

BRIGHTON & HOVE ALLOTMENT FEDERATION –MINUTES AGM 2007

AGM Patcham Community Centre Wednesday 21st March 2007

1. The Chairman John Burns welcomed members to the meeting.

2. Apologies (Sites).

Foredown 1, Roedale Valley 1, Lower Roedale 1, Mile Oak 1, Horsdean 1.

3. Present (Sites).

Camp 1, Chates Farm 1, Coldean 1, Craven Vale 1, Eastbrook 2, Hoggs Platt 1, Old Waterworks 2, Pankhurst Lower 1, Patcham Court 1, Peacock Lane 1, Race Hill Farm 1, Roedale Valley 4, Tenantry Down 2, Waverley 3, Weald 6, Whitehawk Hill 1.

City Council – Parks & Open Spaces 2.

4. Minutes AGM 2005/6.

The minutes of the AGM 2005/6 were adopted.

5. Matters Arising.

There were no matters arising on items not covered elsewhere in the agenda.

6. Annual Report 2006/7.

The Chairman presented his second Annual Report. Copies were also circulated at the meeting. A full copy will be appended to the minutes and available on the website www.bhaf.org.uk. The Salient Points were as follows.

- **ACTIVITY** in second year was less than expected was achieved due mainly to the unexpected change in the secretary's personal circumstances that made attendance at meetings very difficult.
- **A NEW SECRETARY** is urgently needed and anyone wishing to have more information please contact John Burns 503363. The Secretary's task has been eased by the provision of a Laptop computer, e-mail communication, a website full of information and an active committee who share the workload.
- **CORONATION BOWL** competition has been simplified and entry made easier through Site Representatives, with the plothead's agreement doing the entry forms.
- **SITE DEVELOPMENT FUND.** Was well supported by applications for projects that benefited the Site. Details of applications are on the website www.bhaf.org.uk. The application forms for 2007/8 are available from the web or the Chair John 503363.
- **CHILDREN'S COMPETITION** was well supported and details of winners are on the web. Applications for 2007 are already 50% up. Thanks are due to Walter Sargison who judged the entries, canvassed 'seed sponsors' and assisted the Mayor presenting the prizes. Thanks are also due the Gerry Nevill for making the boxes, distributing them and looking after the administration.
- **SPECIAL PLOTS** for Gardeners with Disabilities. All three locations are now completed and about 80% let. Members are asked to publicise the availability of the special plots full details on the website www.bhaf.org.uk
- **WEBSITE** www.bhaf.org.uk is now up and running with 900+ visits by viewers. There is provision for each site to add details about their site and contribute generally. A big thanks is due to Dave Tyrell who managed almost single handily to develop it.

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- **WATER USAGE 2005/6.** All plot holders are congratulated for responding to the need to save water in a year that saw hosepipe bans for householders and worse threatened.
- **TARGETS FOR 2007/8.** –Issues to be addressed.
 1. Recruit a New Secretary.
 2. Continue the development of the website.
 3. Build a directory of e-mail contacts on all sites especially the Site Representatives to facilitate information networking.
 4. Increase entries into the simplified ‘Best Kept Allotment Competition’ and ‘The Children’s Competition’.
 5. Examine the need for a Federation Newsletter to all Tenants. Any ‘volunteers for Editor’.
 6. Continue to publicise the Allotments for Gardeners with Disabilities’.
 7. Examine ways to assist the Allotments Officer to carry out his duties.
- **THANK YOU.** The Chairman thanked Dave Tyrell for his contribution over the last two years especially in masterminding the website that he has said he will continue. Thanks were also due to Steve Lucas, Gerry Neville, John Smyth and Walter Sargison for their hard work during the year.

7. ANNUAL ACCOUNTS.

The Treasurer Steve Lucas presented and circulated the audited accounts for the year ending 28th February 2007 that showed a favourable credit balance and answered questions. The adoption of the accounts was proposed and seconded.

