



MINUTES FOR THE TWENTY FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING FEBRUARY 2022 CONDUCTED VIA EMAIL

Once again, due to Covid, the AGM this year is an online version. 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 when we can. All members who respond to these 'pre-minutes' will be deemed to have attended the meeting.

Virtually present:

John Eaton (Chair)

Jenny Sippings (Secretary)

Josephine Banks

Peter Block

Joanna Bryant

Andy Dolwin

Will and Marsh Facey

Cynthia Fulks

John Goffey

Goeffrey Halls

Paul Ham

Helen Harker

Neil Kennedy

Christine Locke

Clive and Juliet Michel

Fiona and Jeff Naylor

Lin Phillips

Adrian Scarborough

Clive Smith

Meeting minutes as follows:

1/22 Apologies for absence

Everybody else

2/22 Approval of minutes of last AGM

Published on SAS website and accompanying this email, assumed approved.

3/22 Chairman's report

The Covid rules and restrictions have varied through the year and we have been able to hold reduced-scale outside events such as the summer picnic and Christmas drinks.

Thanks are due to the committee for ongoing support and particular thanks are again due to: Jenny as secretary, Lin for editing the newsletter, Geoff for letting plots, John G for working party days and water system management, and Andy for handling the seed order and money. Thanks also to other committee members for organising the summer picnic and Christmas

drinks. The toilet cleaning fairies Cynthia, Juliet, Fiona and Charlotte have continued to work their magic – much appreciated.

Work undertaken by volunteers has included: hazel coppice cutting, undergrowth and hedge trimming. Many other tasks were accomplished (see April 2021 newsletter for details). The big practical event of the year has been the revamp of the tea hut area which has been led by Simon Nicolle and Clive Smith. The source of most of the finance was disturbance compensation paid to the council by rail contractors who accessed the embankment via the allotments. The Society has paid for smaller items.

Roadway maintenance and improvement work has been carried out on Old and New (mainly by Clive S and Clive M) using materials paid for out of the Council allotment budget.

The level of interest in allotments remains high across Berkhamsted and the waiting list has grown. There is a continuing need to look after plots and if the workload becomes too much perhaps take a smaller plot or even give up.

Allotment Management Team meetings have returned to in-person, socially distanced 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.)

The main item of business was the Council decision to change some cost allocations and forecasts. This has resulted in an increase in rent. Tenant representatives made comments and suggestions but with limited success. The issue of dog walkers and mess is ongoing. Shed break-ins have been reported to the police.

Overall, a quieter year and painful for some. Substantial progress has been made on the site infrastructure due to a good number of volunteers and 2022 looks as if we can return to full SAS activities – and, of course, the gardening.

4/22 Treasurer's report

In the second year of Covid restrictions we were again restricted in the nature of fund-raising events that we could have. There was no Open Day but we did have a Summer Picnic which raised just short of £70. Other income from produce, material and donations raised over £300. The number of full members of the Society fell and there were also fewer seed orders – but that could be that, like me, we over-ordered last year!

Two projects appear on the debit side – the Orchard and Tea-hut refurbishment (some costs for the latter are carried over into 2022). No donations were made to local charities this year, likely as a result of there having been no committee meetings where these issues are discussed. Overall, there was a deficit on the year of £445.80 leaving the end of year balance on the account at £5426.40.

5/22 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 (since AGM moved to Bristol)
Angela Wheeldon
John Goffey
Kate Rankin
Lin Phillips
Diana Ball
Jeanne Woodcraft
Steve Atkinson

It is recognised that members have not had a chance to nominate committee members or to vote so please feel free to comment on this issue and prepare a coup!

Future Developments:

- Complete revamp of tea hut
- Revamp of SSN carpark
- Clearing of area above carpark by Grantham Mews entrance
- Possible Platinum Jubilee event

6/22 Discussion

Jo Banks: Thank you Jenny for all your hard work and the rest of the team. The improvements, especially to the tea hut are amazing. I have heard that people were interested in joining the committee, and I'm sure that some folk would be happy to hand the responsibility to someone else, any idea how this will be addressed, as it would be a shame to lose any enthusiasm people have, if it's deferred for another year? **This will be discussed at a committee meeting.**

Adrian Scarborough: Much appreciated as always. Amazing work from so many people this year. Can't wait to hear the hooter and try out the resplendent tea hut.

Joanna Bryant: Thank you. We are new tenants and are looking forward to being involved and using the new tea hut - it looks great!

Lin Phillips: Thanks for these minutes, which are fine with me, and represent a great deal of work and progress, all things considered in the last year!

