

Camberwell and District Allotment Society

AGM Minutes – Saturday 21 March 2020 10:30am

Welcome

Present: Adrian Hill (CDAS Chair), John Shrapnell (CDAS Treasurer), Richard Bultitude (Chair of Grove), Peter Haydon (Treasurer of Grove), Martin Beard (Treasurer of Grange Lane), Elaine Broadbent (Secretary of Grove)

1. Apologies for Absence

Michael Villeneau (CDAS Secretary). In Michael's absence, Elaine offered to take the minutes. Each section has provided its own update which have been included in these minutes.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were agreed and no objections were raised.

3. Chairman's Report

Adrian Hill gave the Chairman's report. Adrian noted that the meeting was not quorate, but this did not present an issue as no decisions requiring a quorum were made.

Adrian stated that the CDAS committee has various responsibilities as given below. It was noted that the CDAS committee does not have responsibility for site specific matters, since the Section committees govern the sections. All Sections held their AGM during the past year.

Section Leases: CDAS has responsibility for the three Section leases with the Dulwich Estate, including any Deed of Variations and the renewal of the leases. There are rent reviews with the Dulwich Estate every 5 years, with the next being due on 25/3/21 (Gunsite and Grove) and 25/12/22 (Grange Lane). The rent is fixed in the leases and rent increases are tied to RPI (Retail Price Index). All three leases expire on 25/3/2026 and will need to be renewed with the Dulwich Estate.

This year, Grove had a Deed of Variation to alter its boundaries with its neighbour, the Camber Tennis Club; the lease was not extended.

Insurance: CDAS maintains the insurance for all three sites. Our current insurance is with Shield Total Insurance (from 30/1/2017) and was renewed on 30/1/20. The insurance covers the wooden buildings, eg sheds. There was damage to the two toilet blocks at Grange Lane during the recent storms. The insurance did not cover the damage since the policy requires the blocks to be fixed to the ground. The blocks have subsequently been firmly fixed to the ground.

Trees/Fences/Drainage: There are currently no known issues at Grange Lane. Tony George inspects the trees on an ad hoc basis. The Dulwich Estate needs to repair the fence at the top of the Grange Lane site. At the bottom of the Grange Lane site, there is trouble with the drainage at the Ellerbank field, which is leased to Dulwich College. Works are being undertaken to extend the ditch towards the school and this appears to be working. Grange Lane will meet with Dulwich College during the summer to confirm whether the solution is working.

Litigation: There is no pending litigation, though there are ongoing disputes on water bills for Grove. The dispute between Thames Water and Grange Lane has been resolved.

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Maintaining Good Relations with Neighbours: There are no outstanding complaints.

Trustees: This was briefly discussed in the AGM and will be further discussed at the next CDAS committee meeting. Appropriate steps will be taken to ensure the affairs of the main committee are administered appropriately.

4. Treasurer's Report and Accounts

John Shrapnell gave the Treasurer's report. John is standing down as Treasurer on 1/10/20 and is currently formally handing over the role to the new Treasurer, Elaine Broadbent.

Please find attached the Statement of Accounts for 2018/2019, year ending 30/9/19, with the following notes:

1. Grove had ongoing financial issues with Castle Water last year, but has now made the payment for rent, levy and NAGLS to CDAS for 2018/2019.
2. Grange Lane has an additional 39 members. John will make an additional payment of £117 to NALGS (ie 39 x £3).
3. CDAS makes an annual donation of £100 to the Scout Centre for meeting facilities. This payment was not made last year, but a payment of £200 was made after the meeting to Gordon Carr, Scoutmaster. Gordon was thanked for opening the Troop Room so that the AGM could proceed.
4. John is closing the Nationwide Building Society account and moving the funds to the main CDAS account. All payments etc should now be made to the main CDAS Lloyds account. The reason for closing the Nationwide account is that it no longer pays any significant amount of interest and therefore it makes sense to simplify the accounts.
5. There is also a Trustee Protection account which contains £6171.78.

5. Secretary's Report

Michael Villeneau was absent due to ill health.

6. Section Reports

Grange Lane: **Martin Beard** (Treasurer at Grange Lane) reported on the following points.

1. Membership now comprises over 300 ploholders and their helpers. All plots have been let or are about to be let. The use of the LoveAdmin software has saved a lot of time in the annual plot renewals. All members have paid without the previous hassle.
2. Communication has improved with the use of MailChimp. The monthly gatherings at the Hut are proving to be a success.
3. Bonfires are restricted and waste and environmental issues are tackled in a number of ways:-
 - a. Southwark Council collects green waste from eight green waste bins each week – the annual cost for renewal next month is £30 per bin.
 - b. Composting is promoted.

