



Humber Avenue Community Allotments Community Interest Company
Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 10th April 2024 at 19.30
Durrington Community Centre

MINUTES

1. Welcome

The HACA Company Secretary introduced himself and his role as chair of the meeting as defined in 5.3 of the constitution. He welcomed plot holders to the third AGM of Humber Avenue Community Allotments Community Interest Company. He informed the group of the whereabouts of the fire exits, toilets and the time the room needed vacation. The Company Secretary informed the meeting that this was a legally constituted meeting in accordance with the published HACA constitution. The invitation for committee nominations and motions was issued on 29th February 2024 and closed on 20th March 2024. The notification of the date, time and place of the meeting was published on 24th March 2024.

The Company Secretary welcomed guests Steve McKenna, Parks and Foreshore Manager for Worthing Borough Council and Vicki Wells, the Worthing Council Cabinet member for the environment.

He explained that the purpose of an AGM was a review of performance to date, to give consideration to future activity, reviewing the financial position and allowing members to ask questions. AGM's are required by legislation to follow the format laid down in the organisation's constitution.

The Company Secretary asked plot holders to ask any questions once each speaker had finished their presentation.

2. Apologies

Apologies had been received for Steve Garrett, Andrew Scoon and Kim Bowen Wood.

3. Approval of Minutes from the last meeting

Approved as an accurate reflection of the meeting, as proposed by Malcolm Hedger and seconded by Judy Kara.



4. Matters arising from the last meeting not covered by the agenda

There were no matters arising.

5. Report from Chair

Judy Kara introduced herself as the current HACA Chair. She started by thanking tenants for working hard on their plots and remarked that the site looked in excellent condition. She thanked her fellow committee members for their hard work and thanked co-opted committee members Steve Garrett and Andrew Scoon. The Chair went on to thank Tony and Lavinia for keeping the site toilet impeccably clean and for their barbecue skills. Richard Billingshurst and Stephen Head were thanked for undertaking numerous site maintenance tasks and carpentry jobs respectively. The Chair expressed thanks to Ferring Country Centre, Northbrook Farm, Urban Surgeons, Mr Tree and Abbie and Paul for providing manure, wood chippings, pallets and removing waste materials.

She informed the meeting that monthly newsletters are sent to plot holders and posted on the website and the bimonthly committee meeting minutes are also posted on the website. She explained that plot holders had attended committee meetings as guests and there had been four directors meetings in the last year.

She informed the meeting that approximately 50% of plot holders now accessed Facebook.

In terms of site projects and activity over the last year, she highlighted the following:

- New wheelbarrows have been provided and existing ones have been serviced
- Metal tools removed and replaced with plastic ones
- Provision of waste skips
- Very few suggestions or complaints had been received
- Provision of an allotment for the SAND project
- Creation of accessible allotments

The Chair finished by informing the meeting that she is now standing down as Chair and wished HACA every success in the future.

There were no questions on the Chair's report

6. Report from Treasurer

The Treasurer highlighted the following from his financial report of 1st September 2022 – 31st August 2023:

- Total income was £14,741.82
- Total expenditure was £10,654.22
- Worthing Borough Council have endorsed HACA's recommendation that plot fees remain the same for 2024/25



The Treasurer thanked Tony and Lavinia for keeping the toilet clean, Christine Busfield and the Chartered Accountants for auditing the accounts, which resulted in no tax due to HMRC.

The Treasurer informed the meeting that no expenses had been claimed by committee members.

The Treasurer highlighted the following from his financial report of 1st September 2023 – 31st August 2024:

- Total income was £23,213.77
- Total expenditure was £16,439.31
- £15,000 had been received for the CIL project, which is the total amount
- Inclusive WAGA membership for all plotholders has been introduced
- The water bill is expected to be over £1,000

The Treasurer thanked Malcolm Hedger, Terry Smith and all who had given up their time to help with the CIL project.

Linda Head asked whether HACA can monitor water usage and the Treasurer explained that he reads the meter once a month.

7. Report from Membership Secretary

The membership secretary highlighted the following from her report:

- 8 plots relinquished since last April and 2 evictions for non-cultivation
- One full plot allocated to the SAND project
- Plot 92 remodelled as an accessible plot
- 90 people remain on the waiting list, with 15 new applicants this year
- Average waiting time for a plot is over three years
- Plot inspections have been carried out on a monthly basis throughout the year

The membership secretary asked that any plot holder who felt they may be struggling with cultivation, to speak to a committee member.

There were no questions on the Membership Secretary's report.

8. Plot fees 2024/25

The Company Secretary explained that plot fees had been discussed at a Directors meeting then at a full committee meeting before the recommendation to the council that plot fees remained the same for 2024/25.

The meeting voted unanimously to keep plot fees the same for 2024/25.

The Company Secretary explained that the council will be reviewing how plot fees are set across Worthing and Adur and this will impact how HACA set plot fees next year.



A plot holder asked how HACA fees compare to other allotments and the Company Secretary explained that while HACA were the most expensive, we also had excellent facilities compared to other sites.

Steve McKenna explained to the meeting that the council should be setting the fees and confirmed this is currently under review to ensure there is governance around the charges.

