

S.H.A.G.S. Annual General Meeting – 11th August 2021 @ 7.30pm

Trustee, Officer and Committee Reports

CHAIR'S REPORT - Mike Cobley

2020 - 2021 A DIFFICULT TIME FOR ALL OF US

I am so pleased to have had an allotment over the last 18 months as an escape from the pressures brought about by the pandemic (last time I mention the 'p' word). Our sites have never looked better, even battling with extremes of the British weather and this year fighting invasions of slugs, pigeons and parakeets and plots have been a real haven for escaping everyday pressures.

There has been an unprecedented demand for allotment plots since spring last year and any vacant plots have been quickly taken over. There has been a significant change in the demographics of our ploholders, now with many younger family groups with children happily involved digging, planting and growing fruit, flowers and vegetables. Grove School now look after a plot at Aldwickbury. With enthusiastic younger members the Allotment Society future is assured and some of our senior members can take a rest from the everyday running of SHAGS in the next few years.

Our entire existing committee is all up for re-election this AGM and I would like to thank everyone who has worked so hard to keep everything running smoothly. We all miss Chris Wilson from Sibley, who moved to Lincoln late last year, we sadly lost Alan Stevenson who helped Chris Overton with machinery servicing and of course our own 'Arkwright'- Roger Gillett who ran the shop until his catastrophic stroke in August last year. The shop continued trading throughout lockdown after lockdown and as soon as garden centres were able to open, after our own risk assessments, we have remained open with record sales, very busy at times. We wish James Gallagher a prosperous and profitable future running the shop over the next few years. We do need more site reps; currently we have vacancies for Churchfield, Sibley and Oakley Rd.

Later this summer we have some boundary work being carried out by Harpenden Town Council, with new fencing planned for Aldwickbury, Cross Lane, Harpenden Rise and Piggottshill. There has been a crisis with some of our machinery, especially at PH this season, but some of the mowers are 20+ years old. We are testing a mulching mower currently, which has proved very easy to operate, where previously many of our machines have been conventional lawn mowers and we are not trying to have grass cut like Wimbledon or Wembley! Later this month we hope to have a 'Breakout Barbecue', further details to follow - all we need is sunshine - we have plenty of enthusiasm!

THANKS EVERYONE!

SECRETARY'S REPORT - Gill Hicks

I took over as Secretary from my husband Peter in January this year. Due to Covid-19 restrictions there were no monthly committee meetings from April 2020. Instead the committee were kept informed via monthly written reports from Officers and Site Reps.

We were able to start committee meetings safely again in May 2021 and have had three meetings so far this year. There won't be one in August due to the AGM, the next one taking place in September. Prior to each meeting a Trustee meeting takes place to agree the agenda and to discuss other priority matters.

There has continued to be a steady number of requests for sheds and polytunnels on plots. Virtually all are approved but they come with conditions as per the rules.

We were unable to have an AGM in 2020, so this year all the committee are up for re-election with a number of new officers who have been co-opted until we were able to elect them at this AGM, myself included. Six rule changes have been proposed and will be discussed at the AGM.

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TREASURER'S REPORT – CAROLE PAMPHLETT

SOUTH HARPENDEN ALLOTMENTS & GARDENS SOCIETY

Year End Receipts and Payments Accounts

For the Year Ending 31st December 2020

PAYMENTS	Year 2020		Year 2019	
Site/Shop Maintenance	£	653.33	£	970.27
Site Improve/Projects	£	71.45	£	2,364.51
Shop roof - part payment	£	2,000.00		
Machinery Purchase		Zero	£	2,145.00
Machinery Maintenance/Service	£	1,688.92	£	2,348.62
Machinery Fuel	£	271.21	£	398.23
Sec/Admin	£	203.44	£	455.65
Water Rates	£	2,893.04	£	1,761.05
Rates	£	716.91	£	613.58
Electricity	£	405.15	£	356.07
Newsletter		n/a	£	77.70
Insurance	£	481.52	£	481.52
Health & Safety	£	120.00	£	60.98
Society Awards	£	67.46	£	286.53
Publicity/PR	£	105.00		~
Donations		n/a	£	50.00
Rent refunds	£	79.50		
Shop refunds	£	87.50		
RHS	£	35.00		
Manure purchase	£	300.00	£	300.00
	£	10,179.43	-£	10,179.43
			£	12,669.71
			-£	12,669.71
RECEIPTS				
Harpenden Town Council Grant	£	3,100.00	£	3,100.00
Allotment Rents	£	11,782.60	£	11,106.18
Associate Members	£	185.00	£	182.00
Other Income	£	60.00	£	57.50
Manure income	£	418.00	£	345.00
Donation from Members Shop	£	500.00	£	500.00
Rent refunds	£	30.00		
Shop refunds	£	92.50		
Contribution for shop roof	£	900.00		n/a
	£	17,068.10	£	17,068.10
			£	15,290.68
			£	15,290.68
Surplus for the year				
			£	6,888.67
			£	2,620.97
Outings Fund				
Expenditure			-£	650.00
RHS Affiliation-Paid			-£	35.00
Sub total			-£	685.00
Income			£	833.00
Outings Fund total for 2019			£	148.00
				£ 148.00
				£ 2,768.97
Plus Balance b/fd from previous year				
S.H.A.G.S Monies	£	12,003.20	£	9,185.77
Outings Fund			£	65.00
Petty Cash	£	33.89	£	17.35
	£	12,037.09	£	9,268.12
			£	9,268.12
YEAR END TOTALS				
			£	18,925.76
			£	18,925.76
MONIES HELD				
SHAGS Funds				£ 11,790.20
Outings Fund				£ 213.00
Balance in HSBC Bank as at 31/12/20120			£	18,887.85
Petty Cash Held	£	37.91	£	33.89
YEAR END TOTALS			£	18,925.76
			£	18,925.76

