



Grow Community – Sopwell 3rd Annual General Meeting Minutes

7pm, 26th September 2023

Cottonmill Community and Cycling Centre, Old Oak, off Cottonmill Lane, AL1 2EF

Attendees:

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| Katharine Swindells KS | Ed Jankowski EJ |
| Joanna Cooney JC | Nelly Cronier-Mackie NCM |
| Gail Jackson GJ | Deborah Hall DH |
| Lee Wood LW | Rachel Baker RB |
| Alison Shipperlee AS | Michelle Mackenzie MM |
| Gail Jackson GJ | Liz Hunt LH |
| | Simi Grewal and daughter SG |

Apologies:

- Sonya Jefferson SJ
- Anne Cowan AC
- Sandy Walkington SW
- Val Rodrigues VR
- Jackie Tominey JT
- Rita Floyd RF

Minutes

<u>Agenda Item</u>		<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsible</u>
Welcome,	Welcome and tour		

<p>apologies for absence and introduction (KS)</p>	<p>Chair Kate Swindells welcomed people to the meeting and gave a short tour of growing places at the Community Centre, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the mini orchard, • the newly planted ornamental trees in the far corner, • potential sites for future fruit/nut trees and wildflowers in unused parts at the front of the dirt jumps (SG recommended planting up with plants like red yarrow that were perennial and seeds could be collected from them), • the raised beds (where we found two growing squashes, some very fragrant basil and some beautiful purple amaranth) and • the plants to pollinators planters by the front entrance. 		
<p>1. Annual Report (KS)</p>	<p>Annual Report</p> <p>Chair KS shared a hard copy of the Annual Report, which included lots of photos of the amazing year Grow Community – Sopwell has had.</p> <p>KS reported that we've had a busy and productive year and welcomed lots of new volunteers.</p> <p>We've added two new growing sites: the mini meadow and the Community Centre.</p> <p>Berners Drive Community Garden goes from strength to strength and plants are establishing well. The rain capture unit is in place and the bench is ready to go in. Next year we plan to create an ornamental bed full of wildlife friendly plants and more fruit bushes. Any suggestions of other projects are welcome.</p> <p>During the year, we've had events including bird counting, seed sorting, community group seed planting and we have the seed and seedling stall and pop ups. We've added weekday evening sessions to give more options for volunteers. We do an open garden in Spring and the wreath workshop in Winter, and we have workshops at our weekend working sessions. We had a well-attended foraging session. We have been in attendance at community</p>		

fairs and KS was at the Lib Dem Food Security panel talk with Daisy Cooper. KS noted that we do all this because our planet is in crisis and we want to educate and take action on the issues of Food Security, Biodiversity and help build Kind, Caring and Resilient Communities. We hope members of our group all continue to stay involved and build on what we've all achieved together.

Mini meadow

LW updated attendees on the mini meadow at Martyr Close. The mini meadow has been fantastic this Summer, and it doesn't take a lot for somewhere to establish when given the love that SJ has given it. There's been seeds and seedlings, many donated by MM. It's been tools in the ground, and the local community around the area has come out to help establish the area. There's been a massive increased in the biodiversity of flora and fauna. There are two bug houses with plans for a third, and plans for a pond, although the weather meant that was put off 'til next year. The local contractors gave the meadow an unexpected haircut, which wasn't great timing as we hadn't collected seeds. However, we've spoken to the Council and contractors, who were very apologetic and supportive and they are keen to help take the meadow forward. Hopefully, they will give us some funding to re-establish the meadow to make it bigger and better than before.

In response to why the meadow was cut, LW noted that there was an error on behalf of the contractor, who hadn't been trained but he reiterated that the contractor had been apologetic and wanted to make things right.

Abbots Avenue Planters

JC gave a short report on the Abbots Avenue planters, thanking all the volunteers that had helped with planting, weeding, watering, litter picking and painting. People interested in helping out in the future were directed to sign up on the growsopwell.org page or the Grow Community – Sopwell FaceBook

