



Minutes of the AGM 17th November 2012 Held at the Harlington Centre at 3pm

Welcome, Introductions & Apologies

Sally Martin welcomed all of the 31 attendees to the meeting and introduced Dave Bell (Treasurer) and Sylvia Cresswell (Secretary) (There were 17 apologies.) All attendees were asked to sign in to confirm attendance.

Previous minutes and action points

The previous minutes were approved and all actions carried out.

Chairman's report

Sally Martin read out the Chairman's report which commented upon the provision of allotments, committee activities (questionnaire, meetings, research) undertaken since the last AGM, and how we had now become members of the National Allotment Society. (SC note: A copy of the chairman's report will be in the next issue of the Association's newsletter– due out shortly).

Treasurer's report

Dave reported that this year we have spent very little. What we have spent has been mostly on stamps, writing to those on the 4 lists that were inherited by the Association, to confirm whether people were still interested in an allotment. Other expenditure had been website registration and photocopying costs. Dave mentioned that wherever possible we are trying to communicate via e-mail (which costs the committee nothing). Currently there is £1194.48 in the bank. Dave advised that the original ex gratia grant (received some years ago to help us set up) was our funding source.

Forming an Industrial & Provident Society (co-operative)

Sylvia explained that the Association had sought advice from the Hart Voluntary Action group and the National Association of Allotments regarding how the Association should set itself up in the future. She advised that the Council required a more formal organisation in order for us to lease the land from them. She explained that initially it was thought that a Community Interest Company (CIC) would be appropriate but was then advised that a co-operative (Industrial & Provident Society -IPS) might be more appropriate as it is the allotment members who would benefit from the organisation rather than the general public). The National Allotment Association (after we joined them) advised that they would sponsor the Hart Allotments Association to become an IPS. They have provided Model rules for the Association and advised that if we wished to change them then the costs for sponsorship would increase for every amendment requested (as they needed to engage solicitors if the 'bog standard' rules were not adopted).

Sylvia advised that the AGM needed to vote on whether to become an IPS or not. The secretary (Sylvia) advised this vote was needed for when we were nearer to getting allotments so that we can apply when the time is appropriate – otherwise an Extraordinary AGM is required. Alec Grant proposed that we become an IPS, this was seconded by Frances Wingate. There was a unanimous vote (and no opposers) to the proposal. The Chairman thanked all for their vote and advised that we would act on this at the appropriate time.

Election of Officers

The posts of Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary also needed to be filled. The Chairman advised that the existing postholders were prepared to stand for re-election. Roger Messenger proposed that the existing team continue in their current posts in the HAA and become the Chairman, Treasurer, and Secretary of the IPS (as and when appropriate). John Bobbit seconded the proposal.

Committee members

Sylvia advised that when we become an IPS we need to state how many Committee members we intend to have and as such it was necessary to agree a number at this AGM. It was suggested that a maximum of 10 committee members should be elected. However, these positions may not be filled until needed.

Dave mentioned that prior to the meeting, four individuals had volunteered to be committee members namely: David Fisher, Mikki Hall (present), Martyn Garvey (present) & Bruce Reece-Russell. At the meeting Jim Haffrey and Alan Jones also volunteered to become committee members. They were all proposed by Dave, seconded by Sally and elected at the meeting.



Dave mentioned that the IPS also needed a President. He advised that Cllr Sharyn Wheale had indicated that she was prepared to accept the position. There were no other nominations. Clive Heathcote proposed that Sharyn should become President and this was seconded by Alec Grant. However, it was noted that we needed to make sure that there was not a conflict of interest in her appointment due to her being a Councillor.

Action: Committee to ensure there is no conflict of interest in appointment

[SC Note: Cllr Wheale has since been approached and the conflict of interest concerns were raised. Cllr Wheale stated that there were no conflicts of interest and that she would be very pleased to accept the appointment.]

Dave asked the group if there were any nominations for the position of Auditor. None were received so further investigation into a suitable auditor by the management committee is needed.

Action: Committee to appoint Auditor when appropriate.

It was discussed that the Association needed to be clear regarding its remit when becoming an IPS and consequently its name. Is it serving Hart or Fleet? The confusion arises because, due to the formation of Parish Councils a couple of years ago, the Parishes are making land available, and keeping their own lists and only allowing those in the parish to have an allotment. It was discussed that the name Hart Allotments might have been appropriate a couple of years ago but might not be appropriate now.

Action: Committee to consider appropriate name for Association and IPS.

Action: Association to apply to become an IPS via the National Allotment Society when appropriate.

Waiting List

Sylvia explained the consolidation of the 4 waiting lists that she had received from the council and the questionnaire that those on these waiting lists had been asked to complete to create a new updated list. She advised that there were currently 141 people on the waiting list. This included those who also were waiting for allotments in Yateley and Church Crookham. Sylvia advised that she had been in contact with Yateley Council to compare lists – but that all those who were wanting an allotment in Yateley, Church Crookham and Elvetham Heath should make sure that they are listed on the relevant Parish waiting list as these Parishes had decided to do their own lists. Those seeking an allotment should approach the relevant Parish directly. Contact names were provided to those who requested them.

Sally explained that since we are dealing with Hart District Council we need to honour the list given to us from the Council, which includes some people from Yateley, & Church Crookham. (SC Note: The District council own the land of the proposed site rather than Fleet Parish Council)

A number of members of the group thought that this was unfair in that people from outside Fleet could have an allotment on the Fleet site but Fleet residents were not able to have an allotment on sites outside the area. The group wanted the Committee members to voice their thoughts that this was 'unjust' and that a suitable allocation policy needed to be worked out. The Committee members agreed to take this up at the next meeting with the council

Action: Committee to take up allocation policy with HDC

Sylvia showed the group the "Mappoint" software that showed the work that had been done on plotting where those on the list were located. She also showed the results of the questionnaire that showed the number of people who ultimately wanted an allotment in Yateley, Church Crookham and in Fleet.

Website

Sylvia thanked those that had met to discuss the website (Bill Jones & Stephen Janaway). She explained that the Wordpress platform was chosen as a basis for the new website and Stephen volunteered to develop it as he had experience with this platform. Stephen showed the website, the different tabs and explained how it works now and what we could include in the future. Those present were impressed with the new site.

AOB

There was no other AOB

Date of next meeting

No date for the next AGM was set, however, it is expected to be this time next year. The committee volunteers were asked to stay behind to sort out a suitable date for meeting