**Grange Lane Allotments AGM 30th October 2016, 10.00am in the Ismay Room, Scout Hut**

**Apologies**: Ming and Dan Shepherd, Gavin plot 102, Tony and Julie, Tony Chandler, Nigel Duckers

**Minutes of the 2015 AGM**: these were approved.

**Chair’s report (Nigel Grant)**

This has been a year of change. There is a new committee and a new chair.

Vision for the future: it is to be down to earth and achievable and will involve members; to be proactive rather than reactive. Issues will be dealt with as they arise. Communication will be improved. We hope to email quarterly newsletters. Input is needed from members. Possibly there will be regular site meetings to meet line managers and committee members; and an online forum to exchange information and resolve issues. We want to involve members in projects, working parties, social events, etc. We hope to set up a mentoring scheme to help new plot holders ; and to hold occasional talks and demonstrations by experts.

Management of the site will be improved. A lot of work is involved and it has to be managed as a whole, dealing with Dulwich Estates when necessary. We have a responsibility to Dulwich Estates to enforce rules and regulations. The Dos and Don’ts are on website. We aim to produce an annual action plan, budget, time scale and then say what has been accomplished.

We would like members’ ideas and thoughts.

We are improving site amenities: installing two eco toilets ; building a community hut ; and better paths .

We plan to share initiatives with local allotment groups and create community links. Ideas include one open day each year, have tours and wildlife talks. Perhaps we could sell produce to raise funds.

Our rents are lower than normal. Maybe members could help on communal projects two days a year.

Nigel thanked all committee members for their hard work, creativity and their encouragement over the year.

**Secretary’s report (Maureen Erny)**

*Matters arising from last year’s AGM -*The golf club now holds a key to the gates for use in an emergency. Notice to be put on gate.

*Renewals -* Peter Allen and Martin Beard again worked very hard on renewals – sending out information, collecting the rents, chasing late payments, dealing with queries. They were thanked for their work. Every year people are asked to renew and pay promptly as it causes a lot more work when people don’t. This year will be stricter and if payments are not received by the end of November, a surcharge of £30 will be levied. If payments have still not been received by 31st December, plot holders will be evicted.

*Lettings -* Sarah Knight was thanked for her hard work during the year on lettings. There are so many people on the waiting list that it is currently closed to new applications. This shows how important it is that we value our plots, use them well and keep them in good order.

*Line Managers -* Jill Panni has worked very hard on building up a team of line managers. Each row of plots from the gates to the wood has its own line manager. Their details are on website and notice boards. If anyone has a plot or site issue, first contact the line manager. All line managers were thanked.

*Inspections -* Normally there are two inspections a year. A warning is given to plot holders who are not keeping their plot in good order and, if no progress is made, they are evicted. A team of three or four people from the committee carry out the inspections and reinspect plots that have had a warning.

*Website -* Tony Heal was thanked for his work on the new website during the year; it has just been launched. [www.grangelane.org](http://www.grangelane.org); Mike and Maggie Handley were thanked for their work on the previous website.

*Skips -* Martin and Iris organised skips during the year. Normally there are three or four a year for non organic waste. Weeds/dead crops should be burnt on bonfire days or taken along to a recycling centre.

*Plot numbering -* Jill and Sarah kindly numbered every plot that didn’t have a number. All plots should have a clear number at the top and bottom.

*Paths -* We are going to trial putting down rubber matting along paths to prevent them getting so slippery and dangerous. Volunteer help is requested.

*Dumping in the woods -* A reminder was given not to dump anything in the woods or anywhere on the site, including vegetation -tomatoes and tomato plants with blight were dumped in the lower wood recently.

*Meetings -* The committee met seven times during the year to try to keep the site running well. Nigel and Martin also attended the Camberwell and District Allotment Society meetings.

*Volunteers -* Volunteers were requested to help with various jobs on the site.

*Developments -* We were successful in gaining two grants - £4,500 for two eco toilets and just under £10,000 for a community shed. Special thanks to Nigel and Jill for spearheading these.

*Thanks -* Adrian Hill was thanked for his help and support. Nigel was thanked for working so hard as chair during the year – and doing an excellent job.

**Site developments (Peter Allen)**

Peter Allen held up a gigantic cheque from the Lottery Fund. He gave a presentation on the two projects: eco toilets and community hut.

There have been problems with the drain/Effra at the top of the site – rubbish has been dumped in it over the years. We plan to build bins for manure and chippings so as to use the top space in a better way. This complies with the agreement we have reached with Dulwich Estates for the developments: they wanted us to create a barrier to prevent debris falling into the drain/Effra.

A huge amount of clearing has already been done and, to minimise cost, much of it by Committee members.

Two eco toilets were installed in October. The bins - 6’ high sleepers - will be built at the top of the site in November to protect the drain/Effra and be the storage area for chippings, manure and logs. The Com-munity hut is due to arrive in Jan. Volunteers are needed to paint inside hut, remove rubbish, plan lighting for hut. We want member input in planning how to use shed, source table, chairs, maintain the toilets, etc.

**Website (Tony Heal)**

Tony Heal reported that it was all about communication. Two developments were highlighted. Active: sending out emails. Passive: website information. New website has only been up a few weeks. Please give feedback on it to [tony@grangeline.org](mailto:tony@grangeline.org) Volunteers are needed to run an online forum.

Some suggestions from members: put map of plots online; ask new plot holders to keep a visual record, which could be put on website; advertise the need for volunteers to help and give dates when the help is needed; enlist people on waiting list as helpers; create a pool of helpers.

**Treasurer’s report (Martin Beard)**

Martin Beard reported on the accounts to 30th September 2016, now distributed to all. We had received about £10,000 from the Lottery Fund to fund the new hut. We should receive funds of £4,500 from Southwark towards the eco-toilets. Thames Water will return £4,000 for past overpayments. So with a current balance of £16,632 we have enough for the rest of the projects and to keep a healthy reserve. We have held the plot rent for four years; next year there should be an increase in the rent paid to the Estate; we will review the plot rent next year.

**Report from Adrian Hill, Chair of Camberwell and District Allotment Society**

Adrian liaises with Dulwich Estates on our behalf, for example over tree issues. The current lease runs until 24th March 2026. Rent reviews are every five years – increases are linked to RPI. The next rent review is at Christmas 2017. It is not automatic – the landlord has to request it. He had had a complaint from Dulwich Estates about flooding onto path in the woods. CDAS are prepared to give us an interest free loan up to £5,000, to be repaid over five years, if needed.

**Election of committee**

The whole committee stood down. Adrian Hill proposed they all be re-elected, seconded by Stella Plumbridge. The vote of approval was carried unanimously. It was acknowledged Nigel Grant would continue as chair.

**Bonfires**

Some members want less bonfire days and others more. After debate a proposal was carried by a majority to add the 3rd Saturday and the 2nd Sunday to the existing days from November to March as a trial.

**AOB**

Concern was expressed about restrictive tree height.