	page.		
2. Financial Report (AS)	<p>Financial Report</p> <p>Treasurer AS reported that currently we have £2748.41 in funds.</p> <p>Over this year we have had more expenditure than income, but this was planned as we had grant money to spend. We've continued to spend across a range of projects including infrastructure (the rain capture, compost for the Community Centre beds). Outside of insurance, our main expense was £430 on the rain capture, £150 on the apple press and £200 on compost. We have reduced some of our running costs, for example we moved from HSBC to Metro to save on fees and we found slightly cheaper insurance this year.</p> <p>We still have just over £1200 of grant money to go forward to projects from next year. There's been a drop in income from events to about £500, as we have had slightly fewer events and they have been slightly smaller. This income though is important for insurance, hall hire, and seeds.</p> <p>EJ asked about audited the accounts but AS noted there's a short time between the end of the financial year and the AGM, so AS has an accountant lined up to audit them but it will happen in the next few weeks. We have to do this to ensure that we meet the terms of our Trustee Insurance.</p>		
3. Resolutions to Constitution	<p>The following notices were put forward when the notice of the AGM was sent out:</p> <p>Notices of Resolution</p> <p>As required under Section 11 of Grow Community - Sopwell's Constitution, the Committee hereby gives notice of intention to alter the Constitution. The resolutions to be raised at the AGM are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change Section 6.10 from "Retiring Officers shall be eligible for re-election after a gap of at least one year." to "Retiring Officers may be re-elected immediately after the end of their three year term." 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To change Section 8.7 from "Members shall elect at least 3 and not more than 7 Committee members to serve for the next year. They will retire at the next AGM but may stand for re-election." to "Members shall elect at least 3 and not more than 12 Committee members to serve for the next year. They will retire at the next AGM but may stand for re-election." <p>Both resolutions were voted on and passed unanimously.</p>		
4. Change of Financial Year	<p>Financial Year</p> <p>The proposal was put forward to change the end of the financial year from August 31st to July 31st to give time for the accounts to be audited before the AGM (as mentioned in the Financial Report).</p> <p>This proposal was passed unanimously.</p>		
5. Election of Committee Members (KS)	<p>Voting in of the Committee</p> <p>a) Chair: Kate Swindells Proposed: Alison Shipperlee Seconded by: Michelle Mackenzie Vote: unanimously approved</p> <p>AS is stepping down as Treasurer and was thanked for her service.</p> <p>b) Two people stepped forward to share the Treasurer role.</p> <p>Co-Treasurer: Rachel Baker Proposed: Kate Swindells Seconded by: Michelle Mackenzie Vote: unanimously approved</p> <p>Co-Treasurer: Nellie Cronier-Mackie Proposed: Gail Jackson Seconded by: Alison Shipperlee Vote: unanimously approved</p>		

	<p>c) Additional Committee member(s)</p> <p>Trustee: Joanna Cooney Proposed: Kate Swindells Seconded by: Gail Jackson Vote: unanimously approved</p> <p>Trustee: Alison Shipperlee Proposed: Michelle Mackenzie Seconded by: Kate Swindells Vote: unanimously approved</p> <p>Trustee: Lee Wood Proposed: Joanna Cooney Seconded by: Gail Jackson Vote: unanimously approved</p> <p>Trustee: Gail Jackson Proposed: Kate Swindells Seconded by: Lee Wood Vote: unanimously approved</p> <p>Trustee: Sonya Jefferson Proposed: Kate Swindells Seconded by: Rachel Baker Vote: unanimously approved</p>		
<p>6. Appointment of Secretary (in-coming Chair)</p>	<p>KS appointed JC as secretary.</p>		

7. AOB (in-coming Chair)	<p>Jigsaw Meadow: Our Next Project!</p> <p>KS reported that SJ would like to create a Sopwell “Jigsaw” meadow similar to the project in Sandridge (organised by Sandridge Parish Council). People in the Community set aside some of their garden and plants it with wildflowers. The small patchwork combined makes a large area. KS noted that we will apply for seeds and launch in February or March. Hopefully, some of the funding from the mini meadow reparations will go towards the jigsaw meadow.</p> <p>Sharing buffet</p> <p>The attendees then shared the food brought to the AGM, including tasty rice salads, chickpea stew, courgette and tomato tart, onion tart, tomato and basil salad, courgette cake, and cinnamon biscuits. DH brought some old recipe books to share and MM bought bags of hazelnuts from her allotment. Thanks to NCM for making the tea.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.30pm.</p>		
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Appendix 1: Financial report

Income & Expenditure 2022/2023 (unaudited)			
Income (£)		Expenditure (£)	
Organisation grants/sponsorship/donations	296.31	Equipment (includes £21.70 uncashed cheque)	807.49
Events & Activities	808.25	Consumables (includes £10.75 from 21/22)	442.18
Income from 2021/22	0.00	Hall Hire	95.75
		Promotion	33.26
		Event Fees	230.00
		Training	24.00
		Insurance, Subscriptions & Memberships	227.20
		Operating costs (bank/web/DBS)	100.60
Total income	1104.56	Total expenditure	1960.48
Of which: Monies to be paid in	0.00	Expenses still to be reimbursed/banked (but accounted for)	21.70
Balance brought forward 01.09.2022	3597.40		
Bank balance brought forward 01.09.2022	3558.82		

Petty cash	32.50		
Ayletts Gift Card	6.08		
Funds of the organisation	2741.48		
Bank balance brought forward 01.09.2022	3558.82		
Petty cash	32.50		
Ayletts Gift Card	6.08		
Income	1104.56		
Expenditure	1960.48		
Bank balance at 31.08.2023	£2,613.49		
Cheque outstanding	-21.70		
Ayletts Gift Card	117.19		
petty cash	32.50		