**Minutes of LRRHAA Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 6 November - Rose Hill Community Centre**

Officers in Attendance

Jon Piggott. Trustee (and chair for the AGM, in the absence of a committee chair)

William Beinart Trustee

Arnold Harpin Treasurer

Khimding Devendra Committee Member

Ian Matten Committee Member

Theresa Gurl Committee Member

Colin Cavey Committee Member

Nick Van Hear Committee Member

C20 association members were in attendance

1 **Apologies:** Lorin Watt, Paul Wavell

2. **Minutes** of the previous AGM meeting held on 7 November 2017 were agreed and signed as a true record by Nick Van Hear.

3. **Matters arising**. A discussion took place regarding the tree on the edge of the Glebe field. It was confirmed that the association

hadn't paid for any work and that it had been carried out by the council.

4. **Committee report:**

Jon Piggott (as acting chair for the AGM) noted that as members are aware we have not had a chair this year**,** however the committee has continued with business as usual and committee members have rotated the chair position.

Members were asked to hold back their questions until all the reports were done.

Nick VH provided a summary of the year’s activities and challenges.

There had been three main challenges:

**No chair:** We started and ended the reporting year without a chair, which has presented some difficulties, but somehow we have muddled through, thanks to the efforts and good will of the committee members. So the committee deserves a bit of acknowledgement for that. Members were reminded that the cttee are volunteers, trying to do their best for the Association.

**Data protection legislation** came into force in May and presented us with another challenge, since it was not entirely clear the law should be interpreted. This affected our means of communication with members over the year. We effectively had to abandon our email address list (and postal address list) and start to reconstruct it from scratch by getting the express permission of members to use their email address. That process is still under way: members were asked, if they had not done so already, to please send in their email address and postal address to the cttee. We need to thank Arnold Harpin who bore the brunt of dealing with the data protection legislation, and Lorin Watt as well.

**Water.** Water is our biggest item of expenditure, and the hot, dry summer exacerbated the consumption. It also has to be said that consumption was raised even further by some people needlessly watering their plots, and/or doing so in the heat of the day, when almost all the water used evaporates. This is very frustrating, and unfair on those who use water more wisely, since everyone has to pick up the tab. The cttee is looking at ways to address this issue.

**Other issues:**

**Working parties** – one was poorly attended, but most have had 14 to 20+ participants, which is encouraging. Giving four hours per year to the association’s collective activities (mainly maintenance of the site) is an obligation of membership. Again we are looking into ways of addressing the issue of people who do not contribute. This can be done in many ways, not just by attending working parties. For example, some people beaver away in the background, mending wheel barrows, cutting the grass of the common areas, clearing up rubbish and so on (they include Colin Cavey, Terry Pike and Cathy Gibb; these and others do sterling work behind the scenes)

**Bonfires policy** – after complaints about smoke from neighbours at the height of the hot summer, it was decided to ban bonfires altogether in the summer months, and to restrict them to Mondays, Wednesday & Saturdays on other times of the year, with occasional communal bonfires on working party Sundays. That practice will continue until further notice.

**Summer party** – the cttee apologised for no-show this year: for various reasons we could not do it (not least, lack of people to organise it, despite Pearl’s best efforts. The cttee will set in motion arrangements for future parties much earlier this coming year: we will start to prepare around Easter, and we may bring forward the party to June-July instead of September. We will ask for views on this, and it would be good if someone other than committee members could take this on.

**Equipment,** including wheelbarrows and water butts. Despite the best efforts of Colin Cavey and Terry Pike, our stock of working wheelbarrows has dwindled. We cannot afford to replace them at the moment (we need rather to buy some more water butts, since the oil drums that we have are coming to the end of their lives). One problem in this regard is with people overloading them with watering cans full of water, which damages the barrows’ axles and wheels. We will think about banning this practice and fining people who do it.

**Respect for allotment rules.** A notice has been posted reminding allottees that they are not allowed to grow stuff for sale. People are allowed to supply the Iffley shop with surplus veg, for example, but are not allowed to grow stuff for commercial gain. This is against the allotment rules, and we think it is against the law. We will act against anyone who we find selling surplus crops in this way. So this is a reminder of need for **respect for allotment rules**, including the prohibitions on selling produce (just mentioned), keeping rubbish on site, wood chippings on common pathways and burning of non-organic material.

The **ODFAA** is due to hold its centenary in 2019 and we need to find out what is happening in that regard. Also Oxford-wide **lease renegotiations** are apparently under way, and we need to know what is happening on that front.

