



FINAL MINUTES FOR THE TWENTY FOURTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING SATURDAY 16TH JANUARY, 2021 CONDUCTED VIA EMAIL

Due to Covid the AGM this year is a small-scale, online version, of the usual meeting. Some of the usual formalities have been waived, in line with the flexibility offered by the National Allotment Society. Full Society activity will be resumed as soon as possible. 'Pre-minutes' were sent to all members and those who responded were deemed to have attended the meeting.

Virtually Present

John Eaton (Chair)

Andy James (Treasurer)

Jenny Sippings (Secretary)

Diana Ball

Josephine Banks

Peter Block

John Cartwright

Jane Dickinson

Andrew Dolwin

John Driver

Fiona Duck

John Goffey

Geoffrey Halls

Christine Locke

Sylvia Irvine Robertson

Neil Kennedy

Trish Kennedy

Clive M

Diane Mix

Phil Mix

Fiona Naylor

Jeff Naylor

Lin Phillips

Kate Rankin

Helen Russell

John Savage

Adrian Scarborough

Matthew Shapland

Clive Smith

Jeanne Woodcraft

Angela Whyte

Meeting 'minutes' as follows:

1/21 Apologies for absence – everyone else

2/21 Approval of minutes of last AGM – published on SAS website, assumed approved.

3/21 Chairman's report

There has been much less Allotment Society activity over the past year and the committee has not been able to organise events. However, thanks are due to the committee for ongoing support and certain activities have continued almost unaffected. Particular thanks to: Jenny as secretary, Lin for editing the newsletter, Geoff for letting plots, John G for (reduced) working party days and water system management, and Andy for handling the seed order and money.

Practical work undertaken by volunteers has included: hazel coppice cutting (thanks are once again due to Bernard and Jean Axford), undergrowth and hedge trimming. The wood rack and Society storage sheds were improved and maintained (mainly by Clive Smith).

Council contractors have cut trees and mended gate posts.

The level of interest in allotments has increased and the waiting list has grown. This emphasises the need to look after plots and if the workload becomes too much perhaps take a smaller plot or even give up.

Regular Allotment Management Team meetings have continued (more recently by Zoom). These are events where the council and representatives of the town's three allotment sites deal with matters of mutual interest. Sunnyside Rural Trust is also represented. (Minutes of these meetings are published on the council website).

Practical matters in hand include: Path/roadway/entrance surface improvements (particularly after heavy rain and increased use), contribution to the Society tea-hut revamp. Consideration of deer fencing on SSN has stopped because of high cost and no real expectation of effectiveness. Plot holders have adopted their own solutions such as raised stick fencing and plastic streamers. The issue of dog walkers and mess is ongoing. Shed break-ins have been reported to the police.

The council is considering a different approach to their cost allocation which may lead on to allotment rent increases. Discussions continue.

4/21 Treasurer's report

A very different year to report with reduced scope for comparisons year on year.

We were unable to hold our annual Open Day, which is usually our main source of income. However we were also unable to undertake any major projects around the site so there was no expenditure to report there. Printing costs were down – no publicity material was needed for Open Day and we are now able to electronically distribute all copies of the Newsletter. In future years we will have to find a new printer as Strongs' Printers ceased trading at the start of the first lockdown.

A raffle is normally held at the Open Day with all proceeds being donated to a local charity. The committee decided that, in the absence of income from the raffle, we would make a donation directly from Society funds. We had discussed possible recipient causes at last years' AGM as well as at committee meetings, it was decided that we would donate to both St Francis Hospice and the Pepper Foundation.

The decision to make these donations was easier due to the success of the Seed Order scheme. With 53 members placing orders, we doubled the value of the order we eventually placed with Kings Seeds. With the discounts we get from early ordering and high value of the order, the society funds benefitted by around £420.

Overall there was an increase in Society funds of £218.67 – we closed the year with a balance of £5872.20

5/21 Officers/committee members

All officers and members have agreed to stay in post for another year:

Chair:	John Eaton
Treasurer:	Andy James
Secretary:	Jenny Sippings
Committee Members:	Geoff Halls
	Angela Wheeldon
	John Goffey
	Kate Rankin
	Lin Phillips
	Diana Ball
	Jeanne Woodcraft
	Steve Atkinson

6/21 Future developments

When Covid rules permit, revamp of tea hut.

