

Addiscombe, Woodside & Shirley Leisure Gardens Ltd

AWSLG Chairman's Report - AGM 14 December 2024

Introduction

On behalf of the Committee I am delighted to share this Chairman's Report for the 103rd year of the Society's existence at Glenthorne Road.

This report outlines our Society's achievements and challenges in the past year, and also its exciting prospects ahead.

It is encouraging to observe that our Society continues to flourish as evidenced by the continued presence of the many longstanding and new Members. Each Member's commitment significantly contributes to the success of our Society and enjoyment of our very special allotment and garden site.

Committee

The past year has been unusual in so far as our Chairman, David Lay found that due to work commitments he felt he had to resign from the Committee as he could not give it and his role the time it required and deserved. In David's absence I assumed the role as Acting Chair and Kin Tse took over the role as Acting Vice-Chair. I am pleased to advise however that David remains a remarkable supporter of our Society and Committee and I thank him on their behalf for his work as Chairman and his continued support and involvement in developing the Committee's objectives during this year and which I will briefly outline later in this report.

The Committee presently comprises 10 members including; Anthony (Tony) O'Connor, KinTse, Peter Bashford, Jill Seagroatt, Nick Wood, Michelle Gosnell, Toby Caird, Peter Warsop, Paul Sheehan and Wenton Lespierre (co-opted onto the Committee in November 2024).

In November 2024 Gero Tona advised that due to personal reasons he was unable to continue as a Committee Member, we and thank him for his contributions to the Committee and look forward to his continued support of our Society.

Annual Show

The show was well supported with contributions from Members. It was attended by many Members' families and friends and resulted in a delightful community gathering. The day was enhanced by the weather, apple pressing, afternoon tea, tombola, and providing a perfect setting for all to socialise.

Artisian Fair

Proved a great success for those attending and also the stall holders. We were lucky with the weather on the day and the event was well attended by both plot holders and members of the wider community, and the Christmas atmosphere was greatly enhanced by the decorations painstakingly hung by Volunteers.

Trading Hut and Canteen

Both facilities are trading well but in need of Volunteers on Saturdays and Sundays.

Polytunnel

The Polytunnel continues to grow much needed plants for sale in the Trading Hut.

Buildings & Grounds

An accidental fire destroyed the Bee Shed earlier this year and it is to be repaired / replaced 2025.

Wild Garden & Meadows

Healthy and thriving. Malcolm Bridge to say a few words later in the meeting.

Bee Apiary

The bees are thriving and have settled down for the winter with the hope that next year will be a similarly successful year.

Foodbank

The foodbank plot continues to produce vegetables and fruit for the Shrublands Foodbank and to store much needed contributions from Members.

AWSLG – A Potted History

Printed late 2024 and recommended reading for all Members. This publication is a great history of our Society and reinforces page after page that the Society was set up by its founding fathers to provide safety of tenure for its Members, to promote community and to minimise costs to its Members with the management and maintenance of its property being undertaken by Volunteers.

Volunteers

The Society extends its sincere thanks to all our dedicated Volunteers and Committee Members whose steadfast support serves as the cornerstone of the Society's success.

Special appreciation is directed towards the following.

Alan, Helen, and their team in the Trading Hut,

Michelle and her canteen team

Jill and her team of event organisers

Peter and his Saturday working group for maintaining the site's beauty and safety.

Malcolm Bridge and his team for an exceptional job in preserving our wild garden and meadow.

Malcolm Holmes for his tireless efforts in cutting and maintaining the grass paths.

Kevin for keeping our facilities in excellent condition

Jean and her team for our greatly appreciated and informative monthly newsletter.

Nigel Back for his ongoing support of our website

Penny, and the Saturday office volunteers.

Special thanks to Sally and her team, for ensuring an abundance of plants from the polytunnel for sale in the warehouse.

Helen Clements, Richard, and Mary Polya for maintaining the Foodbank plot.

Richard Rainey and his extended for the Potted History

To all other unsung Volunteers for their contributions and whose selfless dedication is pivotal to the success of our site.

Security

Ensuring the security of our allotment site remains a top priority for the Committee and it consistently reviews the security measures. Regrettably, the past year witnessed a few break-ins, resulting in the theft of goods from sheds along with some damage to sheds.

Although it is not possible to completely secure the site, additional CCTV cameras have been

installed and, following their successful installation, these will be increased in number and locations during 2024 / 2025.

The Society has also agreed with its adjoining neighbour, Shirley Oaks Management Limited, that anti-climbing paint may be applied to the cappings of the boundary wall along Primrose Lane. These works will be undertaken early 2025.

(2023 /2024 Committee Report and) 2024 / 2025 Objectives

Volunteers:

Instigate procedures for the encouragement of Volunteers.

Society Rules:

Complete redraft of Society Rules for Committee consideration third quarter of 2025, Members' consultation late 2025 and Members approval via SGM prior to the 2025 AGM.

Society Regulations:

Complete redraft of Society Regulations for Committee approval mid 2025 and for introduction before plot letting 2025.

Health and Safety Policy:

Complete Society wide H & S Policy for completion mid 2025

New Members:

Investigate measures to support new Members.

Hall Hire:

Investigate measures to increase use of Hall

Security:

Ongoing review of measures for improving site wide security.

Investigate Feasibility and Demand for Development of an Area With Raised Beds for Senior Members / Reirring Plot Members:

Prepare proposal for Committee consideration 2025.

Improve the Society's Visibility:

Continue improvement of the Society's visibility via internet, local churches, etc.

Conclusion

In conclusion 2024 has been another successful year for our Society. Notwithstanding this it is recognised that the Society has and is experiencing much change including demographics, legislation, threats of changes in planning, etc. In recognition of this the Committee is undertaking reviews in a number of areas, including Rules, etc.. It is monitoring Croydon's Development Plans. It is also looking at how it can improve in the encouragement of volunteers, social events, uses of it facilities, visibility to Members and the wider Community, etc. It looks forward to concluding many of these matters in 2025 and to the continued future success of our Society.

Tony O'Connor
Acting Chairman