

**BEAUCHAMP ROAD AND GREEN LANE ALLOTMENT
ASSOCIATION – AGM Wednesday 24 November,2021
On-line**

Minutes

Present

Ann Bailey, Ron Bailey, Jeremy Schomberg, Douglas Watson, Linda Thomas, Sarah Cheshire, Lucy Edington, John Parker-Jones, Sandra Taylor (14N), Andrew Gee (97N), Richard Cutler (77N), Rob Gathercole (33N), Dieter & Elaine Klander (34N), Chris & Vendula Way-Jones (91S)

1. Welcome and Apologies

Ann welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

Apologies for Absence

Erica & Andy Nunn, and Olivia Orchard sent their apologies

2. Adoption of the Minutes from the last AGM

The Minutes were adopted by a show of hands.

a.Matters Arising

Elaine Klander raised the point that they were still having trouble with the adjacent pathways to their plot i.e paths overgrown, plum tree branches from 32N overhanging etc. As the pathways are a joint responsibility, Ann and John will discuss the matter and the Secretary will write to Elaine.

3. Chairman's Report

As we are still being mindful of the regulations concerning COVID 19 the Committee have decided to hold the AGM via Zoom again this year and we hope as many members as possible will join us online on 24 November.

COVID 19

Because of COVID the toilets will continue to remain closed, and we will let you know if this changes in the future.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The contribution that the members of the Committee make cannot be underestimated. We are self-managing and without them we would be unable to function.

Many of the Committee are up for re-election this year and I sincerely hope they will receive the support they so richly deserve.

John Parker-Jones our Secretary has been incredibly active and supportive and keeps everything ticking along very efficiently. My personal thanks to John for his support during my enforced 'absence' following my hip replacement and undertaking the last plot reviews with Lucy.

Lucy our Membership Secretary has done a fantastic job in maintaining our waiting list and the enrolment of a large number of new members.

Douglas Watson our Treasurer continues to keep our financial affairs, as always, in good order. Invoices will be sent out as normal for plot renewals and we ask you please to pay these promptly and avoid the need for Douglas to chase members which is very time consuming.

Whilst Jeremy kept us supplied with manure for as long as possible this supply has now stopped. I know that many plot holders will be disappointed, but the Committee will continue to investigate other possible options and keep you notified if we find a way to resolve this problem.

Sarah has kept you all updated on Facebook, our Website and noticeboards with news of events and Committee updates. If you have time do send us your photographs, news and recipes to share on both these forums.

Sadly, Richard Farmiloe, whilst not a Committee Member a critical member of our 'team' has moved away from the area. Richard has maintained our water supplies for many years and is known to many members. We wish him and Pat well settling into their new home. Last year Andy Nunn kindly helped Richard and Andy is already helping out with various issues that have occurred these past weeks. Thank you both for your continued help it is very much appreciated.

BONFIRES

The lighting of bonfires has also been a thorny subject. There is clear signage on site, and everyone has received a copy of the strict rules concerning bonfires. However, we have received further complaints this past year from nearby residents about bonfires on our site. The Committee have therefore decided to review the rules on bonfires, and it has been agreed that bonfires may now only be lit between 1 November and 31 March.

Remember please: If it is windy - NO bonfire. If items are wet or green - NO bonfire - they will smoke. If in doubt - NO bonfire.

Further complaints will necessitate the banning of bonfires completely so please let common sense prevail. If a member of the Committee requests, you to put a fire out - please do so.

PUMPKIN PARTY

We had another successful Pumpkin Party with some worthy winners. Thank you to Jeremy for taking on the judging this year. The winners were: - Jan and Eliza Plot 18S with a pumpkin measuring 174cm. Alex on Plot 84N - 163cm. Jeannette Plot 46N - 139cm. Jeanette also had an amazing pumpkin growing up her fruit tree. Erica Plot 21S - 125cm and finally Finn and Oscar - Plot 103 with pumpkins measuring 60 and 43 cm
We hope we will have more entries next year with bigger and better pumpkins.

