

Annual General meeting | 21 January 2012 Minutes

Present

Erwan Guillo Lohan <i>Chair</i>	Nina Pope	Loothfur Sattar
Tim French <i>Vice-Chair</i>	Andreas Lang	Jason Lennon
Lydia Thornley <i>Secretary</i>	Torange Khonsari	George
Ashley McCormick	Alison Gibson	[New visitor]
Hamish Liddle	Fiona Pettitt	Apologies: Dasha French <i>Treasurer</i>
Jen Currier	Louis French	Charlie Seber

Topics

Introduction

- Main business of the meeting noted as delivering Chair's and Treasurer's reports, electing new officers and all other topics fall into Any Other Business

Chair's report

- Initial run-through of year via notes made at last year's strategy meeting:
 - We are still engaged in the activities we said we enjoyed and getting the same environmental, health and social benefit from those activities
 - We have got better at achieving the mix of gardening, social club and events that we wanted
 - We are changing legal structure as planned while fulfilling our aim of staying as we are in activity
- Delivery of Chair's report [Please see full document available separately].
Brief summary:
 - Core group has almost doubled and increased in diversity
 - Reputation has grown: we have been visited by other gardening groups starting up, students and Radio 4
 - Innovation: we have built a compost shed from recycled materials and converted the tool store into a mushroom shed
 - Variety of events on-site and outreach in and outside the borough
 - Achievements: judged 'thriving' by RHS and London in Bloom; in the National Gardens Scheme Yellow Book; participated in Open Garden Squares Weekend
 - Finance: we have both received funding and generated funds via cake and honesty stall sales and outreach events and we start the year with a healthy £4,500 in the bank against £1,500 last year
 - End of grant report has been submitted to the Tudor Trust for last year's grant; thanks to Alison, Cath and everyone involved
 - Structure: Charity status has been on hold pending election of new Treasurer and Secretary
 - Sustainability: will come from continuing to be innovative and reaching beyond Newham
 - Olympics: interest in seeing how the Olympics affect the garden

Finance and fundraising

- | Run-through of finance report by treasurer Dasha French [Please see document available separately]
- | Aim is to ask for less funding this year and become more self-sustaining
- | Funding applications submitted to Tudor Trust for £6,000 for garden club leader and £1,000 for fully-accessible portable toilet and to Comic relief for £8,000 which if we get both may be allocated to the next gardening year. Applications in progress to City Bridge Trust, Esmée Fairbairn Foundation and the Co-operative Bank, the latter possibly to fund Mind sessions where cuts might rule out NHS funding
- | Chiltern Seeds are continuing to sponsor us with seeds and seed order has been placed
- | Suggestion [Nina] to aim for cash reserve so that we feel confident of being able to start Garden Club Leader sessions at the start of the year

Renewal of key positions

- | With Charity status, the three key management positions will be Trustee roles
- | Chair: Erwan Guillo Lohan to remain Chair
Nominated by Andreas; seconded by Ashley; voted-in
- | Treasurer: Ashley McCormick expressed interest and set out project budgeting experience. Desire for closer working with fundraising group. Dasha to hand over to Ashley
Nominated by Andreas; seconded by Lydia; voted-in
- | Secretary: Lydia Thornley set out job description of role before and after incorporation and introduced applicant Fiona Bloom (unable to attend due to prior engagement) contact via Somewhere project and the What Will The Harvest Be Facebook group - a secretary who would like to get involved in the garden as an administrator and volunteer. Lydia to hand over to Fiona and be 'buddy' over first few months as Fiona is new to the group. Motion carried to call an Extraordinary General Meeting to coincide with the 4 February monthly meeting, welcome Fiona to the group and elect her as the new Secretary. Thanks given to Lydia
- | Additional two Trustees to be Nina and Andreas to maintain vision for the garden
- | Vote for whether we need a Vice-Chair: "no" carried
- | Non-Trustee sub-group posts:
 - Fundraising team to remain as Alison and Fiona. Thanks given to fundraising team
 - Hamish to become outreach coordinator with Loothfur helping
 - Events: Torange standing down; Lydia to join Jen in events team with Loothfur helping
 - Infrastructure and maintenance to remain as Louis and Tim

AOB:

Events

- | Events already in diary: Open Gardens 9+10 June + Summer Fair, possibly coinciding with Chelsea fringe; NGS 8 Sept + Harvest Festival
- | RHS National Gardening Week beginning April 14-15 could coincide with our Spring event
- | Proposed Olympics events to be checked against latest Council guidance and volunteer availability
- | Have joined Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens - possible events tie-in potential
- | Possibility of Queen's Jubilee event
- | Event ideas to be brought to Spring meeting

Lease renewal and Somewhere three-year phase coming to an end

- | Decision to renew lease: Liz Shearer to be contacted for information [Erwan]
- | Thanks given to Somewhere
- | Decision carried to seek Somewhere's involvement if maintenance or other issues require discussion of design

- Infrastrucure**
- | Greenhouse: materials costs of just over £200 approved
 - | Floor behind shed for trolley: Andreas to look at existing materials
 - | DLR station border to be fixed
 - | Maintenance of beds: Louis and Tim
 - | Toilet: portable fully-accessible toilet in the short-term; permanent composting and plumbed options to be researched
 - | Ivy: Hamish to remove; Council will shred on-site
 - | Compost: another delivery needed May/June
 - | Some of the compost store boards to be repaired [Louis and Tim]
 - | Garden sessions to restart on 3 March with Saturday only 10-3 until funding enables us to resume Tuesday and Thursday sessions with Saturday 10-4
 - | Children's indoor play area proposed by Ava; agreed to research covered area in the garden as alternative which can also be used for event workshops. Ava to prepare drawings to discuss with Louis and Tim
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- Marketing**
- | Discussion of the need for more social networking: Ollie to be approached to set up Facebook page and run the Twitter feed
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- Food**
- | Proposal from Nina to look at more food-related events, both formal and informal and developing good practice routine
 - | Suggestion from George to have cooking at end of new longer Saturday sessions
 - | Louis and Tim to look at fixed secure position for gas bottles
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- February gardening jobs**
- | Clean-up and stocktake: proposed for morning of 4 Feb before meeting
 - | Weeding
 - | Note to take care not to put compost on non-compost beds: recommendation to follow those beds which have already been composted with more if needed