9. New Social Hub

The Company Secretary explained to the group that the committee were considering replacing the current social room with a new, larger building with accessible access. Initial enquires have been made and the approximate cost is in the region of £30,000, which includes plumbing and solar panels. He went on to explain that HACA would apply for funding from several sources, with the help of plot holder who is a professional bid writer.

He asked the meeting whether they want a new social room.

Richard Billinghamurst asked who would own the building and the Company Secretary explained that this is currently being discussed with the council and whilst none of the money would come from plot fees, the upkeep of the building would do but as a new build, this is not expected to be much.

Graham expressed concern that HACA may have to pay rates on the building if it was too big.

Steve McKenna explained that planning permission was needed, compliance with accessibility regulations and the ongoing maintenance of the building all needed to be considered. He added that the council supported the proposal in principle but warned that the process was quite complex and the proper governance process needs to be followed.

The meeting voted in favour of going ahead with a new social room.

Judy Kara asked about plans for the current social room and the Company Secretary explained that this would be utilised in part for a seed swap area, with storage space at the back.

10. Durrington New Development Allotments

The Treasurer informed the meeting that the plans have been passed but the work was not expected to start imminently.

The Company Secretary explained that Andrew Scoon had kindly agreed to move to another plot to make way for a path between the two sites and the committee would be discussing what to do with this area until the new path was created.

A plot holder commented that people go to the allotments for peace and quiet and expressed concern at the possible noise from the football pitches.



Steve McKenna explained that the football pitches were located on the other side from the allotments and were for juniors, with no floodlights and likely weekend matches only so he did not anticipate any increase in noise levels.

Richard Billinghamurst asked whether a fence will be constructed to keep footballs out and Steve McKenna replied that this would be considered.

There were no further questions on the new development allotments.

11. Five year Service Level Agreement

The Company Secretary informed the meeting that the retirement of William Boyd had slowed down the process. He explained that Articles of Association, public sector governance, the HACA constitution, policies and procedures and legislation including Health and Safety and GDPR all needed to be considered. He explained that when HACA was set up as a Community Interest Company, if it were to go out of business then it was a legal requirement that any assets would pass to another CIC or charity. He felt HACA were very close to agreement on the SLA and Steve McKenna agreed, adding that it was important to get the agreement right, regardless of the time it took.

12. Election of Directors and Committee Members

The Company Secretary informed the meeting that there were no challenges to the nominations received by the due date of 20th March 2024, therefore the following were all elected unopposed:

President	Ian Hamilton	Plot 42
Chair& Director	Terry Smith	Plots 57 & 58
Company Secretary & Director	Ros Knight	Plot 100b
Treasurer & Director	Peter Davey	Plot 10
Membership Secretary & Director	Christine Busfield	Plot 75
Health & Safety Advisor	Linda Head	Plot 63
Project Co-Ordinator	Malcolm Hedger	Plot 60 & 61
Newsletter	Ros Knight	Plot 100b
Website & Facebook	Ruth Allan	Plot 90

The new President introduced himself to the meeting and the Company Secretary thanked him for taking on the role. The President informed the meeting that he was honoured to take on the presidency and was looking forward to working with everyone.



13. Questions from Tenants

The following questions were asked by plottolders and with replies below:

Q Are there any developments with the resurfacing of the south west road?

The Company Secretary replied this would happen once the weather had settled and the temperature was above 10 degrees.

Q How many plot holders had taken up joining WAGA?

The Company Secretary explained that the scheme only started on 1st April and will be reviewed in three months. It was also noted from Graham that with more volunteers, the shop could open more regularly, possibly including some evenings in the summer.

Q Is money paid to WAGA now included in the plot fees

The Company Secretary confirmed this was the case.

Q Are there instructions for using the defibrillator?

The Website Manager explained that the machine gives instructions on its use and that you have to ring 999 to unlock the defibrillator and the call handler will talk someone through using the defibrillator as well as CPR if required. No medical knowledge is needed to use the defibrillator. The Company Secretary thanked the Health and Safety Advisor and Chair for checking the defibrillator on a regular basis.

Q Will there be a plaque on site to recognise Roy Olliver's contribution to the allotments?

The Company Secretary replied that this is planned for the summer, with Plot 92 dedicated to his memory.

Q Will all plottolders be invited to attend the dedication to Roy?

The Company Secretary explained that all plot holders would be invited to attend.

It was noted that the profile of allotmenters had changed, with more younger people and children and the committee was looking at ways to engage with everyone. A gardening blog had proved unsuccessful and there was just a small team of regular volunteers to help with maintenance. The Website Manager took the opportunity to thank the volunteers who had worked on her plot.

14. Closing Remarks

The new Chair thanked everyone who had attended the meeting and invited Vicki Wells and Steve McKenna to say a few words.

Vicki Wells introduced herself and said she was delighted to support HACA's CIL application. She commended HACA for being visionary and felt other groups could learn a lot from HACA. She also thanked Steve McKenna.



Steve McKenna explained to the meeting that there was no self-management of allotments in Brighton and consequently the allotments were not in a good state. He went on to say that HACA were “streets ahead” of anything he had seen in Brighton and encouraged HACA to keep moving forward.

The Chair closed the meeting with the following quote from Winston Churchill: **This is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. It is however the end of the beginning.**

He commented that HACA’s focus should now be on further development of our culture to meet our mission, vision and values commitment of inclusivity of all.

The meeting closed at 21.00