We also plan to hold and award a Children's Prize next year to encourage more children to grow their own pumpkins.
Seeds will be sent out as usual with your invoices. They were kindly supplied, counted and bagged by Jeremy this year. Thank you.

SKIPS

We have again had skips on site this past year and as always, they leave site full to the brim. We will continue this practice again in the Spring. Signs will go up on site, Facebook and our website. Keep a look out.

EMGS

The Trading Hut will remain open until 5 December and re-open at the end of January. They have served us all well again this past year. Special orders will be facilitated where possible. We appreciate their co-cooperation and on-going service. Being able to use cards and not cash has been an added bonus.

ENTRANCE GATE

Too often this is left unlocked and even wide open. Please remember to lock the gate as you enter and leave the site. It is too easy for someone to wander in and help themselves to produce and tools. Be security conscious - lock up.

PLOT REVIEWS

Reviews will continue to be held throughout the year and any plots that are failing will be flagged up and the plot holder written to. If you have issues, are unwell etc do please let us know so that allowances can be made. We have a very long waiting list of people who would like plots so if your plot becomes too much for you do please let us know.

WATER

As usual water supplies will be turned off soon for the winter and the roadways closed. We look forward to seeing you on 24 November.
Many thanks to you all.

Ann Bailey - Chair

4. Tenancy Agreement - John Parker-Jones . Secretary
Good evening and welcome.

You will see from the agenda that there are two proposals for amendments to the Tenancy Agreement which require the approval of the AGM. These

relate to the lighting of bonfires and the period of notice a tenant has to give the Association. The proposed changes are shown in red. In brief these are as follows:

Tenancy Agreement (para 3k)

Bonfires only between November & March (3k)

A change from between October to April.

The previous wording read:

k). Bonfires can only be lit between the months of October and April. They must not be left unattended and the burning of plastics, foam or rubber is forbidden. Bonfires must not cause a nuisance to adjoining plot holders or to adjacent householders. Should the Association be sued for causing a nuisance then the association will respond by suing the member responsible for lighting the bonfire.

The proposed wording is:

k). Bonfires can only be lit between **the months of November and March**. They must not be left unattended and the burning of plastics, foam or rubber is forbidden. Bonfires must not cause a nuisance to adjoining plot holders or to adjacent householders. Should the Association be sued for causing a nuisance then the association will respond by suing the member responsible for lighting the bonfire.

Reason:

To eliminate bonfire nuisance during the months of October and April when the weather can be warm and sunny and neighbours to the site could be using and enjoying their gardens.

Tenancy Agreement [para 3q (ii)]

Tenant notice to leave reduced to one month [3q(ii)]

A change from six months to one month for notice period to be given by tenant.

The previous wording read:

q). The tenancy may also be determined in the following manners:-
i) By the Association giving the Tenant six months previous notice in writing expiring on or before the thirty first day of March or on or before the twenty-ninth day of September in any year
ii) By the Tenant giving to the Association six months previous notice in writing expiring on or before the thirty first day of March or on or before the twenty-ninth day of September in any year

The proposed wording is:

q). The tenancy may also be determined in the following manners:-

- i) By the Association giving the Tenant six months previous notice in writing expiring on or before the thirty first day of March or on or before the twenty-ninth day of September in any year
- ii) By the Tenant giving to the Association **one month notice in writing**

Reason:

To simplify the wording and reduce the amount of notice a tenant has to give to quit the plot. This revised wording reflects what happens in practice. With long waiting lists, a six-month notice period is a barrier to getting new plot holders onto the site.

Membership and its benefits:

The second matter which I draw members attention to is the benefits of being a member of the Beauchamp Road & Green Lane Allotment Association.

For the annual fee of £12 per person (adults only) plot holders gain access to the site, are able to rent a plot, are covered by the group insurance on site and become affiliated members of the Esher & Molesey Garden Society (EMGS). The EMGS started life in 1917 as the Esher District Allotments and Home Produce Association, and has provided its members with continuous service for over a century. We are fortunate that the EMGS has a trading hut on our site which is open to members of the BRGL Allotment Association.

