

SALTERSGILL ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF PLOTHOLDERS
SUNDAY, 21st NOVEMBER 2021

PRESENT:

Committee Members: Sybil Taylor (Temporary Chairperson), Craig Story (Treasurer), John Appleby (Secretary), Phil Gibson, Joe Fisher, Billy Holdsworth, Joe Keir and 16 Plotholders.

APOLOGIES:

Keith Lewis, Barrie Kearney, Denis McNally

1. INTRODUCTIONS AND WELCOME FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

The Chairperson, who for the purpose of this meeting was Sybil Taylor, welcomed everyone to this the 6th Annual General Meeting of the Association. She explained that due to the resignation of the Chairman, Peter Whelan, she would be taking on the temporary role.

2. MINUTES OF LAST AGM

The minutes of the last AGM on the 28th April 2019 and a Yearly Review Letter dated 15th April 2021 were accepted. A few copies were available at the meeting for inspection or these could be emailed out if requested.

Proposed: Ronnie Ward

Seconded: Ian Ford.

3. MATTERS ARISING

None.

4. CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

Sybil said that it was two years since our last Annual General Meeting and during this time we have sadly lost a number of plotholders due to Covid. Hopefully we are passed the worst and we can move on to a more normal life, if that's at all possible now.

The site continues to run effectively due in main to the Committee and volunteers. It's a big job keeping the site running well and we are always looking for more volunteers to help out even if it can only be occasionally. We do though understand people lead busy lives and time is at a premium. If you feel you can spare some time then please let a Committee member know you are willing to help and fulfil some of the functions involved.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Craig gave a financial update and said that SAA is solvent and our account had maintained a stable balance at the start of the previous four financial years of around £17.5K. This is in line with previously stated wishes of the SAA to keep around £15K contingency funds.

Craig stated that our number one expense is on water at £4,111 last year. The only obvious way to bear down on our water usage is to remind plotholders that the use of sprinklers is very wasteful of water and is specifically disallowed in our site rules.

The second biggest expense is rubbish removal at £2,800. Plot holders were reminded to remain vigilant regarding fly tippers on the site and to abide by the rules regarding a maximum of two bags of rubbish per plot per month.

A question from the floor was received about the money spent on security at £2,385. Craig explained that this had been high as we had been paying a private security firm; AJW, to patrol the site for £150 per month

but that arrangement had now ended and we were no longer paying that money. We do have a security camera at the entrance to the site which sweeps around most of the allotments.

Ian Ford reminded the meeting that the money raised by the shop, after covering its costs is not a profit, it is a surplus belonging to the SAA which can be used to reduce plot holders rent. Typically the shop has paid £1,000 into the SAA main account each year, which equates to a £5 per plot reduction in rent.

Sybil explained that usually a £1,000 contribution had been made in previous years but unfortunately this year it wasn't passed over until April and therefore does not show in the 2020/2021 Accounts.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT

John mentioned that there were 80 people now on the waiting list with only one plot being available.

Concerns regarding the manner in which plots were let and whether this was covered in the constitution was raised by Guru Naidoo.

John explained that in his experience having seen approximately 500 people only two have stayed the course. Word of mouth had been very successful and that this was his preferred method of use. Jim Skivington, Peter Bland and Ian Ford all stated that this system was working, He did say that if he was on the waiting list then perhaps he might feel differently. He also said that in future it maybe possible to split double plots when they become empty

After lengthy discussion about the options for allocating a tenant, and what our constitution says about that process ie the constitution does not specify how tenants should be allocated, the members agreed that the best solution was that the allocation of plots and selection of new tenants is the responsibility and at the discretion of the Secretary.

With regard to uncultivated plots, John explained that whilst the Committee do not go round measuring the percentage of cultivated ground in each plot, they do take action (in the form of a non-compliance letter) where a plot is clearly not being cultivated. Any unused plots should be released for use given the high level of demand.

John introduced Joe Fisher as the person to contact for weed killer and Phil Gibson who would be looking after pest control.

He mentioned that Michael Wright had asked for permission to take on more Gardens as part of the Community Gardens Scheme but after discussion with all concerned agreed not to take it further.

7. SHOP

Sybil said that after nearly five years running the shop with Chris Allen until he resigned from the Committee it was time to hand over the reins and this was done on the 30th September. The team now running the shop is Joe Keir, Lynn Waters and Michael Wright.

Joe reported that the transition period went smoothly with the three co-ordinators taking on individual roles such as the quarterly staffing rota, sourcing and monitoring stock, weekly cash reconciliation and banking, recording income and expenditure to provide accurate monthly updates.

He said the aim of the shop was to continue to provide plot holders with a useful onsite shop with any profit being ploughed back into SAA for the benefit of all plot holders. Any ideas on how the shop can improve on stock and the service currently provided would be welcome.

There will be additional shop opening days over Christmas, ie Wednesday, 22nd and 29th December and the usual Saturday opening, 18th December and 8th January. These dates will be advertised on the SAA website and Facebook as well as the chalkboards and notice boards.

8. COMMITTEE for 2021-2022

Since our last AGM we have had three resignations from the Committee, namely Chris Allen, Peter Whelan and Eric Benson. Two members, Joe Keir and Barrie Kearney were co-opted.

At the meeting Peter Bland, Plot No 57 agreed to join the Committee.

Plotolders had been invited to nominate members for membership to the Committee but as there were no further nominations there was no need for an election to take place as the present Committee were happy to continue along with Peter.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Ian Ford thanked the Committee for all their work, time and effort put into running the site.

As there was no other business, the meeting closed at 11.00 a.m.