



Henley on Thames Allotments Association

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

held at 19.30 on Monday 28th October 2019 at Henley-on-Thames Town Hall

1. Apologies

Ania Kozniewska, Anne Sandars, Edna Large, Heather Dickson, Liz Reid, Mandy Taylor, Mike Hails, Sally McEwan

2. Presentation of last year's minutes

Minor error relating to chainsaw location noted. The minutes were otherwise accepted and passed as correct.

3. Matters arising

None.

4. Committee's Report

The 2018-2019 allotment year saw the Committee functioning with fewer members than we need and without a Chairman. We could do with some more volunteers!

Without an events organiser, socials were limited to the bonfire at Watermans in November, and the Christmas dinner which was, as ever, great fun. We saw our first seed swap in March, held in conjunction with Greener Henley and HTC- another is planned for 2020 with (hopefully) a follow-up seed saving workshop (time ran out this year). The annual plant sale was also very successful. Many thanks to all those who provided plants for sale, and also to those who came along to spend the day selling! Next year's sale is booked.

The renovations at Watermans have been moving on apace, with Tony and his team of volunteers working hard to clear and tidy the site. Tony has been working with plot holders to ensure poorly maintained plots are brought up to the standard required by the tenancy agreement, and has implemented a maintenance system. The waiting list is now at zero and there is a marked improvement to the site. Full details were given by Tony on a separate sheet.

Doug and Lewis have announced their retirement as site managers, and we have two volunteers for the roles – Mandy Taylor and Tony Robinson.

Finally, a reminder to all plot holders following the theft at Greencroft to not leave valuables on either of the sites, and for Watermans plot holders, if you are last on site, please remember to padlock the gate on leaving.

5. Treasurer's Report and Accounts

David Chilvers presented the accounts to the meeting.

Fundraising was down for the second consecutive year, although profit on seed sales increased, meaning income was down by £800. Expenditure increased because of increased maintenance at Greencroft, plus two manure deliveries to each site (as requested at the last AGM). After a good recovery of our financial position in 2017/18, we are in danger of slipping back again.



In previous years, honoraria have been voted to members of the Committee in recognition of their time, effort and resources.

Motion – That honoraria of

- £100 each be paid to David Chilvers (Treasurer), Doug Richards (Site Manager Watermans), Lewis Every (Site Manager Greencroft), Sharon Oldham (Secretary);

- £50 to Mandy Taylor (Website & Social Media Marketing), Tony Robinson (Assistant Site Manager).

Passed and approved on a show of hands.

Appointment of Auditor: David made a plea for a volunteer (doesn't need to be an accountant); Sterl Greenhalgh (Greencroft) kindly stepped forward.

Passed and approved on a show of hands.

6. Secretary's Report

Sharon Oldham outlined work on the HAA database - all email addresses are up-to-date; only eight plot holders do not have email. We are fully GDPR-compliant. In future, annual invoices will be sent by email.

There are only 13 plots currently vacant – seven at Greencroft and six at Watermans.

Plot rents will increase in the 2020/21 year and will be held for 2021/22 – the increase is between £1 and £3 depending on plot size. A letter detailing the charges have been sent by the Council.

7. Election of Officers and Committee

The following officers and committee members stood for election/re-election

Officers

- Secretary: Sharon Oldham
- Treasurer: David Chilvers

The position of Chairman remains vacant. Roles performed by the Chairman are currently undertaken by the Secretary.

Committee Members

- Greencroft: Mandy Taylor, Peter Anderson, Barry Tindall
- Watermans: Doug Richards, Tony Robinson

Retirements

Doug Richards is retiring as Watermans Site Manager, and Lewis Every as Greencroft Site Manager. Sophie Pentecost retired from the committee earlier this year.

Presentation of retirement gifts for Doug and Lewis with thanks for all their work.

Nominations

Tony Robinson as Watermans Site Manager, and Mandy Taylor as Greencroft Site Manager.

All passed unanimously

This leaves a vacancy for a representative from Watermans, in addition to that of Chairman.



8. **Social / Events Update**

Unfortunately, once again, social events were limited due to the lack of a volunteer organiser. The Christmas Dinner was enjoyed by all. The bonfire at Watermans was well attended in spite of the bad weather – many thanks to those who helped to organise it. The first seed swap and annual Plant Sale were also successes. It is hoped a boat trip will be possible in the coming year.

This year's Christmas Dinner will be on 11th December; tickets are available from Peter at Hobbs. £22. BYOB.

Jo Miller mentioned the Ways and Means Trust is holding a Christmas Event at Greenshoots.

RHS Associate Membership allows us to visit RHS Gardens – volunteers needed to help organise. Katy Dickie offered support.

9. **Website update**

Mandy has set up a new Facebook group as the original was difficult to find – it already has 24 members. Members of the previous group need to resubscribe. It is now easier to join the group – simply answer two questions. This saves Mandy an admin job. Please join up and join in!

10. **Presentation of Awards**

- Watermans Best Plot – David Keats
- Greencroft Best Plot – Andrew Hawkins
- Watermans Best New Plot holder – Heather Dixon
- Greencroft Best New Plot holder – Nigel Rogers
- Community Award – Mick Blackall and Tony Robinson

11. **AOB**

Nothing had been sent in writing, but the following questions were raised from the floor:

- Could we have a regular delivery of compost?

Manure will be supplied as in previous years. Compost may be available from SODC at Benson, possibly free to plot holders.

- Can plot holders use the lawnmowers and strimmers at Greencroft?

There are two petrol movers and three hand mowers available to use. The strimmer is held by Lewis – anyone requiring strimming should ask him. A secure shed is required on site – Mandy/Committee to investigate.

The lawnmowers and strimmers at Watermans have suffered lots of damage over time, so they are not readily available. Access is regulated by the Site Manager.



- Request from Watermans for notification when manure is being delivered, and query about how the limit of four barrow loads per plot can be enforced.

Notification will be emailed. With regards limiting, we need to remember we are a community and are self-regulating – it is hoped that everyone will “play fair” but if anyone sees any significant violations please let the Site Manager know.

- Jo Miller raised the issue of the Kings Seeds order, specifically the timing of the availability of the catalogues.

The number of catalogues given out versus the actual orders received were discussed. Regarding delivery, we have two options: end September or end November. It was agreed the earlier delivery date is preferable.

- Thanks were expressed from the floor to Jo and Bob for all their work organising the seed orders.
- Dave McEwan expressed thanks to Lewis for dealing with unkempt plots at Greencroft, and asked about a getting together a list of volunteers who would be willing for working parties/tasks.

Mandy and Lewis to discuss how this could be taken further.

12. Date of next meeting

The next AGM will be held in October/November 2020, with further details to be confirmed closer to the time.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm.