 4 – 5.5 rods:** The new tenancy commenced on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020.

**Plot 29B – 3 rods:** Formerly part of the 6 rod plot 29 which has been divided into two 3 rod plots. The PH has donated his refund in the sum of £37.19 for RGS purposes.

**Plot 32A – 2 rods:** This plot was declined by three viewers for various reasons. It has now been let to a first time gardener.

**Plot 41C – 3.5 rods:**

### ***ii) Site 3: outer area 50-100 (VF) Lettings:*** One letting – Plot 52C

**Plot Inspections:** Follow up inspections took place end December 2020. All plot holders who had received warning emails and letters had attended to the various problems raised – a good outcome.

**Neighbours:** The Elmshaw Road resident behind Plot 61A has contacted our MP regarding what she considers to be an issue of a shed shading her garden and house. HF has responded. Matter on going.

**Other matters:** Manure – deliveries hard to obtain. G O'Reilly now looking after this.

Wood chip – Hardy Tree Surgeons contacted. We have requested good quality product without foliage if available

***Inner area 101-127 (AL)*** No plots have changed hands this month.

### **Boundary Dispute**

It is a reminder to us that when letting plots we must emphasise the need to have a clear path all around the plot.

**11. Bulletin Editor's report (CM)** A bulletin was not produced for January as due to lockdown and the store being closed there was not a lot to write about, however, Helen sent a Happy New Year message to all members. With the store remaining closed and only a limited amount of goods on sale via click and collect I do not think a bulletin at the moment is appropriate as a significant amount of content is related to store goods. Also, nobody is sending any stories.

Once a decision is made about the store reopening or some news happens, I will happily produce a bulletin.

*It was agreed that Catherine Maunsell-Bower would write an obituary of Clifford Pope aged 92 who has died of Covid having been a plot holder for 10 years. Any copy for a Bulletin is requested by 22<sup>nd</sup> February.*

**12. Show Chair's report (CM)** Autumn Show: St Margaret's have confirmed hire of the hall from 6pm on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> September until 6pm on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> September. Let's hope the show can go ahead.

## **13. Site Manager's report (CG)**

**14. PR:** (JS) nothing to report

**15. Events and Diary dates:**

- Gardeners' Question time (CG) :
- AGM: 12/11/21

**16. AOB** - All

Date of the next meeting **Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2021 9am**