To be certain of being covered by our insurance policy (including Public Liabilities of the Club, its Members and its Landlords and Employers' Liability) each adult who uses a plot needs to be a paid- up Member and pay the annual fee. Typically, a family would have two adults using a plot and would be required to pay £24 for their membership fee. Typically, an adult who uses a plot just for themselves, would pay a membership fee of £12. We will be doing some work to ensure that all members are recorded on our data base so as to make sure that insurance cover is in place. If you are in any doubt as to whether you are covered, please check your annual invoice which will show the names of all members who are covered.

A separate item on the amount of membership fees and plot fees is included in the Treasurer's report.

The changes to the Tenancy Agreement regarding bonfires proposed by John Parker-Jones and seconded by Jeremy Schomberg were agreed by a show of hands.

The changes to the Tenancy Agreement regarding Notice proposed by John Parker-Jones and seconded by Douglas Watson were agreed by a show of hands.

Regarding the Membership, Elaine queried how she would know if she and Deiter were both members. John explained that work was being done on the records to make this clear. Ann stated that this would be clear on the invoices sent out in April.

Sandra said that as she usually did the work on the plot and Martin came down occasionally, should he be a member as well. Ann said that for insurance purposes he should be. Ann said that this was not a new thing. This would be pointed out on the invoice. John said that it would be put on the website and Facebook by Sarah. Elaine asked if the website was only on Facebook. Ann said that the allotment had details of the website information etc on the gate and notice boards.

5. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of Accounts

We now have the Treasurer's Report and Adoption of the Accounts so I will hand over to Douglas Watson our Treasurer to give his report.

The accounts were adopted by a show of hands.

Treasurer's Report **Financial Year to 31 October 2021**

Good evening, I trust you all have access to a copy of the Summary Accounts.

A copy of the audited Summary Accounts has been shared with Members. The plot rental and subscription revenues remain healthy and reflect the strong membership.

Revenues

In terms of the annual results, the rents amounted to just over £4,000 and the membership subscriptions came to almost £1,800. I will take this opportunity to remind members that being a paid-up Member is a prerequisite for having a plot and accessing the site as we are a membership-based Association.

I would also like to remind members that when paying the rents, prompt payment is appreciated.

We parted with the trailer during the year. Our supply of manure dried up and the trailer required considerable expenditure to keep it roadworthy, the cost of which did not balance with it being idle. Additionally, we were going face parking fees to keep it a secure area. The amount raised was £1,200 as it was sold in a 'spares or repair' state (i.e. non-roadworthy).

Expenditure

Total expenditure was just over £4,500. The key area of expenditure this year was *maintenance* at £1,500 (one third of our costs) and *skip hire* of over £800 spent (18%). This latter item is due to a small number of Members departing from the Association and leaving the Committee with huge

amounts of rubbish. *Water* was almost £700 (15%) and is less than last year due to the rather wet summer.

Potential Liabilities

The contingency for water repairs has been increased substantially. Our pipework is aging and this revised figure partially represents the likely cost of having professionals on site to re-pipe/ repair etc. This contingency remains conservative and, in terms of prudence, is likely to increase again.

Internet Banking

Online banking has been a great success with over 100 payments made online. A small number of members have had issues with registering the BRGL bank account with their own bank account - the suggestion is to double check the details have been entered correctly and consider accepting the account. Please note that we track payment through the invoice number as indicated (which changes every year) - **PLEASE USE THIS REFERENCE OTHERWISE WE CANNOT TRACK YOUR PAYMENT.** It is simple to add this to the payment 'reference' section in the online transaction.

Rent and Subscription Fees Increase

The Association has kept the same level of fees for almost a decade. The subject of annual increases was raised in the AGM of 2013 and it was agreed with the Membership that fee increases would be linked to the annual CPI increase (as published by the UK Government ONS).

