



**Minutes of a Meeting of the RA Council held on
Tuesday 13th July 2021, at via Zoom at 8pm**

Present: Emma Howard (Chair), Peter McCluskie (Hon Secretary), Steve Morris (Hon Treasurer), Tony Ghilchik (T&OS), Colin Gregory (T&OS), Helen Leiser (Consam), Simon Sackman (Consam), Ann Spencer (T&OS & Consam), Adrian Hodgson (Events), Shelley-Anne Salisbury (Publications), Judy Smith (Publications), Maria Schlatter (T&OS), Philip Okrent (Pavements), Selena Amado (RA Membership Secretary).

Guests present: Brian Ingram and Andrew Botterill

1. Note apologies and absences

Marie-Christine O'Callaghan (Publications) and Philip Harlow (Allotments) sent apologies. Philip sent a report which had been circulated to RA Council. Alan Brudney and Tony Brand were also unable to attend.

2. Questions from residents (submitted in advance)

- 2.1 A question from Brian Ingram had been circulated to Council as follows: *"What can be done so that Northway Gardens Organisation gets the publicity in Suburb News needed to raise the adequate funds and support as it brings back to life the Suburb Parks?"* Mr Ingram also stated that Northway Gardens Organisation relies heavily on SN for publicity and would like its other sponsors to be given publicity.
- 2.2 Shelley-Anne confirmed that coverage for Northway Gardens had already been featured in the previous 4 issues of SN. However, the park will be featured in SN 147 which will be circulated. Photos already captured by Peter McCluskie and others would be used. However, Shelley-Anne said that Mr Ingram or one of his committee members would need to supply appropriate text when he sends in photos. The Suburb Directory pull-out to keep section in SN145 had covered in detail how to donate money to NGO.
- 2.4 Northway Gardens could also be featured in Suburb eNews; Mr Ingram would need to supply an article. If any NGO sponsors would like to advertise in SN, they should email chair@hgsra.uk. The Chair said that the sponsors could not be given free advertising as part of their support of NGO.

3. Appointment of new Council member

- 3.1 Philip Okrent, retired Surveyor and property consultant, introduced himself to the Council. He had volunteered to oversee the condition of pavements in the Suburb and had also agreed to join RA Council.
- 3.2 Concerns had been expressed by residents about the dangerous state of some pavements in the Suburb and Philip had reported several to Barnet Council who had

logged them. Follow-up action would be monitored. Cllr Marshall had been helpful. The new role would be featured in the next issue of SN. It had already been in eNews.

- 3.4 The Chair proposed Philip for Council, and this was seconded by the Hon Secretary. RA Council voted unanimously in favour. Council also voted unanimously that Standing Order 23 could be waived as the pavements role does not fit well with any current standing committee.

4. RA finances and membership

- 4.1 The Hon Treasurer summarised the RA finances as of 30 June 2021. The RA had started with £75,000 at the beginning of the year in reserves, with plans to break even on operating costs. £17,500 in additional grants had brought reserves down to £58,000.
- 4.2 Grants: £5,000 more has been paid out than originally planned to St Jude's but is separate from the £17,500 as discussed.
- 4.3 Income very good in particular on publications. Previously expected to be approximately £2,000 in deficit this had now changed into surplus due to advertising revenue - now about £5,000 per edition. The new format for SN its production has led to savings in costs of approx. £3,000 for the year.
- 4.4 £2,000 had been budgeted for paid distribution of SN and had been reduced to £500 as volunteers had returned to doing the distributions. Overall, £7,000 in costs will be saved on Publications.
- 4.5 The RA had given up the room at the Free Church and was now renting storage space instead which was saving £1,000 for the year.
- 4.6 Taking into account all the savings and the additional grant for St Jude's, the RA is looking to end the year with approximately £61,000 in reserves.
- 4.7 RA Membership: At the end of Q2, 1,357 members have renewed which includes 38 new members and 17 Life Members taking membership to 1,374.
- 4.8 Three email reminders had been sent to members to renew and the main mailing will be sent to 500 current members who've not renewed yet and remaining households in the Suburb to attract new members. **Action Steve**
- 4.9 About 1000 fewer addresses will be mailed compared to last year which will save in costs. This excludes roads and flats where there is little response and it is not cost effective.
- 4.10 Membership information will be included in each SN to ensure all residents are aware of how to join.

5. Grants and donations

- 5.1 Repairs at St Jude's: The further £5000 grant application had been considered by EC. St Jude's repairs had cost more than anticipated and EC had recommended approval. There were no questions from Council.