7/21 Email comments received

Chris Locke: Thanks to all of the committee and others who keep the allotments in good shape. What a lifesaver it is to potter and occasionally find a kindred spirit to chat with.

Helen Russell: Looking forward to the new season

Peter Block: 'Pre-minutes' fine by me

Fiona Duck: I don't really have much to add, but wondered how we should be paying our subs for this year? Can you circulate the bank details for doing a direct transfer? I may not be the only one that hasn't done it yet! A reminder as to the amount would be good too. **Instructions for payment were included in the January newsletter.**

Sylvia Irvine-Roberts: Just to say thank you for the pre minutes and last year's minutes plus a big thank you to all those who have been working to do as much as possible within the constraints imposed on us.

Adrian Scarborough: all very interesting...and frustrating in equal measure!
Balance looks good though.

John Driver: Thanks Jenny for all your hard work as Secretary, have read the minutes from 2020 and the pre-minutes for 2021, all seem comprehensive and a good record of the 2020 meeting.

Josephine Banks: Just wondered if you'd consider something to remember Geoffrey by, as he contributed so much to the allotment community spirit. You may well have this in hand already. Maybe something to think about when you have a revamp of the society hut tea room. **Noted.** Thank you for all for your hard work, great gardening advice, and positive, upbeat approach to everything.

Lin Phillips: Nice minutes, summarising this unique year!

Neil and Trish Kennedy: We are happy with this report and have the following comments:

- Could we see a copy of the accounts, please? We do not expect them to be inspected/audited, so they can be published with that caveat (this is what I, Neil, have done in my treasurer role elsewhere). **These were emailed out subsequently.**

- Losing Strong's is a pity, they were so convenient. I have been given a name by Tony Strong : GT Print & Design info@gtprintanddesign.co.uk (in Hemel). I have not used them. **Noted.**
- We note that Bernard has felled the hazels in the coppice on C road. Will there be an advert for PYO stick collection? **Mentioned in April 2021 newsletter.**
- We observed to John that SRT had put a hedge on C-road, look like it may be polytunnels, but we haven't had the chance to talk to anybody. Could we have a note in the minutes on that, please? **This is part of a community project funded by Berkhamsted Town Council. The proposal can be seen here: <https://www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk/uploads/srt-community-growing-project.pdf> and this was approved by the Finance and Policy Committee on 21st September 2020: <https://www.berkhamstedtowncouncil.gov.uk/uploads/f-p-minutes-21-september-2020.pdf>**
- Would it be worth putting a provisional date in the diary for an Open Day? We do not know what form it might take, of course, but it would cheer people up. **The committee will discuss this.**
- Do you want to note the passing of Geoff Giles and Keith Shaw in the minutes? **Noted.**

Geoff Halls: A good set of virtual minutes!

One comment/question: I notice that our NSALG subs have increased quite noticeably. Is the affiliation fee related to our own number of members? **Yes numbers who affiliated were higher than usual.**

Fiona Naylor: Jeff and I have read this through - thank you for continuing to represent us all on our allotments!

Here's hoping for some less strange times to come, and an August open day.

How do I get our subs to you this year by the way? **Instructions for payment were included in the January newsletter.**

Jane Dickinson: Thanks for the info, I enjoyed the meeting!

All others who 'attended' the meeting acknowledged receipt of the 'pre-minutes' by email.



Sunnyside Allotment Society

Statement of Accounts for Year Ending 31 December 2020

Opening Balance **£5,653.53**

INCOME

Subscriptions	£492.00	(360)
Produce Sales	£4.00	(141)
Material and Tool Sales	£64.00	(15)
Seed Order	£2,680.70	(1321)

EXPENDITURE

Insurance	£83.64	(84)
NSALG affiliation	£369.00	(276)
Printing	£32.09	(110)
Postage	£4.74	(3)
Seed Order	£2,259.98	(1106)
AGM hall hire	£25.00	(30)
Tea Hut & Toilet costs	32.51	(111)
Materials	£15.07	(256)

Donations

Hospice of St Francis	£100.00	(175)
Pepper Foundation	£100.00	(0)

TOTAL INCOME £3,240.70 (3568)

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £3,022.03 (2480)

Income less expenditure £218.67 (1088)

Closing Balance **£5,872.20**

Verified as a true reflection of the society's financial position at 31 December 2020

Jane Hughes