

Allotment News

Grange Lane Allotments Newsletter
Autumn 2020

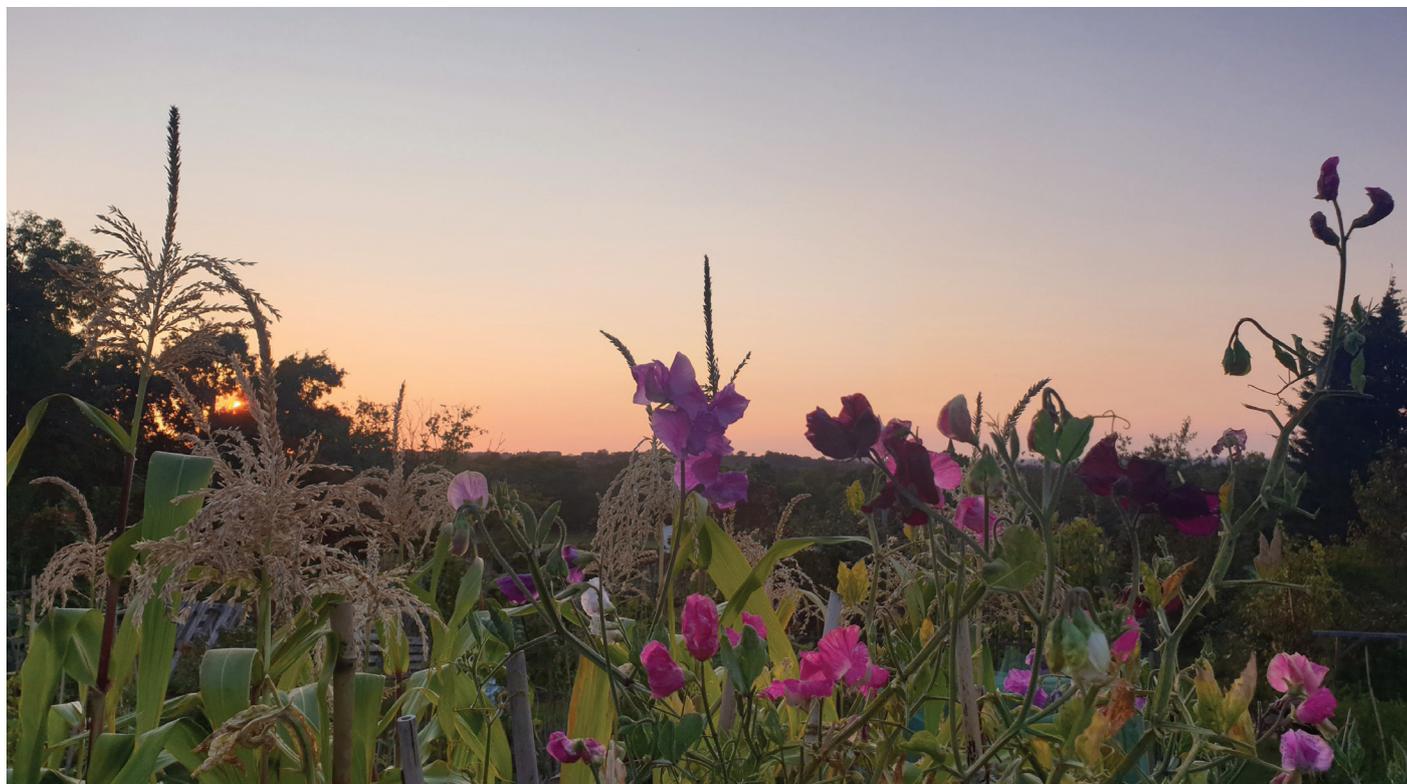


Photo: Maureen J Erny

AGM

Sadly the AGM this year has had to be postponed due to Covid-19 restrictions. We are sending this newsletter to keep members informed.

From the Chair



It gives me great pleasure to introduce our first newsletter for Grange Lane plotholders.

These past few months have been very challenging for everyone and I am really proud of my committee members who have worked

tirelessly throughout these challenging months to ensure all plotholders were able to cultivate their plots in a safe and protective manner. Many individual plotholders stepped up when asked to volunteer their services to those members who were shielding during the lockdown. I am grateful to each of them.

In spite of the challenges of Covid-19, we have managed to achieve some positive outcomes for Grange Lane Allotments. Some of these are described in detail in this newsletter, which I hope you will enjoy reading.

Nigel Grant, Chair

Secretary's Report for 2019/2020



It's been a very different year due to Covid-19, but also a very productive one. This is a quick summary.

The committee has been working hard behind the scenes to keep the site well maintained and to deal with issues as they arise. If you ever have a concern about anything, please contact your line manager (all details on the website www.grangelane.org) and if necessary a member of the committee (again, all details on the website). We are delighted



Photo: Maureen J Erny

that Tyrrell Evans has been co-opted onto the committee.

This year we have mended the broken fence along Grange Lane and we are still liaising with Dulwich Estate about mending the fence at the top bordering Dulwich and Sydenham Wood, which is their responsibility. We have dealt with dangerous trees, leaking water tanks and lost keys amongst many other things. Plot inspections have taken place and help given to those who were self-isolating. Empty plots have been re-let, thanks to the hard work of Sarah Knight.