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SOUTH HARPENDEN ALLOTMENTS & GARDENS SOCIETY

Statement of Assets held in Harpenden Building Society

Building and Contingency Fund

The Society maintains a ring-fenced figure to cover uninsurable assets such as the Committee Room, Shop and stock, plus machinery and sheds with all ec

£ 45,000.00

Contingency Fund £ 4,000.00

Accrued net interest to 31/12/2019 £ 2,650.66

£ 51,650.66

Gross interest for 2020 £ 51.65

£ 51,702.31

Treasurers Report for the financial year 2020

2020 was a difficult year for managing the societies budget. Although our allotments stayed open during the first lock down and there was a lot of interest from local people to take on a plot, so our income from rents was higher than the previous year. But we had to cancel a number of events, our AGM, the Societies Awards Night and because our machinery sheds had to close, we didn't invest in any new machinery and we were unable to start any improvements to our eight sites. Although we paid half of the cost of the new shop roof later in the year. This is why we had a bigger surplus in 2020. Although we were unable to hold our monthly committee meetings during 2020 and the beginning of 2021, I circulated the attached Receipts and Payments accounts to the committee in February 2021 for their approval. I explained that any surplus is held in our core funds to be used when needed.

We continued to received support from HTC, not just in the grant we receive but there is now a budget for the boundy manage programme, which we share with East Harpenden Gardening Club. This is discussed and agreed at the Allotment Working Party meetings, (via Zoom). So, although 2020 was a difficult year to manage we continue and thrive with the support of our members.

Carole Pamphlett - S.H.A.G.S - Treasurer

Independently examined - Jean Clare - see page 4

Signed on behalf of the Trustees - Mike Cobley

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SOUTH HARPENDEN ALLOTMENTS & GARDENS SOCIETY

Members' Club (Shop) Accounts to 31st December 2020

Year End Receipts and Payments Accounts for 2020

	Year 2020		Year 2019	
Income				
Sales to members		£ 11,378.88		£ 8,018.58
Expenditure				
Stock purchase	-£ 8,798.27			-£ 6,463.29
Shop Maintenance	-£ 21.99			
	-£ 8,820.26	-£ 8,820.26		
Trading Surplus		£ 2,558.62		£ 1,555.29
Donation paid to Society	-£ 500.00			-£ 500.00
Roof repairs	-£ 1,160.00			
	-£ 1,660.00	-£ 1,660.00		
		£ 898.62		£ 1,055.29
Balance brought from 31/12/19				
Barclays Bank	£ 16,374.24		£ 15,377.74	
Cash In Hand	£ 426.41		£ 367.62	
	£ 16,800.65	£ 16,800.65	£ 15,745.36	£ 15,745.36
		£ 17,699.27		£ 16,800.65
Monies Held at 31/12/20				
Bal in Barclays Bank	£ 17,523.30		£ 16,374.24	
Cash in Hand	£ 175.97		£ 426.41	
	£ 17,699.27	£ 17,699.27	£ 16,800.65	£ 16,800.65