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4. At a cost of £53.21 per month Southwark collects general refuse from a large commercial waste bin each week to. This has saved on the cost of skips.
5. A number of allotment site issues have been or are being tackled, including:-
 - a. The fence along Grange Lane is being improved and repaired.
 - b. On advice concerning drainage, the upper ditch will be cleared and improved and a new one will be dug down the western side of the site.
6. The finances are in reasonable health and are meeting the cost of maintaining and improving the site and its operation.
7. The Lottery has given an award to fund the introduction of much needed electricity to the Hut and this will widen the use of the Hut.
8. Concerning dealings with the Estate and the School:-
 - a. The Estate has removed a large oak tree which had split and become dangerous; and granted permission to trim another oak tree.
 - b. The Estate appears to have issued a bill for tree work on the site in error and it is hoped to settle this soon.
 - c. Adrian continues to ask the Estate to repair the upper fence.
 - d. It is hoped the School's plan to have a drainage ditch in the School's neighbouring field will improve the drainage issues at the bottom of the allotment site.
 - e. Nothing has been done about the all-night lighting in woodland which the School has licensed to a neighbour.

Gunsite: **Armored Weston** (Chairperson at Gunsite) provided the following report.

Nigel Thorpe produced a Survey for the Gunsite Working Group; there was a 25% response. We will need to file these ideas into a longer-term plan. Some because of costs and practicalities. We hope to apply for a Cleaner-Greener Grant in the autumn to fund one of these suggestions taken by the Survey.

We are in discussion over whether to ban Himalayan Balsam that has been a great nuisance in the past and is gradually creeping back onto our site.

Since the last report to the CDAS our drainage system has been working well. We have been pretty strict in the Inspection over Plotters keeping the ditches clear running. They were well tested by the heavy winter rains and the lower parts of the site inevitable got pretty waterlogged even with the good drainage system.

Jane Taylor and myself attended the Dulwich Estate Surgery on Monday 2nd March. We discussed the poor state of our lane, which has been eroded away by the constant flow of Heavy Vehicles dumping waste. Also we discussed whether we could remove branches from trees over hanging and blocking our light at various places between the golf course and the Gunsite. We were assured that Karen Strange who is responsible for Tony George's Diary would get back to us. Unfortunately we have had no further answers as yet.

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There has been a good flow of Manure and Leaf Mould deliveries from Green Waste since January.

The Gunsite Website is up and running and also using 'mailchimp', which has been very good enabling us to communicate with Plot Holders and for them to be able to go to the Website for all information: gunsiteallotments.org.

As with other Allotments under CDAS we have closed the Shop but hopefully setting up Online Selling, which will be available to Plot Holders only.

Grove: Grove elected a new committee at its AGM in January 2020. We have a new Chair (Richard Bultitude) and new Lettings Officer (Emma Davidson). The committee is looking forward to working with site members to undertake work at the site and have some social events. The committee has had two committee meetings and covered a lot of ground in preparation for this year.

We have completed the legal documentation for our Deed of Variation to change the boundary between us and the Camber Tennis Club. We are awaiting receipt of the final versions of the Deed of Variation and the Licences to maintain and operate the new sheds, signed by the Dulwich Estate, so we can proceed with installing the new sheds. We remain in debt to Adrian Hill for his sterling support during this very protracted and difficult process. This year we plan to install our new shed, carry out drainage work at the site and repair damage from the recent storms.

We were beset with water problems this year, firstly in dealing with a huge deficit bill (£3200) from Castle Water and secondly with a major leak at the site last summer. The deficit was due to Castle Water failing to read our meter since Sep 2013 and working off estimates. We plan to take regular meter readings this year and establish a sensible level of payment to Castle Water.

7. Election of Officers

The following officers were elected:

Chair	Adrian Hill
Secretary	Michael Villeneuve
Treasurer	John Shrapnell until 30/9/20, with Elaine Broadbent taking over from 1/10/2020.

Other committee members are nominated by Sections on an ad hoc basis for each CDAS committee meeting.

8. Any Other Business

The meeting proposed a vote of thanks to the Officers for their work during the year. Special thanks was given to John S for many years of service as CDAS Treasurer

The meeting was then formally closed by Adrian.

Minutes produced by Elaine Broadbent (Grove Secretary)