

**BEAUCHAMP ROAD AND GREEN LANE ALLOTMENT
ASSOCIATION**
Minutes of the AGM Wednesday 27 November, 2019

Present

Ann Bailey, Ron Bailey, Douglas Watson, Duncan Toms Jeremy Schomberg, John Parker-Jones, Vicky Moore, Linda Thomas, Frederick Catling, David Sleep, Elsie Shaughnessy, Rob Poole, Richard Farmiloe, Alan Howard, Annie Barrett, Carolyn Avery, Tony Speller (EMGS), Andy Nunn, Erica Nunn, Melissa Joy, Anthony Barnes

1. Welcome and Apologies

Good evening and Welcome to you all.
Having stood down as the Chairman I find myself here again and about to serve a 7th year – however this would not have been possible without the wonderful support of the Committee who I should like to thank most sincerely and now introduce.

Apologies for Absence.

Keith Davies, Jane Poole, Andrew Gee, James Moore, Trevor Marshall.

Ann advised members that three long-standing allotment holders have passed away this past year Angus Turner, Terri Williams and Sandra Turner. They will all be sadly missed.

2. Adoption of the Minutes from the last AGM

There was a show of hands and the Minutes of 2018 were adopted.

3. Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

4. Chairman's Report

I should like to thank all members of the Committee for their hard work, time and commitment to the Association and to me again as Chairman.

Contributions from all plot holders are welcomed and if you feel you would like to join the Committee and lend a hand to help in the running and maintenance of our site it would be much appreciated. Without the valuable work of our dedicated Committee we would not be able to maintain our site for everyone's benefit.

We have had a skip on site this year – well used by members and every nook and cranny filled. We will continue with this practice and signage will go up on the notice boards and web site and Facebook to alert plot holders of the dates in the New Year. Keep a look out.

Duncan Toms has done sterling work as both Secretary and Membership Secretary. He has been an invaluable member of the Committee. We now have a new plot holder who has volunteered and will be standing for election as Secretary. We are very

grateful to John Parker Jones and look forward to having him in the team.

Douglas Watson has, again kept our finances in good order and he will report fully at the AGM. Thanks are due again to Jane Poole for keeping our toilet clean – please help by leaving it, as you would wish to find it!! Sincere thanks to Jane. A reminder do not flush the blue hand towel down the toilet – it blocks the system, which results in temporary closure. Victoria keeps our Facebook Page, web site and noticeboard humorously up to date. Join in and let us have your feedback. Linda Thomas takes our Minutes – perfectly and also at the AGM this year. Thank you all for your contributions.

Jeremy Schomberg, another invaluable member of the Committee has kept a watch over the manure pile and regularly heaps it off the roadway. Please ensure you leave the area tidy when you collect manure and do not trail it across the pathways. Deliveries continue to be made on Tuesdays and Fridays.

Thanks are due as always to Richard Farmiloe, who whilst not a Committee members is a great support and help turning our water off, before the frosts and back on again in the Spring and deals with our leaks and repairs. He is also creating new more robust water tank covers for us – which we hope to have in place before too long. A reminder – do not wash vegetables in the tanks – it blocks the pipework. Use a bucket or the tap.

It has been another challenging year for plot holders. However, I am not going to go into the vagaries of the weather this past twelve months. Suffice to say we had some exceptional crops and others were very disappointing. Keep digging and enjoying the challenge, the fresh air, and camaraderie on the site.

Please remember that there is clear signage on site and everyone has received a copy of the very strict rules we have concerning bonfires. If Elmbridge receives further complaints we may be banned from having ANY bonfires in the future. If it is windy – no bonfire- if items for burning are wet or still green – they will smoke – no bonfire. If in doubt – no bonfire please. Thoughtless action will impact on all plot holders. ***I should like to add that if a member of the Committee ask you to put a bonfire out – please do so. Abuse and rudeness at this request is not acceptable and you will risk having your plot lease terminated. Fair warning!***

Our Pumpkin Party on Sunday 6 October – despite the high winds and a couple of heavy showers, was a great success and well supported. Thank you to Philip Finch for his expert judging. Thanks to Sandra and Martin Taylor and Richard Farmiloe for helping on the day, together with Vicky, Ron, Douglas and Elsie, Jane and Rob. The winning pumpkin was grown by Michelle and Marian and measured 1720mm in Second Place were Eliza and Jan Braszkowski with a pumpkin measuring 1620mm and in Third Place – Steve Plumbridge with 1522mm. Well done to everyone who competed and joined in the fun on the day.

Thank you to Vicki Moore for sourcing our pumpkin seeds and Vicki, Douglas and Elsie for packing and posting them to all plot holders.

The roadways will again be closed when the water is turned off to protect the lanes from damage. They will be reopened when the water is turned back on in early Spring.