Profit and Loss Account	Year 2020		Year 2019	
Opening stock at sale value	£ 7,602.85		-£ 6,727.48	
Closing stock at sale value	-£ 6,393.90		£ 7,602.85	
Stock	£ 1,208.95	£ 1,208.95	£ 875.37	£ 875.37
Plus Trading surplus		£ 2,558.62		£ 1,555.29
Surplus		£ 3,767.57	Surplus	£ 2,430.66
Less donation to S.H.A.G.S	-£ 500.00		Less	-£ 500.00
Less Roof repairs	-£ 1,160.00		Surplus 2019	£ 1,930.66
	-£ 1,660.00	-£ 1,660.00		
Surplus 2020		£ 2,107.57		

Despite the major problems our allotment shop had 2020, we managed in increase our trading surplus. As you will know Roger Gillett our long standing shop manager had a catastrophe stroke at the end of July and was unable to continue. We also had to close our shop in the first lock down. But thanks to the hard work of Mike Cobley and the Sunday morning team our shop managed to stay open, much to the relief of our plot holders. So, a big thank you to everyone.

Carole Pamphlett - S.H.A.G.S - Treasurer

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LETTING COORDINATOR AND DATABASE MANAGER'S REPORT - Jim Machin

Letting

Currently we are fully let but awaiting completion of one agreed letting; the tenant is away. It has been a very busy letting period since March 2020.

Number of lettings to new tenants 59
Number of lettings to existing tenants 3

Over the period we gave new people on the waiting list priority over existing tenants unless the tenant only had a half plot or where there was no one on the waiting list wanting to take on the plot.

Letting Procedure

The Council have agreed that we can continue to let by email rather than signed documents so we are in the process of changing the procedure.

Letting Secretary

We are in the process of changing Letting Secretary and Alex Davis is currently working on lettings and database with the aim of taking them over shortly.

Waiting List

We have 30 people on the list currently wanting a plot and 6 people who have expressed interest but not able to take one until a later date. Of the 30, 21 are looking for Harpenden Rise or Cross Lane so the number for the remaining sites is low.

Bee Keeping

The beekeeper who kept bees at Cross Lane has found it to be unsatisfactory and has given up.

Database

A small change was made to add a separate column for the sub-plots - A, B etc. - to improve data handling.

Wayleaves

Four new wayleaves granted to new tenants.

DISTRIBUTION (SHOP) MANAGER'S REPORT - James Gallagher

Over the short period of time since I became the shop manager, everyone has been very welcoming. Mike has always been cheerful and helpful. Only doing one Sunday a fortnight it is nice for me to see a few regular faces coming back each time. The shop is well stocked with items. Over the last couple of weeks it has been a bit slower on Sunday mornings, either because of sport going on or a few damp mornings. Also it's now going into the time of year where people are going on holiday and potentially being allowed to leave the country again.

We have an order of winter/spring garlic bulbs due shortly, a seed potato order has been placed with much reduced quantities from last year as quite a few were left over. Also Mike has placed a spring bulb order. We're looking to get another small order in for the shop soon, especially slug pellets. One of good sellers within the shop have been slug pellets as most plot holders seem to have lots around!

Looking forward to the opportunity within the shop over the rest of the season and to helping increase sales and trying new ideas to attract more members.

MACHINERY MANAGER'S REPORT - Roger White

No report received

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COMMUNICATION / WEB MASTER'S REPORT - Rod Cooley

In accordance with changing rules, Covid 19 policies have been created and put on the website after discussions with the society trustees and information received from NAS and Harpenden Town Council. The Society Covid 19 policy has been constantly evolving. This included reopening of all of the communal tool sheds subject to guidelines. An updated Covid 19 policy, from the 19th July 2021 relaxation of rules will be issued soon.

An auto reply message has been set up on the society's Gmail account to answer common questions.

A frequently asked questions and a contact form section has been added to the website to allow members and other people to ask questions or raise issues. The queries are sent directly to R.Cooley's email address. This section has been very useful and, for example, picked up a strimming noise complaint.

Members have been advised how to avoid society email going into the junk / SPAM folders.

Useful links have been added to the society's website "useful links" webpage.

Many messages have been sent to different sites over the past year.

"The plot so far" communication has been added to the website as well as regular updates on the society shop called "Shop News".

The details for the "Committee of officers and site reps" have been continually updated.

The 2020 photo competition was very successful and the same approach will be used for the 2021 photo competition. A new dropbox folder has been created for the members' photos to be uploaded to it and updated instructions, with a link to the folder, will be sent to all members nearer the time when photographs are to be requested.

Dropbox were contacted when they made changes to their file labelling for uploaded files. This would have prevented the photo competition from going ahead. Other people also complained & Dropbox decided to revert back to their original file labelling for uploaded files.

Weebly were contacted when their Scribd document command stopped working. Weebly repaired the command.

The Society website www.shallotments.weebly.com is still completely free to the society as well as the society email address shallotments@gmail.com