You will see from Peter Allen's report and photo that we applied for Lottery funding to get electricity installed in the Hut – our thanks to Sarah Thurman for doing the application and to Peter for organising the installation. Despite Covid-19 restrictions, we have still managed to have a number of

social events at the Hut, including plant sales, and had an idyllic day last month with home-made cakes galore and lots of members turning up (see picture above). And we were able to use the newly-installed electricity to run an urn for the first time for the all important cups of tea!

We were saddened by the deaths of two long-standing members – Mick Morris (plots 7 & 8) some months ago and Verney Montoute (plots 11 & 12) in July. Mick was proud of his classic Morris Minor and we understand friends brought their Morris Minors to accompany the cortège at his funeral. Verney was a member of the committee for many years, took an active role at the site and was known and loved by many.

We are going to buy a bench in memory of Verney and have already started collecting donations towards it. If you would

like to give, please send your contribution to: Grange Lane, a/c No 007 047 93, sort code 30-92-89 designated 'Verney' or by cash at the next Hut gathering.

We are always looking for people to help with specific tasks so if you would like to help, please contact a member of the committee. A big Thank You to Amy Aeron-Thomas and Paul Widdecombe for looking after the toilets for us and keeping them clean and stocked with toilet paper, to Vic Neal for his plumbing and maintenance work, to our lovely line managers – and to all those who have helped with various tasks throughout the year. On behalf of us all, I would like to express appreciation to Nigel for his work as Chair and to all the committee members for their dedication and hard work.

**Maureen J Erny, Secretary,
October 2020**

Treasurer's Report 2020



We have ended the financial year to 30th September 2020 with a modest surplus despite an expensive year for water (over £1,100 more than last year after several long spells of dry weather), the introduction of electricity to the hut and the repair of the fencing along the lane.

We received a Lottery grant of over £9,500. Fees and rents amounted to just under £19,100. The hut activities brought in a profit of about £720 – from plant sales and donations (thanks to the helpers, plant organisers and cake makers) – and this went towards equipment.

The rent to the Estate, the levy and membership fees to the Main Society amounted to nearly £8,900. Water charges were about £2,600, skips and waste management fees were about £1,500. General maintenance and equipment and supplies expenditure were about £2,200. We spent about £11,500 on projects and so, with the grant, this meant we were on target for what had been budgeted for. Our website and IT costs were less at about £620 (and thanks to Mark Aeron-Thomas for all his work).

The overall surplus for the year was about £2,000. Our reserves are about £16,200 and this figure is about £400 less than four years ago. We retain this level of reserves in order to be ready to meet the costs of projects to

maintain and improve the Site. Money will have to be spent on such things as the Site's requirements for water and the need to renew water tanks. We may have to spend money to improve drainage and some of the paths.

The rent for plots increases with inflation (as the membership had asked for and agreed at a recent AGM). I see no need for a larger increase for the time being. Our fees remain very modest, because much of the work to keep Grange Lane Allotments working and in good order continues to be done by volunteers. The whole membership must be grateful for this. Without this voluntary work, our membership fees could be much higher and certainly much nearer to the membership fees for the golf course across the lane. A more detailed breakdown of the figures will be made available shortly.

*Martin Beard, Treasurer
October 2020*

Plot and membership renewals

Payments for the year 2020/2021 are due from the 1st November and renewal requests will be emailed from late October. This year with Covid-19 it is even more important that as many as possible are done online. Peter Allen, membership secretary, will be at the Hut from 11.00am to midday on Sunday 1st November for the small number of ploholders who pay cash. No cheques please unless absolutely necessary.

Renewal fees are

- ½ plot £36.50
- 1 plot £73.00
- 1 ½ plots £109.50
- 2 plots £146.00
- 2 ½ plots £182.50
- 3 plots £219.00

Membership remains at £3.00 per person.

Peter Allen, Membership Secretary

Electricity at the Hut *Peter Allen*

We now have power installed at the Hut thanks to the Lottery, with money collected at plant and cake sales allowing us to buy an urn and kettle...take a look below. We are now working on a Covid-safe set of guidelines for use of these new facilities by ploholders.



Photography Project

Over the last few months, Photographers Hannah Blackmore and Jimmy Irwin have been visiting our allotments, speaking with many of you and taking photographs. Below is a short message from Hannah and Jimmy

Dear Plotolders

It has been lovely to meet so many of you over the last few months. With the growing season coming to an end, we will be concluding our photo project by creating a photobook which will showcase the work from this year. The book will be a limited edition run, which will be available to members of the allotments before it becomes available in shops.

We will be using the website Kickstarter for pre-sales of the book, along with additional photographic prints available. This will be shared with you all soon in a follow up email in the coming weeks. We hope you will enjoy the book as much as we have enjoyed creating it.

We would like to thank you all again for your time and generosity in sharing the allotments with us this summer.

Here are a number of images from our time with you, with more to be shared soon.

Hannah and Jimmy

