



Grow Community - Sopwell 1st Annual General Meeting Minutes

7pm, 28th September 2021

St Julian's Hall, Abbots Avenue, St Albans, AL1 2HY

Attendees:

Katharine Swindells, Chair KS	Janet Audley Charles JAC
Joanna Cooney, Secretary JC	Michelle Mackenzie MM
Gail Jackson, Vice-Secretary GJ	Liz Hunt LH
Lee Wood, Out-going Treasurer LW	Sallyann Chapman SAC
Rachel Baker RB	Sonya Jefferson SJ
Elaine Rainsford ER	Valerie Rodrigues VR
Teresa Frame TF	Janet Knott JK
Sandy Walkington SW	Peter Wares PW

Apologies:

Jackie Tominey JT
Alison Shipperlee, In-coming Treasurer AS
Nic Hayes, NH

Danielle Durant, DD

Rebecca Sumner Smith RSS
Caroline Cowling, CC

Minutes

<u>Agenda Item</u>		<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
1. Welcome, apologies for absence and introduction (KS)	<p>The AGM was preceded by Communi-Tea with cakes, biscuits, tea and coffee. Thank you to Michelle and Rachel for serving, and Sally for her sponge cake and the lavender heated bags.</p> <p>KS, the Chair, welcomed everyone to the 1st Annual General Meeting of Grow Community – Sopwell. KS noted that all our policies have been sorted and approved, so we are ready to re-start our working parties from the following Saturday (9th October 2021).</p>		
2. Annual Report (KS)	<p>Despite continuing challenges, the group had a productive year. Thanks to our team, we couldn't have done this without you, and our funders helping us to get off the ground. Highlights have been creating the community garden and the team to help it, 'Grow and Give' has made a good start contributing to the local Food Bank with individuals and donations from the community garden, the seed stall outside 71 Leyland Avenue and pop up seed stalls on the Bank holiday weekend were successful. If people have any comments or suggestions then let us know.</p> <p>The Full Annual Report 2021 is available from: https://cottonmillandsopwellhub.files.wordpress.com/2021/09/grow-annual-report-2020-2021-final.pdf</p>		
3. Financial Report (LW)	<p>LW thanked everyone for coming and presented the Financial Report for the year 2020 to 2021. This was the year that everything kicked off and our expenditure shows this, managing to develop a piece of land to a jewel of Sopwell. The majority of the money was grants, and income from collection buckets and the seeds and seedlings stalls. Money was brought forward from last year (petty cash and what was in the account). The bulk of the cash in</p>		

	<p>hand is from events (donations, seeds, cakes etc). Expenditure was large due to beds, soil, seeds, tools, and further future expenditure was predicted for on-going projects including bench and sign, and the group is looking to develop the area with more beds. There has been training to make sure that we are compliant with Council demands. There was also spend on insurance.</p> <p>The balance brought forward was £2447.71 (£2385.71 in the bank and petty cash of £62.50). Income was £4969.31 and expenditure was £3540.57. The closing balance was £4893.46. The full summary of the Financial Report is included as Appendix 1.</p> <p>PW was impressed by the amount managed to generate and spend, and put the money to good use.</p> <p>KS noted that the majority of the money was from SW's County Council locality budget, St Albans' District Council grants and the Royal Horticultural Society, which included support from Alison Findlay, an RHS expert.</p> <p>SW said that he was impressed with the work done by Grow, as well as other efforts by CASH and SCT, and that he was pleased to support the good work being done in the area.</p>		
<p>4. Election of Committee Members (KS)</p>	<p>a) Chair: Katharine Swindells Seconded by: Valerie Rodrigues Vote: unanimous for</p> <p>b) Vice-Chair: Gail Jackson Seconded by: Katharine Swindells Vote: unanimous for</p> <p>Lee Wood is standing down as Treasurer, but looking to stay on as</p>		

	<p>c) Treasurer: Alison Shipperlee Seconded by: Michelle Mackenzie Vote: unanimous for</p> <p>Trustee: Sonya Jefferson Seconded by: Katharine Swindells Vote: unanimous for</p> <p>Trustee: Joanna Cooney Seconded by: Katharine Swindells Vote: unanimous for</p> <p>Trustee: Lee Wood Seconded by: Gail Jackson Vote: unanimous for</p> <p>Additional Committee members: No-one else put their name forward to be a Committee Member.</p> <p>KS noted that we'd like to create a diversity role, and noted that the group was looking to fill this role over the next few months. Attendees were invited to contact her outside the meeting if they were interested in taking on the role.</p>		
5. Appointment of Secretary (in-coming Chair)	KS seconded JC for the role of Secretary and this was passed by unanimous vote.		
6. Potential Future Events (in-coming Chair)	KS noted that the group is looking to do a working party in October, and then monthly events in November and December. JC noted that the wreath making (done online last year) was popular.		

7. AOB (in-coming Chair)

Social media presence

LW said that the social media engagement has gone through the roof, 400 on Instagram, a few hundred on Twitter. He asked for the group to keep engaging to get our message out there. Having being raised in Cottonmill and Sopwell, LW can't think of a better place for a Community Garden. He noted the more help we have, the better that the area will be for everyone. The idea is to connect everything together in one centralised hub.

ER noted that the group had inspired her sister up in Glasgow to do something similar, to link with her community to set up something similar.

Engaging the wider community including older people

PW suggested that Grow should engage older people, such as a club of older people who have a lot of time on their hands. KS noted that she and PW could develop this and should discuss ideas outside the meeting.

GJ suggested that perhaps there could be some sessions at the garden for older people. KS noted that the Home Ed families were interested in the Thursday working sessions.

JC noted that working with the Thursday Community Cafe at the church may be a way to engage older people.

LW noted that there was a window to engage with the Council at the start of the project, and there was a lot of work early on to get the garden going. Over the next twelve months, there's now time to develop this further.

KS noted that group has grown really well, and that perhaps the Communi-Tea could be a way to draw people in. KS is trying to have Thursday as her working day, and hoping that having six Committee members should help

have more sessions.

Jobs to do

KS noted that another coat needs to go on the Abbots Avenue planters.

LH asked what planting was planned for the next few months.

KS replied garlic and onions; attendees were asked for suggestions. GJ suggested an online session to discuss planting ideas.

ER noted that the media was saying Christmas would be difficult due to HGV driver shortages and wondered whether Grow could help by growing vegetables.

KS noted that there were parsnips in the raised beds already, but only a small amount.

SAC noted that she had grown potatoes in a greenhouse in October and they had grown in time for Christmas. It was noted that we can't have additional structures on the Community Garden site but this could be something for Grow members to do at home.

The meeting closed at 7.48pm.

Appendix 1: Financial report

Income and Expenditure 2020/2021

Income & Expenditure 2020/2021			
Income (£)		Expenditure (£)	
Grants	4636.48	Equipment	2116.80
Events & Activities	332.83	Consumables	1079.77
		Training	12.00
		Insurance, Subscriptions & Memberships	332.00
Total income	4969.31	Total expenditure	3540.57
Of which: Monies to be paid in	149.29	Expenses still to be reimbursed/banked	1168.80
Balance brought forward 01.09.2020	2447.71		
Bank balance brought forward 01.09.2020	2385.21		
Petty cash	62.50		
Funds of the organisation at 31.08.2021	3876.45		
Bank balance brought forward 01.09.2020	2385.21		
Banked petty cash	30.00		
Petty cash	32.50		
Income	4969.31		
Expenditure	3540.57		
Bank balance at 31.08.2021	4863.46		

Financial year: September 1st to 31st August