ANN BAILEY
Chairman

5. Treasurer's Report and Adoption of Accounts

Financial Year to 31 October 2019 – Douglas Watson

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

The plot rental and subscription revenue remain healthy and reflects our strong membership. I will take this opportunity to remind members that the subscription is a prerequisite for having a plot, as we are a membership-based Association.

I would also like to remind members that when paying the rents that prompt payment is appreciated, as we are all volunteers having to chase people for their rents is costly and time consuming which I for one could do with-out (it took over six months to collect all the subscriptions this year).

The key area of expenditure this year was on water with more than a third of the total (35%), due largely

to the dry summer and good occupancy/ cultivation on the allotment. [Note that in 2018 the water bill appeared low as we had been over-billed and paid in the previous period.] Our expenditure on maintenance was the second highest category at 28%. As always, we make continuous investment in making sure that the allotment is up to scratch. Member turnover this year meant that we have had the task of ensuring plots are reasonably clear ready for new members.

The BRGL sponsored the annual Pumpkin Party, the cost of which is included in the membership, and similarly to last year came to around five hundred pounds (including the seeds mailed to members). This is included in the 'Events' section of the account's, which also includes the AGM expenses.

Elmbridge Council doubled our rents this year (from a low base) and backdated the increase 3 years.

Last year's investment in the trailer to ferry regular supplies of manure to the allotment has been a resounding success and the trailer remains a financial asset on our books.

We reviewed increasing rents broadly in line with inflation for next year. Indexing rents was voted and agreed at the AGM 6 years ago, however, we are maintaining the rents at the same level for next year. Particularly as the allotment's capital base remains reasonable.

During the year we investigated changing banks to enable online payments. However, the outcome is

that in the short term we will not change banks. Although it might be marginally easier for payments from a small number of members who rely on electronic banking, the trade-off is an increased workload on collating the accounts, as we will continue to accept cheque and cash payments.

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

There was a show of hands to adopt the accounts.

6. Membership Update Report 2019 – Duncan Toms Secretary and Membership Secretary

It has been a pleasure to have once again had the opportunity to be the membership secretary of the association and I would like to take the time to say a big thankyou 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 2019 season. It would also be remiss of me not to take the time to thank Ann and the other members of the committee for their time and help over this year.

We started off the 2019 season with a healthy waiting list of 20 people, these had been added on during the Autumn of 2018 following another successful marketing campaign on social media. We also had 7 plots free at the beginning of the year so that we could start off the process of getting new members onto plots as soon as the spring had sprung!

We also carried out a couple of reviews during the start of the season which allowed us to identify more unused plots that we could re allocate to new members.

I am pleased to say that during the spring and summer we managed to sign up 17 new members onto vacant plots, 9 in April 4 in June and 4 more in July. This meant that we cleared our waiting list and our vacant plot list!

We then started to advertise for a new set of people to join our waiting list and following another successful marketing blitz on social media we had 16 new people register an interest to join the association. We had 2 plots become available so managed to take on another 2 new members in September.

We now have a healthy waiting list of 17 people, and recently we have had 5 plots become available to show.

So, in summary we have had a very productive year, with new 19 new association members joining us through the spring and summer, we managed to clear our old waiting list and now have a new and very healthy waiting list.

7. Election of Committee Members

Those members of the Committee who are up for – re-election and thankfully prepared to stand again are:-

Ron Bailey and myself Ann Bailey.

I am delighted to also invite you to welcome John Parker-Jones who has offered to take over as Secretary of the Association and who will work alongside Duncan in his capacity as Membership Secretary.

If no one has any objections may I have a show of hands to vote all these members onto the Committee for 2020/2021.

They were voted in by a unanimous show of hands.

9. Any Other Business

Keith Davies sent an email regarding the water pressure on the allotment. This will be discussed by the Committee in the New Year. Richard Farmiloe will be consulted as to a possible remedy.

David Sleep said that originally there were only four tanks on the site but Richard Farmiloe said that there are now 12.

Richard Farmiloe explained that there were two water meters on the allotment, but the one covering eight tanks and the toilet used less water than the meter covering just four tanks. Andy Nunn suggested that there could be a water leak and this could be checked while the water was turned off. Andy Nunn has agreed to assist the Committee in an advisory capacity so that he can help Richard Farmiloe. This offer was much appreciated.

Victoria Moore asked if there were any volunteers to join the Committee. Unfortunately, there were no volunteers.

Fred Catling stated that there were numerous slow worms on his allotment and that as they were a protected species, could he erect a protective fence around the area. It was generally felt that they would be safe under the carpet on this plot.

Tony Speller from EMGS explained that they were going paperless and their newsletters would be sent by email in the New Year. Ann Bailey said that the allotment members were delighted that EMGS were staying on the site and that the new trading hut looked very smart with its new roof and freshly painted doors.

David Sleep requested that, due to problems with his sight, could any information that was posted on the notice board or sent by post be sent to him by email.

The meeting closed at 8.15 and refreshments were served.