Geoffrey Halls: The tea-hut replacement is an excellent upgrade and thanks to those that made it happen. It will be great to get it in use again. Re waiting lists for Sunnyside: with the exception of those who want specific plots, the waiting list is now down to a handful of people, with all plots occupied. In a few cases we split plots into two to satisfy demand.

Will and Marsha Facey: Minutes and pre-minutes received and perused. Many thanks for your time and efforts! And also to all members of the committee, and especially to Clive and Simon for the very fine new tea hut – all as square and perpendicular as can be. Otherwise everything looks fine; nothing to add or query.

Clive M: Really helpful to read about updates and plans for the future - how do tenants feed in ideas they may have for continually building the community atmosphere? I think one of the best things about sunnyside is the community spirit - love it - that is the thing to drive accepting that some just want to be left to do their own thing too.

Normally the way to discuss ideas and plans for the future is to do so in person at the AGM. This has been made harder by holding a virtual AGM. We have been thinking about ways of welcoming new tenants, including a welcome email, updating our information pack on the website, going back to in person lettings etc. Also the FB group is a good way of bouncing around ideas as is the newsletter. New events are being planned such as Meet and Greet, Platinum Jubilee celebration and Open Day.

Neil and Tricia Kennedy: Thanks to the committee for soldiering on. If there are tasks we all can help with you know how to contact us, and we look forward to meeting our fellow allotmenters again at the Tea Hut.

We have one AOB: In recent years the supply of wood chip and leaves to the site has been discouraged and has now largely ceased. We regret this development and believe that some other ploholders would agree. Having organised working parties we recognise that unused woodchip/leaves is a problem, and that fly-tipping is an issue. However, we would ask that the committee actively discuss ways in which this green community resource can be reinstated in a managed way.

Fiona & Jeff Naylor: We have been chatting with some of our plot neighbours, and a common thought came up - we would love access to some woodchip, as the pile up near the Rural Trust hut has now gone - is it possible to get some more in? I have been using it in previous years for the paths between the beds on our allotment, and I know that several of the other allotments surrounding us also use it. We also use what's left after it's rotted down a bit as compost. I'm aware that we have had a bit of trouble in the past with unauthorised dumping in some areas, but hopefully up on C road this hasn't been such a problem? I wonder if you could discuss with the committee whether we could have some more delivered there from a reputable tree surgeon company eg Treelife?

From the recent newsletter: Some plot-holders like to use woodchip for mulching, etc., but previous 'communal' woodchip piles on SSO & SSN have always degenerated into weed-infested problems and encouraged dumping. In future, if you (and maybe others) want some chippings, it will be up to you to contact a supplier and then meet any delivery and promptly shift it all onto the plot/s; ie. not leave it on common areas (paths and car parks). The Committee will consider if some joint ordering arrangement can be set up, but it has not happened yet. If you do arrange your own supply, watch out for the quality of the chippings, and do not allow the supplier to dump without your supervision. We do not want to restart random dumping. There used to be a woodchip pile looked after by Sunnyside Rural Trust on SSO on C Road; they said tenants could use some (by individual arrangement), but there are no chips there at the moment.

Paul Ham: Thank you for sharing the pre-minutes. I note the dip in seed orders - I missed the deadline last year and will make sure we order again!

John Goffey: During the year some progress was made on the problem of diseased pear trees. An illustrated letter (two sides of A4) was delivered to neighbouring properties within about 200 yards of the SSO orchard asking for cooperation in tracking down the source of infection. We will not know of any effect until June or July. Of 100 copies of the letter printed, approximately 25 are now surplus and ideas regarding how we should distribute these would be welcomed.

Thank you John for organising this. Click on the link to read [John's leaflet](#).



Sunnyside Allotment Society

Statement of Accounts for Year Ending 31 December 2021

Where there is a direct comparison, 2020 figures are shown in brackets

Opening Balance **£5,872.20**

INCOME

Subscriptions	£388.00	(492)
Produce Sales	£10.00	(4)
Material and Tool Sales	£146.00	(64)
Seed Order	£1,551.34	(2681)
Summer Picnic	£151.60	
Donations	£169.50	

EXPENDITURE

Insurance	£83.64	(84)
NSALG affiliation	£291.00	(369)
Seed Order	£1,286.56	(2260)
Tea Hut & Toilet costs	£20.64	(33)
Materials	£403.56	(15)
Tea Hut project	£481.89	
Orchard project	£86.13	
Other expenses	£126.55	
Summer picnic costs	£82.27	

TOTAL INCOME £2,416.44 (3241)

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £2,862.24 (3022)

Income less expenditure -£445.80 (219)

Closing Balance **£5,426.40**

Verified as a true reflection of the society's financial position at 31 December 2021

Jane Hughes