8. ELECTION of OFFICES FOR 2007/8

The following were proposed seconded and accepted.

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| President | – John Smyth. |
| Chairman | – John Burns. |
| Secretary | – Vacant. To be filled as soon as possible by the management committee. |
| Treasurer | – Steve Lucas. |
| Publicity | – Gerry Nevill. |

9. ELECTION OF VICE PRESIDENTS.

Three Vice Presidents were elected for their long and valuable contribution to ‘Allotments in Brighton and Hove’ and were presented by the Chair with a Diploma.

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|------------------|---------------------|
| Harry Gander | Mile Oak Site. |
| William Wakenham | Eastbrook Farm Site |
| Ron Buckham | Weald Site. |

10. COUNCIL RELATED MATTERS.

Crispin Fitzpatrick, City Council Allotments Officer gave a resume on the year.

- ✓ **Council Restructuring** – The restructuring is due for completion in May. Resources however available for the administration of Allotments have already been reduced and are unlikely to change.
- ✓ **Contactability.** – Crispin apologised for the delays in responding to messages.
- ✓ **Allotment Occupancy.** – 95% plots are ‘on paper records taken’. However there are a large number of plots not being fully cultivated and work is progressing on reducing this state of affairs.
- ✓ **Waiting Lists** – Waiting lists are now open again since the 1st March 2007 and already 300+ had registered an interest. A review at the end of last year reduced overall numbers waiting by about one third but still only three out of ten respond when an offer is made.
- ✓ **Contractor Work.** No new work orders have been issued since January for new work so rubbish removal and preparation of overgrown plots for new Tenants has been delayed but work will start again on the backlog 1st April 2007. However tenants were to still keep reporting work to the office.
- ✓ **Water** – Water is in the process of being turned on again and meters read.

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- ✓ **Coronation Bowl** – The competition had been simplified and a lot of the RHS Show rules dropped in favour of ‘Growing for the Table’ Entry forms are now available.
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- ✓ **Issues raised from the floor.** – Tenants have difficulty in knowing who their site rep is and what his/her role is. Waverley Tenants drew attention to the lack of gate security and easy access to the site from the back of adjoining houses. Camp Site’s second cultivation survey will be in mid April.

The Chair thanked Crispin for his work during the year in difficult circumstances and asked all to assist him in any way possible.

11. FEDERATION WEBSITE www.bhaf.org.uk

Gerry Nevill presented and illustrated with slides taken from key pages in the website. Attempts were made to try and have a working laptop computer to show it live but no broadband connection was possible and the Patcham Centre is in a wireless blind spot. The website has some 8,000 pages at present and carries information on ‘Starting an Allotment’, ‘How to apply for an allotment, List of sites and a City map showing their approximate location, Details with photographs of the Allotments for Gardeners with Disabilities, qualifications, locations, facilities and how to apply are also included. It is also possible for Plot holders to submit items of information, what’s on for the events dairy and add detail to their own site page.

Application forms and detail of the **SITE DEVELOPMENT FUND** and **BEST KEPT ALLOTMENT COMPETITION** are included for information and easy to access.

To date there have been 963 visits to the website.

12. CHILDRENS COMPETITION 2007.

Notices have been on Allotment Site gates for sometime and already 28 new applications have been received with 3 from last year. For more information telephone John Burns 503363 or Gerry Nevill 681931.

13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

Attention was drawn to the newsletter (copies distributed) of **THE ALLOTMENTS REGENERATION INIATIVE** that may be viewed at www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari. Copies may be had by telephoning 117 963 1551. The Newsletter also contained a loose page giving details of useful practical publications on the management of Allotments and other Allotment topics.

COMPOSTING. Copies of the City Council Publication on ‘Home Composting’ were distributed and may be obtained from the Council’s Regeneration Team.

BARGAIN COMPOST BINS– The City Council in conjunction with RECYCLENOW special offers at £8, &10, & £20 depending on size. Details from the City Council Recycling Team.