



## RA COUNCIL

### Minutes of the HGSRA Council Meeting Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> April 2024, at 8pm at the Central Square Minyan

**Present:** Emma Howard (Chair), Peter McCluskie (Hon Secretary), Steve Morris (Hon Treasurer), Adrian Hodgson, Maria Schlatter, Steven Rowe, Helena Benes, Colin Gregory, Gren Manuel, Dominic Rose and Shazia Riaz Ahmad.

#### Apologies and absences

1. Jonathan Waxman, Judy Smith, Revd Emily Kolltveit, Lynda Cook and Shelley-Anne Salisbury

#### Post AGM Discussion

2. The Chair thanked all committee members who had attended the AGM.
3. The event had been well attended – about 75-80 members - well up on the previous year. Cllr Grover attended and there was a good dialogue with him. Unfortunately no one from HGS Trust was there.
4. Council reviewed what worked and what didn't in terms of the smooth running of the event. Some suggestions arose:
  - a. Room seating layout in semi-circular style.
  - b. Test run the projector (if used) in advance.
  - c. Request the audience to wait for the roving microphone, and to say their first and last name before they start speaking.
5. The Events Team was thanked for the management of the refreshments.

#### New Member of Council

6. Dominic Rose was proposed by Peter McCluskie, seconded by Emma Howard and unanimously voted onto Council. He will have Biodiversity as his specific role and will not (for now) be attached to a committee.
7. Dominic spoke about 'Britain's Biggest Living Garden' - a wildlife gardening and biodiversity project in HGS.
8. Via a chance meeting with Dr Steven Head (Oxford), Dominic and certain members of Council started working together to develop this project, which aims to make the Suburb a national flagship of how biodiversity can be encouraged and nurtured in an urban environment through the participation of the wider community, building on the founding legacy and ambition of Henrietta Barnett. The high concentration of gardens, connected by

what is possibly the highest density of hedging in the UK, makes the Suburb uniquely positioned to show how small steps by local residents can make a huge difference to urban biodiversity.

9. Further information about this project may be obtained from:  
[www.britainsbiggestlivinggarden.org](http://www.britainsbiggestlivinggarden.org)

### **Reinstatement/creation of committees and other roles and representation**

10. The Hon Secretary reminded Council that after the AGM, all appointments to committees (etc) become obsolete – and re-appointments must be made. The list of such appointments (as at the date of the AGM) had been circulated to form a basis for such re-appointments.
11. Alan Brudney had stepped down from both the Trust's Estate Committee and the Orchard Housing Society. Council unanimously agreed to appoint Steven Rowe as his replacement on the Trust's Estate Committee.
12. Orchard Housing Society: the RA has one share in the Orchard Housing Society. Colin Gregory gave a brief history of the relationship between the RA and the Society. After some discussion on whether it was necessary to have an RA representative, Council unanimously agreed to appoint Steven Rowe as its representative
13. Tom Whiting and Tom Matier had stepped down from T&OS.
14. Subject to the above, there were no other changes and Council approved the re-appointments.

**Action: Peter**

### **RA finances, membership and website: Steve Morris**

15. The Hon Treasurer updated Council on the finances.
16. We have two new advertisers on eNews, totalling £500 annually. Total eNews revenues now £1,050 pa.
17. The Free Church has increased the rent on our storage space from £650 to £750.  
**Action: Steve and Adrian to seek an alternative storage space**
18. Membership: The membership is currently 1,268 – 30 new members this year. We have circulated two emails and a letter for membership renewals and at the beginning of May we will email another reminder for membership renewal.
19. New Members: Council discussed ideas on how to connect with people who move into the Suburb, and cost effective ways to reach new members. Letters will be circulated to residents of The Orchard and Emmott Close.

**Action: Steve M/Steven R/Shazia**

### **Grants, donations and joint initiatives**

20. The sponsorship amount for Proms has now increased from £3,000 to £4,000. Council agreed the extra £1,000.
21. Fellowship House has requested RA support of its Ukraine appeal. Council discussed this in detail, and agreed that RA constitution is very much Suburb-orientated in its Objects. It was agreed it would not be appropriate to get involved in the appeal. **Action: Emma**

22. There are no other outstanding grant requests at present.

### **T&OS matters**

23. Steven shared that Colin, Maria and Peter F's interactions with the Trust are invaluable.
24. Colin and Peter F are working very closely with the ward councillors and getting very good support from many RA members.
25. Steven updated the committee that the trees crowdfunding is going well - the target for the year is 20 trees. At present they had received £2,291 for a total of 9 trees.
26. Steven expressed enthusiasm for the Kid's Gardening Club, associated with the Britain's Biggest Living Garden project, which will bring a new dynamic to T&OS and the RA and it will involve the parent(s) of each child.

### **REACH**

27. Gren confirmed that the current focus is on the two events next week (below), and after that REACH will look at what's next. Electric Car and Bike Show on 14 April 2024 and a follow up talk on 18 April.

### **Events**

#### Summer Fair

28. Adrian advised that the Events Committee met in early March to discuss the Summer Fair. He will circulate the minutes.
29. Adrian is awaiting a quote for a marquee where HortSoc will have their show and the costs will probably be shared with them.
30. He has not had any response from either of the two schools.
31. *Catering:* Adrian has spoken to Rev Emily about doing a community BBQ. There will be a bar. HortSoc will do teas in the Free Church.
32. Adrian updated the committee on the various actions associated with the Summer Fair. He will liaise with Sarah Vaughan who has offered to run yoga at no charge. Hella is in touch with All Dogs Matter on the dog show. Adrian will contact the Fire Service about providing a fire engine. Adrian is also in communication with the Suburb Theatre about them doing something. There will also be a coconut shy and table tennis.
33. Peter suggested approaching the Suburb Police at their regular sessions at the Suburb Library, requesting their presence at the Summer Fair. **Action: Peter**

### **Publications**

34. The RA Chair updated Council on Publications - the last edition of the Suburb News was very well received. The advertising revenue is doing well albeit the associated costs also keep increasing.

## **Biodiversity**

35. Britain's Biggest Living Garden project and website was launched 6 weeks ago. There has been a good response to the residents survey; 140 people have responded saying that they are very interested in the Suburb being a leader in Biodiversity. For effective communication, a WhatsApp group has been set up and there are 70 people on the group. 209 tickets have been issued to date for the talk on 29 April at St Jude's.
36. St Judes had agreed to allocate a space in the vicarage garden for the use of the Kids Gardening Club; for 3-18 years old. So far, 40 children have registered for this project. The children are to be accompanied by their parent(s), and there will be a contribution of £20 per child towards the project. In addition, the HGSRA may also be sponsoring the Kids Gardening Club. On Monday 29th April, there will be a talk at St Judes, and, to date 205 tickets have been sold. Posters have been put up in Central Square.

## **Any other business**

37. On 30 April, the City of London will be organising a memorial for Declan Gallagher at 4pm, at Golders Hill Park followed by drinks at the Bull & Bush pub.
38. North London Festival 30 April. The RA is sponsoring the Piano Competition at the Free Church.

## **Next scheduled meeting**

The next Council Meeting will be in-person on 2 July at 8pm at the Central Square Minyan.