This year we undertook a detailed fee review and the resulting fee calculations are £25 per half plot and £15 for Membership. These revised fees will apply from 1 April 2022. We are still very value competitive compared to a number of other allotments in the area.

Please note that the Membership fee includes both a contribution to EMGS (to which Association Members are also EMGS members) and a small contribution to the annual Pumpkin Party (previously we used to produce chargeable tickets to the annual party).

The rationale behind the increase is that we will be facing increasing contingent liability for the water onsite water supply network and our operating costs are expected to increase noticeably over the coming years. Hopefully, we won't need to revisit this matter for a number of years.

Auditor

Finally, the Committee would like to thank Trevor Marshall for once again Auditing and approving the books.

Thank you.

Douglas Watson

Regarding the internet banking Douglas said that due to the length of the name, "Beauchamp Road & Green Lane Allotment Association" plot holders

were having difficulty registering the account. Douglas suggested that this could be overcome by accepting it as a Bona fide" account.

Regarding plot fee/Membership increase, Jeremy proposed this, Ron seconded it and it was passed by a show of hands.

Douglas proposed a vote of thanks to Trevor Marsh for doing the Audit and Ann seconded this.

Andrew (97N) asked if the rationale behind the increases would be explained when this was due to take place. Douglas said that it was in his report. John suggested that Sarah could put this on Facebook.

6. Membership Secretary's report

It has been a pleasure to have had the opportunity to be the membership secretary of the association and I would like to take the time to say a big thank you to all the new plot holders who I have had the chance to meet this year. As well as some of the current members that I have met for the first time during the 2021 season. I would also like to thank my fellow committee members for their time and help over this year.

We started off the 2020/21 season with a healthy waiting list of 32 people. These people have been added to the waiting list during 2020, with a sharp rise in enquiries during the corona virus pandemic. This heightened interest is taking on an allotment and growing your own continued throughout the period, with the waiting list increasing month on month, and we ended the season with a waiting list of 71 people. It will take around three years to clear the waiting list, so in September 2021 the committee decided to close the waiting list and review the numbers again in a year's time.

I am pleased to say that during the year we signed up 23 new members onto spare plots as they became available, and we are ending the year with one spare plot to fill.

So in summary, interest in having an allotment during these highly unusual times has continued to grow, and we have had a very productive year, with some new great plot holders.

Lucy Eddington

Membership secretary (appointed October 2021)

7. Election of Committee Members.

Chairperson
Secretary
Treasurer

Ann Bailey (for re-election)
John Parker Jones (for re-election)
Douglas Watson (for re-election)

Membership Secretary Lucy Edington
Website & Facebook Sarah Cheshire
Committee Member Jeremy Schomberg (for re-election)
Committee Member Linda Thomas (for re-election)
Committee Member Ron Bailey (for re-election)

Ann asked if attendees would be happy to re-elect the Committee en block. If no one has any objections may I have a show of hands to vote in all these members onto the Committee for 2021/2022.

Any objections

There were no objections and there was a show of hands to vote in all the Committee members.

Ann thanked the members of the Committee especially John and Lucy who stepped in when she was recovering from hip replacement surgery.

8. Any Other Business

Elaine Klander said that there was a big dip in the car park near the toilets. She said that she and others had found it to be a hazard and were concerned it was a Health and Safety issue. Ann Bailey explained that this was where the cesspit cover joined the car park and that it had recently been covered with brambles which had been removed. Jeremy Schomberg agreed to have a look at the area to see if the area can be screened in any way for greater safety.

Sandra Taylor asked about the manure delivery situation now the trailer had been sold. Jeremy said that he has been making enquiries about a new supply and will let the allotment know if it would continue albeit infrequently and with a smaller amount.

Sandra asked if the Committee still had a supply of Mypex. Ann and Jeremy said there was and Ann had a note of the size and price. All it needed was to be cut to length. This exercise requires 3 people to facilitate. Sandra will liaise with Ann to arrange supply.

9. Date and time of next AGM

- a. Wednesday 23rd November 2022

The AGM closed at 8.30pm

