

HAA Meeting

12th January 2022

Attending: Julie-Ann Vickers (41a), Helen Butt and Sarah Hill (50), Nazim Ali Bharmal (40a), Paul Graham (37,20), Chris Bishop (8), Paul and Toni Bunnell (42,43,44), Sally Hodgkinson (46a), Ruth Patterson (3b), Pete Baker (49), Jessica Loveland (35B), Nicola Neale (5b) Jenny and George Hay (25), Matthew Irwin and son (55b), John Dowson (4a)

Chair: Julie-Ann Vickers

Minutes: Helen Butt

1. **Apologies**

Bob Hervey, Ruth Jennaway, Sue Lonsdale, John Horsfield

2. **Presentation to Paul Graham**

We thanked PG for his hard work and commitment over 20 years as Site Secretary at Holgate allotments as he now stands down. TB, HB and J-AV presented PG with gifts and cards from the plot holders, YACIO and HAA respectively.

3. **Chair's report**

2021 has been a quiet year due to the ongoing COVID-19 situation. West Bank Fair was cancelled again, but we hope to be able to take a stall this year. We held a successful apple pressing and pizza day in October and hope to make this an annual event. We successfully secured £10,000 funding from the National Lottery to develop the Orchard and Apiary project. A site inspection was undertaken in September to help deal with uncultivated plots and reduce the waiting list. A follow up inspection will take place in February. PG stepped down as Site Secretary at the end of 2021.

Action: Further plot inspection in February

4. **Treasurer's report**

In reserve at the end of the year (2021) was £715 for Carriage Garden and £9,700 for Holgate Community Orchard and Apiary.

Income was £294 plus £10,000 from the National Lottery Community Grant for Holgate Community Orchard and Apiary.

Outgoings were £701.

Available unrestricted balance is £758.

Carriage Garden repair work and improvements will be funded from restricted funds.

5. **Site Secretary's report**

PG reported on the difficulty of contacting people on the waiting list and ensuring that plots are taken up once they are offered. An email has been sent by YACIO to the waiting list to establish up-to-date interest. Jenny H queried how long plots needed to be left before they could be re-let. HB confirmed that once given notice by YACIO, tenants have 30 days to clear their plot and it can then be re-let. However, YACIO are not legally able to re-let plots during the year if tenants do not inform

YACIO in writing that they are giving up. This is because tenants have paid a yearly rent for the plot. This can lead to plots becoming overgrown. JD questioned whether there were break points during the year which allowed for partial refunds for outgoing tenants. This might provide an incentive for plot holders to inform YACIO of their intentions in good time.

Action: Site Secretaries to contact people on the waiting list.

HB to confirm YACIO rules on partial refunds and break clause.

6. **Orchard and Apiary**

HB introduced the Orchard and Apiary project and distributed some boards showing the proposed design and planting scheme for the area. Members were asked for their views and there was a favourable reaction to the plans. PB flagged up the need to plan for maintenance. HB suggested that GoodGym might be engaged in the long term to help with this. Dates for the next working party digs were advertised. MI asked if the project fencing might be extended to cover the corner of his plot. J-AV explained that the funding would only cover the fencing as planned, but suggested that some mature hedging trees which are to be removed from the allotment site might be used instead.

Action: J-AV to contact MI to discuss hedging

GoodGym evening digs planned for 13th and 27th January at 6.30pm

Orchard digging session planned for 23rd January at 10.30am

More working party events to be planned for Spring

7. **Finances**

NAB explained that HAA currently has no membership fee. This was introduced in 2020 to cut down on admin and to allow all plot holders to automatically become members. However, last year we ran a deficit. The cancellation of West Bank Park fair is largely responsible, but this is not sustainable in the long term. It was agreed that HAA would operate on a no fee basis for this year and that membership would be reviewed next year.

Action: Membership fees to be reviewed next year.

8. **Site Secretary role**

There have been no applications for the vacant site secretary role. J-AV, NAB and HB have agreed to share the role on a temporary basis until it is re-advertised by YACIO in April. The scope of the site secretary job was discussed and PB and JD both raised concerns about who to contact for various issues - YACIO, Site Secretary or Police - in the event of leaking taps or vandalism. J-AV confirmed that Site Secretaries were YACIO's representatives on the allotment and so are the first point of contact for most issues. Any maintenance issues should come to Site Secretaries who would pass them onto YACIO. However, all vandalism should be reported directly to the Police prior to informing the Site Secretary.

MI expressed an interest in taking on this role on a job share basis.

Action: Site Secretaries to provide relevant information on the site noticeboard.

9. **Carriage Garden**

There are several maintenance tasks to undertake in the Carriage Garden, and it is proposed that the monthly working groups restart in Spring.

RP flagged up the possible psychological barriers to accessing the Carriage Garden for new plot holders and those at the opposite end of the site. CB confirmed that the Carriage Garden is for all plot holders to enjoy. The space can also be booked by members and anyone interested should email her. We have signed up for the Big Garden Birdwatch 28-30 January and will be spotting from the Carriage Garden on Sunday 30th January.

PG raised a concern that the St Paul's School plot within the Carriage Garden area has not been worked since it was initially cleared by GoodGym and wondered whether the school were still committed to working it.

Action: PG to send contact details for St Paul's School to J-AV to chase.

CB to advertise Birdwatch.

10. **Manure deliveries**

Clancy's have declined to delivery manure to the allotments due to the difficulty with access. Alternative suppliers were discussed. JD asked about the possibility of having YACIO membership cards which would allow discounts at local garden centres.

Action: Sally H will investigate Foss Farm Foods as a potential supplier.

HAA members to supply contact details of any other potential suppliers to the committee so that a new source of manure can be secured.

HB to suggest a membership card to YACIO.

11. **AOB**

None

12. **Date of next meeting**

TBC