**Appendix 1 – Annual Report 2012/ 13 (John Burns)**

This last year has seen sweeping changes going through the Federation, starting from last year’s AGM, where there was a wind of change, a motion was passed that the objectives of the Federation should be looked at because it was felt that there were shortcomings in so much as they did not fully represent the interests of the plot holders. A sub committee of volunteers was formed and a new list of objectives was achieved, a SGM was convened and the new objectives were duly passed. They have now been incorporated into the constitution along with other updates and you will be asked to approve these changes shortly. Before I leave this topic I would like to thank the volunteers that gave up their time and expertise to carry out this exercise.

The Liaison Meetings held between the Federation Committee and the Allotment Officer continued throughout the year. We welcomed Councillor Lizzie Dean to the meetings, Lizzie was elected at the annual B&H City Council Meeting on the 17th May 2012, to be the Councillor attached to the Federation. I am sure she did not know what she’d let herself in for when she accepted the appointment, but Lizzie we are grateful for your attendance and input and long may you continue. David Cooper lost the title of acting Allotment Officer to become Allotment Officer and has endeavoured to keep the allotment service running smoothly. He has worked well with us, we have not always agreed with each other, but we respect each others views.

Another outcome of last year’s AGM was Pete West stating that a Strategy was necessary, so the allotment service could have a vision going forward. With that in mind we asked for volunteers to sit on the Strategy Committee, along with members of our Committee. Two volunteers were recruited and the Strategy Committee was formed and have met with the Council Representatives, along with two independent members on a number of occasions. An update will be given to you at the AOB section of the agenda.

Your Committee have met on a regular basis, in between Site Rep Meetings, and a large number of topics have been discussed, a major one being the halving of 10 rod plots when they become available. This topic has caused great concern amongst plot holders and Committee Members alike, but this is one of the areas that the Strategy Committee Meetings will address and come up with a policy in due course.

We unfortunately lost the services of Tracey Llewellyn as Secretary during the year. We advertised for a replacement, and lo and behold we received three applications. We held interviews and it was decided that we would ask two of the applicants to share duties because of the increase of the workload on the Secretary. Allan Brown and Nicola Oestreicher were duly invited and both accepted. Unfortunately Nicola became unwell and decided to step down before getting her feet under the table, so Allan has had the workload all to himself, but has been a great asset and I thank him on behalf of you all. I must also thank Tracey for her sterling work that she gave over the last few years. Steve Lucas is relinquishing the position of Treasurer this AGM. Steve was elected at the 2007 AGM and has been an important member of the Federation Committee. We are not losing Steve’s expertise and sound common sense because he is standing as a Committee Member. I would also like to pay tribute to the remaining Committee Members who have contributed to the smooth running of the Federation, they are namely Anne Glow, Lynn Long, Melanie Matthews and Gary Johnson. Also, during the year, we co-opted Simon Powell and Tania Johnson on to the Committee. They will all be standing for election this year.

If you are a regular on our website, you will notice that it has been revamped and upgraded. We now have a new logo, the website shows all the minutes once they have been approved and the website is more user friendly. Our thanks go to Mark Carroll and Allan Brown for the new logo and to Mark Carroll for the revamped website and also Melanie Matthews who is the web master and edits and produces the e-news letter on our behalf. I would give you a plea on her behalf that Melanie is always open to contributions from tenants for inclusion in the e-news publication.

Once again the Allotment Competitions were held in conjunction with the City in Bloom, I have to say I was a little disappointed with the number of entrants, but I was not disappointed with the standard of the entries. The winner of the Best Kept Allotment (Coronation Bowl), Tina Shaheen of Plot 19, Moulscoomb Estate, had an excellent laid out plot, full of different varieties, all in good order. The Best Newcomer category had the most entries with the winner coming from Eastbrook site – Dan Carton, plot 16/2. The most Creative Category was won by Kay Sexton, plot 103, The Weald site. The judges were again independent, coming from Worthing Allotment Society. The Children’s Competitions were held once again, the number of entrants was again disappointing, but having said that the weather that we had to endure last summer did not lend itself to having numerous children’s entries. The City in Bloom organisation is now a stand-alone organisation, not being run by the City Council, as our competitions are held in conjunction with City in Bloom and our winners are presented with their prizes at the combined presentation evening. Our representative on the City in Bloom Committee is Anne Glow.

The Site Development Fund, although not fully used, had more applications this last year with a variety of projects being supported, ranging from hedge-whips to protect allotment sites from the prevailing winds, to petrol driven equipment to be used for the benefit of plot holders. It is in the interests of you all, that if you feel there is a need for something on your site, that is going to enhance the use or surroundings to the benefit of all tenants get in touch with your site rep to make application to the Treasurer.

As you have probably realised, as my name is not on the agenda for re-election, this is my last Federation meeting, my last Annual Report. I was first elected Chair in 2005, during that time it is interesting to note that the number of Allotment Officers that I have seen leave and been replaced is six! Don’t think that is a reflection on my ability to work with them but what I will say is that the position of the Allotment Officer is an arduous task, and not one that I would want to do.

In conclusion I will finally say that I have generally enjoyed my time as Chairperson and I leave the Federation in good hands. Thank you and goodbye.

*John Burns.*