Brief report on **school visits and any other community-related matters**. We had two successful school visits, and welcome this engagement with the local community. We were invited to attend RHCC’s Volunteers Fayre (Sept 6th) but were not represented for lack of a volunteer to attend. We also participated in Iffley Open Gardens.

**Thanks.** Particular thanks are due toArnold, Lorin (who basically kept the show on the road: Lorin is currently abroad, but has agreed to continue as secretary, if elected, from after January – so one of the cttee will have to act as secretary pro tem), Terry, Cathy, Colin, and Pearl. Also Paul Wavell as lettings secretary, and Ian Matten, Jon Piggott, Garth Bottomley, William Beinart, Theresa Gurl and Devendra Khimding for their wisdom and good sense. We would like to thank the Nepali community for chipping in their labour for working parties. Also a big thank-you to Mariam Iqbal for improving and maintaining the website, which now looks really good. We would also like to acknowledge the enduring support over the years of David Penwarden, the late John Grimley Evans, and Corinne Grimley Evans, who are hanging up their spades in the year ahead. We need more help from other members chipping in an hour or two, or taking on a specific task.

In summary, it was noted that we have a good association and community here, which apart from the occasional hiccup, is run quite well, or at least we muddle through – though we’re always on the look-out for ways to improve and welcome suggestions you may have, now or later on.

5. **Treasurer's Report:** Arnold provided a summary of this year's accounts. A summary will be posted in due course.

**6. Letting Report.** In Paul Wavell’s absence, Nick stated that there had been a number of changes throughout the year with some members leaving and new ones joining, as usual. At the current time there is no waiting list and we have a couple of half plots available.

**7. Shop Report.** Jon Piggott provided a report on the shop, which made a modest surplus, and a donation to the Association of £30 cash and two wheelbarrows to the value of £46 (ie £76 in all).**8. Members feedback**

A number of comments questions were raised by the members present:

* what is happening with the pile of rubbish collected from the various working parties? Response: the committee is trying to make contact with the local metal merchant to come and take what they want and depending on the amount left we may need to get a skip. It was suggested that anyone could take rubbish to the waste site if they were going there.
* Why do we pay for the hedge to be cut and not do it ourselves? Response: the number of members who turn up for the working parties is not sufficient to get it done and it always falls to the same people
* How do we control the excessive use of water ? Response: this is difficult to enforce, it was agreed that the committee would look to put up additional signage and arrange for them to be translated into Nepali. It was also incumbent on all members to challenge members who are watering at the wrong time of day or too much
* There wasn't a party this year and it was suggested that we should have a joint party with the Nepalese community. The committee will make preparations much earlier next year and consult the Nepalese community.
* There are a number of unkempt plots that need to be tidied. Committee members will do a walk around and arrange for the allottees to be reminded of their responsibility to keep them tidy
* Some members expressed the need for a clear statement of the association’s finances

**9. Changes to constitution**

It was suggested that some aspects of the constitution and rules need to be revised to take account of some changes that need to be made: these are mainly inconsistences in the constitution/rules and matters that need tidying up. These changes had not been published or circulated in advance of the AGM, so it was accepted that these will need to be formally made at next year's meeting.

**10. Election of Officers**

The following officers were proposed, seconded and elected:

Cathy Gibbs Trustee

William Beinart Trustee

Jon Piggott Trustee

Nick Van Hear/Jon Piggott Chair: it was agreed that Jon and Nick would act as co/chairs

Arnold Harpin Treasurer

Lorin Watt Secretary

Paul Wavell Letting Secretary

Ian Matten Committee Member

Garth Bottomley Committee Member

Theresa Gurl Committee Member

Devendra Khimding Committee Member

Colin Cavey Committee Member

**11. Rent Increase**

A discussion took place regarding the financial situation partly resulting from the high water bill and Arnold put forward a proposal for a £2 increase on next year's rent. Those members present (with the exception of one member) voted for the proposal, which will be implemented from September 2019.

**12. Communicating with members**

Concern was raised over the issue of GDPR and how we are going to communicate with our members. There are still concerns about holding personal details and being responsible if the data gets into the wrong hands. There was a view from members that this wasn't such a difficult problem to resolve provided we have told the members what we will use their data for.

**13. AOB**

MI, who has been running the website, is to take over formally as the website lead

Auditors for next year: volunteers are sought to help audit next year’s accounts.

Members are reminded to make sure they keep the site tidy

There is a shed that needs to be removed at the next working party

As the roadways will close, the cttee will contact the manure man to let him know not to do any more deliveries

**Date of next AGM - November 12, 2019**