- 5.2 The Chair proposed approval of the further grant to St Jude's. This was seconded by the Hon Treasurer and Council voted unanimously in favour.
- 5.3 Fellowship concerts: Fellowship's request for the RA to provide a £500 grant towards this year's Autumn Series of Fellowship Chamber Concerts had been circulated to Council accompanied by an events leaflet.
- 5.4 A Council member questioned why Fellowship had requested sponsorship from the RA, considering Fellowship had greater reserves than the RA. Andrew Botterill stated this had been answered in the responses to questions 9 and 10 (B) of the application form. A public demonstration of the RA's support was far more important to Fellowship than the money.
- 5.5 Helen Leiser proposed support of the application, seconded by Simon Sackman. Council voted to approve the grant, nem con.
- 5.6 Heath Extension playground: Works had been proposed by a local resident and there had been discussions with the City of London about improvements to make the playground more suitable children up to the age of 12. The estimated total cost is around £40,000. The project was considered worthy of RA financial support.
- 5.8 Match funding, similar to that done for the Royal Free and Noah's Ark charities, with a maximum of £5000 had been considered by EC and was recommended to Council for this Suburb project.
- 5.9 Colin Gregory proposed the Council agree to a £5,000 matchfund. This was seconded by Peter McCluskie. Council approved the matchfund by 12 votes to 1.
- 5.10 Colin will arrange publicity and Emma will handle the donation site.

Action Colin and Emma

6. Events matters inc. proposed survey

- 6.1 Events Committee meeting minutes had been circulated to the Council and a survey was being drafted to get feedback on what they'd like to see. This was almost ready.
- Action Adrian**
- 6.2 A managed event may go ahead this summer but was subject to government guidelines.
- 6.3 Proposed events such as an outdoor cinema and a Christmas/New Year event of some sort may take place. Whether events will be commissioned rather than organised by the Committee will be discussed.
- 6.4 Overall, the events industry will have a shortage on supplies (fencing, stewarding etc) due to companies dissolving but this will have less impact on Suburb events.

7. Publications matters

- 7.1 SN issue 147: The new format will continue with a few tweaks. The front page header will be more bold and the font will be made more dense and easier to read. Overall, there had been positive feedback on topics covered, stapling and the generally fresh approach.

- 7.2 Deadline for SN147 is 1 August and all chairs of standing committees will be asked to submit content to the editors.
Action Peter

- 7.3 The RA will have dedicated two-page coverage in SN147 and going forward. This will be a good platform to make the residents aware of what the RA does and the benefits of membership.

8. T&OS matters

- 8.1 The Community Orchard: Maria and Emma had met with Katerina Hadincova and Mark Chandler (Barnet Council) to look at the site. There will be a follow up meeting in November before the tree planting day. An updated budget will be provided for the cost of the project. An update will be featured in the SN.
Action Maria

- 8.2 Residents will be encouraged to be involved and Peter Falk has offered to arrange for help with planting from Bigwood volunteers. Ways to plant trees had been discussed and there had been a decision to plant the trees individually with cages and posts for protection. There was some concern that it will be a big responsibility on the RA's Orchard Group especially regarding maintenance. Ideally hand tools should be used rather than machinery.

- 8.3 There will be 12 stand-alone trees, situated at the corner of Lyttleton playing fields next to the bowls club and outdoor gym.

- 8.4 It had been suggested that the planting of the trees should be made a special event, inviting Barnet Councillors perhaps including the Mayor.

Action Maria

9. Allotment matters

The report from the Allotments Chair had been circulated and is appended to these minutes. If Council members have any questions or concerns, they should take them up directly with Philip.

10. Consam matters

A Consam meeting will be convened in the near future and Council will be updated in due course.

Action Simon

11. Any other business

EC will not be meeting in August.

12. Next scheduled meeting – 23 November at 8pm

ALLOTMENT MATTERS - REPORT

I can report that we had our Summer Inspection/Walkabout last weekend, and it was noted that the allotments in general are looking better than they have for some time. This is partly due to lockdown and also more pressure on allotment holders as they are aware there is a long waiting list of applicants. We also offer new plotholders smaller plots so they learn from experience the reality of allotmenting - this helps to reduce the numbers who take on a plot and then can't manage it. We have shortlisted a number of plotholders for the Phyllis Young trophy for best plot, and also for best newcomer. Final judging of this will be undertaken by Chris Page.

The only issue we have is the small number of plots where the plotholder is not cultivating the plot. The Trust is not prepared at present to remove any plotholders, and thus we have situation where an uncultivated plot stays as is. We are in discussion with the Trust to change this policy.

We are exploring the possibility of holding an 'open afternoon' for plotholders in place of the usual Harvest Supper, as we feel the latter is not appropriate given the Covid situation (50-60 people in Fellowship sharing food). For this we would want to borrow one of the RA's gazebos, although at present we don't have a suitable venue.

Philip Harlow
Chair, Allotments Committee
12 July 2021