

MINUTES OF CAAGA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, 7.30pm, Thursday 7th December 2023 in The Hutch.

Present: Martin Copeland (chair), Lucy Smickersgill, Gary Watt, Charles Egarr, Graham Jacob, Maria Spellacy, Dennis Noble, Evelyn Hazzard, Alyssa Powell, Claire Standage, Barry Back, Nadine Davies.

Apologies for absence: Jenny Dixon, John Duffy, Sue Johnson, Maggi Josefowicz, Margaret Back

The Notice of Meeting had been sent out, as under constitution.

Minutes of 2022 AGM were accepted as a true record. Proposed Charles Egarr, Seconded Alyssa Powell, agreed unanimously.

Matters Arising from the minutes. Re: organising the data for plotholders. Thanks to Gary/Lucy and a bit of Graham for doing this work, and clearing up the data. We now have a comprehensive and functional list.

Secretary's report: This is what we have discussed, and acted upon, at committee meetings this year.

Financially - we decided to put some of our money in a savings account, and we voted to change the way we collect CAAGA non-plot holder subscriptions. People can now sign up and pay by Direct Debit Go Cardless, which will automatically renew until they choose to stop.

We changed our email provider from Mailchimp, to a free-to-use alternative. And we cleared about 90 redundant names from the mailing list.

Around the site, we're getting the steps repaired, we've fought off Japanese knotweed, and David Sharples is helping with site maintenance. But not as a committee member.

With over 100 on the waiting list, we discussed, and consulted with Leeds City Council, whether to close the waiting list. We decided to keep it open, but warn would-be plotholders there might be a long wait. We also took the decision that new applicants would only be offered quarter or half plots.

Events: We had two shows and an open day. Also a juicing day, and a delayed bonfire. We paid visits to Harlow Carr, and The Orchard, a National Garden Scheme garden. We had talks from climate scientist Ryan Neely, who has proposed to put a weather station on the allotment site, and UK Permaculture CEO Andy Goldring. We're going to trawl in the new year for talks from other plotholders with interesting things to share.

And we discussed – many times and at length - the replacement for the toilet block. To be continued.

Letting Secretary's Report: This year Gary has let 37 plots, down on last year. He's carried out 4 site inspections, resulting in 63 uncultivated plot letters, with 6 of those being issued a termination letter, lower than last year. Due to demand, we have been

reducing as many plots as we can to half plots. The waiting list currently stands at 104, 63 more than this time last year. Waiting time is probably around 3 years. Currently 209 plotheholders, distributed as follows:

1 x 1/8th
84 x 1/4
5 x 1/3
156 x 1/2
1 x 3/4
24 x full

The digital version of the plot list and letting paperwork still going well.

Thank you to Gary. We're very lucky to have him as Letting Secretary.

Treasurer's report: (See attached accounts)

Our financial situation is healthy, we have around £6k more cash than this time last year, thanks to having no major expenditure this year. Thank you to tea/coffee sales, the shop and the shows for their income. We have been accumulating cash at a rate of around £5/6k per year.

For the first time, we sent rent letters out by email. This was very successful, only one was undelivered, and all except one plotheholder had paid by the due date.

Question: What happens if you don't pay on time? There's a £10 fine for anyone who's not paid by the end of October. If by 10th December you still haven't paid, it means automatic termination. But it's never come to that.

The savings account is working well, with most of our money being kept in there. We've received £140 in interest so far, with more to come this month.

Questions:-

Why is water income lower than water expenditure? Water charges are haphazard, and not always accurate. Graham offered to monitor the water meter, and look back over past 3 years, to check that we are not undercharging for water. GJ

Why is Greenhouses/Polytunnels in the accounts? When one is on a plot and Gary lets it, he sells it on to the new tenant.

Why is water income less this year than last year? – We changed the accounting period.

What does administration fees cover? Things like printers, stationery, laptop.

Re. Tea and coffees – a special thank you to Martin and to Lisa, they provide it all for free.

Thank you to Graham, for looking after finances.

The accounts were accepted as a true record. Proposed – Dennis Noble, Seconded Barry Back. All agreed.

Auditors report. Paul Riley, Director of treasury at Leeds Building Society, has inspected the accounts and confirms the accounts as presented are accurate. He is content to endorse them.

Membership fees for 2024/2025: Fees are currently £5 for non ploholders, £7 for plot holders. Proposed to leave them at the same rate for this year. Proposed Dennis Noble. Seconded Alyssa Powell. All in favour.

Discussion re why the difference £5 for non ploholders/£7 ploholders. General consensus that next time we put fees up, we make them the same rate.

Officials' honoraria 2023: We worked out a new scheme for this last year, based on Option 4 from 2022 minutes.

Secretary	18.00%
Show Secretary	12.00%
Lettings Secretary	18.00%
Treasurer	18.00%
Store manager	12.00%
Storekeeper	12.00%
Chair's allowance	10.00%

Currently honoraria is £2,200. Should it be higher?

Discussion: Why is this set by the AGM, when it is mostly committee members at the AGM? Could it be agreed instead by the trustees? Martin/Jenny/Barry to discuss at trustees meeting. MC/JD/BB

We discussed, and voted on, 3 options:-

Raise to £2,500	3 votes
Raise to £2,400	2 votes
Keep it the same.	6 votes

Decided to keep the honoraria at the same level this year.

Election of Officers and Committee:

Phil no longer wants to be stores manager, but will stay on for 2/3 months to help his successor.

Discussion re how to recruit a new stores manager. Decided to advertise more aggressively, give details of what the job involves, and appeal to members. Without a stores manager we have no DC.

Officers elected 2023:-

Chair	Martin Copeland
Secretary	Lucy Smickersgill
Letting Secretary	Gary Watt
Treasurer	Graham Jacob
Show Secretary	Nadine Davies
Stores Assistant	Dennis Noble
Stores Manager	Vacancy

All elected unanimously.

Ordinary members – Maria Spellacy, Sue Johnson, Maggi Josefowicz, Charles Egarr, Alyssa Powell, Evelyn Hazzard, John Duffy. And welcome to new committee member Claire Standage.

All elected unanimously.

To agree Programme of Events for 2024

We'll have our Spring and Autumn Shows again, last year with 2 shows worked well.

Other events:-

Roni has offered to do pruning and grafting workshops.

Could we do a cookery demo? Claire to check, there was a good one at the LAF day.

Harlow Carr – could we do a spring visit, April/May to see tulips.

Open Day

Seed Swap

We'll send out a general call for suggestions for other talks/visits.

Discussion: Could we do something for children? Maybe do an activity at the open day. Or maybe at the show – put games on downstairs, make most of space?

Could we do a summer social evening? A barbecue or some kind of fuddle. Chance to meet fellow ploholders, swap ideas. All in favour.

Any other ideas bring to next committee meeting.

Items of which members have given written notice to the Secretary. NONE.