



grass CUTTINGS

OCT:2021

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Well Autumn and the season of mists and mellow fruitfulness has crept up on us again. Things – including hopefully the weeds – are slowing down. In the case of the Japanese Knotweed we are hoping for better. Tony Turnbull and I treated it at the end of August. That, together with a further winter booster dose from Tony leaves us hoping for a good result. We will be ready for it next year if it does show its face – as it may. The main problem is the garden of the adjacent abandoned garden in Carlton Road which is rampant with the stuff.

We have at last been able to hold an AGM. Janet Cripps has prepared a detailed report of the meeting so I will keep this to a few headline points.

It was both pleasing and encouraging to have more than usual in attendance – no need for the precautionary headcount to ensure a quorum. As you will see from the full report a good number of points were raised from the floor which the Committee will be looking at. We are planning a further meeting in November.

The AGM saw a number of members sadly leaving the Committee. I suspect they were hoping to slip away quietly but I am afraid that does not do justice to their contribution which cannot be overstated.

Don Jackson stood down as Chairman after 25 years of continuous service in the post. Don hands over the reins with the Society being in good health. Don wasn't only a figurehead. He did an enormous amount including assisting in the physical internal finishing of the Hoedown. He did much to negotiate and sort out the drainage at the Glebelands Road end. During his time the Society won a Trafford award for being the most improved plot in Trafford. Reading a few of his many columns for Grass Cuttings are a testament to his work. He will be a very hard act to follow – I will be well pleased if I can achieve half as much.

Treasurer Peter Baggaley was another officer to stand down. Peter has served the Society as Treasurer since 2008 – again handing over the reins with the Society in good fettle – this time to Phil Gorman. To all our benefit Peter also handled the Kings Seeds order even during last year's unusual winter. As behoves all good treasurers Peter's profile was low and he avoided the limelight – but his contribution should not be underestimated in any way at all.

Unfortunately, we also bade farewell to Elaine Watson who has been the Trading Hut manager since January

2013 on account of family commitments. Like Peter Baggaley Elaine adopted a low profile and all that we were witness to was the smooth running of the Trading Hut. It worked without any fuss – indeed to a very high standard with nothing being too much trouble. My personal recollection of what Elaine was really doing came clear last May/June when we were locked down but were just opening up the Trading Hut a bit. Orders were to be in by Thursday, followed by cash Friday and collection Sunday. Just before midnight one Thursday I sent an order over saying sorry for being late but not to rush next week will be fine. At 05.30 the next morning came an email from Elaine – no problem and gave order number and collection time. On the Sunday all the orders were laid out in socially distanced order on both sides of the path.

Elaine will be a hard act to follow as manager of the Trading Hut but if it is to continue, we do need somebody to take up the reins, so if you feel you have something to give and would like more information about the role do feel free to call Tony Turnbull for a chat. We can offer a good handover and you will have the full support of the Committee and a team of volunteers to help.

Our thanks and best wishes go to Don, Peter and Elaine all of whom were granted life membership at the AGM. They all retain their plots so we will not lose touch.

By way of replacements, it is a pleasure to welcome Phil Gorman (now Treasurer) and Dave Knight – who is assisting Louise with the plot inspections – who were elected to the Committee confirming their previous co-option.

As the year moves to a close can I extend thanks to the Committee for their work and support throughout the year – they have certainly been a great help and source of support to me.

Lastly and by no means least, may I also extend thanks to Roger Snowden for all the work he does around the allotments – the most visible is the mowing of the paths but there is much more that he picks up through the year. We are hoping that Roger will have a new mower in the spring – Roger having worked the present one to exhaustion.

This is the final edition of Grass Cuttings for the year. I hope you and your families continue to enjoy your plots and may I wish you and your families a good – and hopefully normal – festive season.

Chris Abbott, Chairman

AGM SUMMARY 2021

Our AGM was held on Tuesday 5 October 2021 at 7.30pm at The Salvation Army Community Hall, Ashton Lane, Sale. Chris Abbott chaired the meeting and began by welcoming everybody to the meeting which included many new faces.

Chris talked about how very grateful everybody was that our allotment remained open during the lockdown periods of 2020. He was pleased that plots were being well looked after and had noticed more involvement of families and children on the plots, which was a good sign. Dave Knight, one of the recently co-opted committee members, is helping Plot Manager Louise with the plot inspections with a view to taking the role over next year.

Chris reported that Committee meetings in person had restarted in the summer. Active discussions have taken place with Trafford Borough Council in regard to the new 15 year lease, and with momentum on both sides, we are hopeful that this could be resolved before the next AGM. Valerie had organised the summer picnic and we do have ideas for other activities next year. Regretfully the plant sale didn't happen again but we hope to restart next year. There's an issue with Japanese Knotweed on a couple of plots coming from a garden on Carlton Road. Action is in hand to treat this invasive weed. During the summer asbestos has been removed from old sheds on a couple of plots and the sides of the wheelbarrow store. A review and update of the Welcome Pack is underway and will be made available on the website to read or download. The Committee has compiled a list of jobs to do around the site and would like people to volunteer to help.

After 25 years' service, Don Jackson stood down as

Chairman in April. During the year, 3 people put themselves forward for co-option to the Committee, Chris Abbott, Phil Gorman and Dave Knight, all of whom stood for election at this meeting. Peter Baggaley (Treasurer) and Elaine Watson (Trading Hut) have now also decided to stand down and not seek re-election. Phil Gorman has offered to take over the role of Treasurer. The process of looking for somebody to take over the role of Trading Hut Manager is underway.

Chris thanked Don, Peter and Elaine for their commitment and the enormous contribution they have made to SHAS over many years. It was agreed that all three would be given Life Membership status.

Chris also thanked Roger Snowden for keeping the grass paths mowed and looking good; to Paul Howarth for his work on the website; and the Committee for their support.

Reports were received from Tony Turnbull, Membership Secretary and Louise Black, Plot Secretary. Membership remains stable with 142 members at the end of 2020. A welcome increase in full members under the age of 60 was noted. Members agreed that membership fees would remain unchanged in 2022 at £4.50 for full members and £4 for concession members. 17 plots have changed hands since the last AGM. The waiting list currently stands at 17 with people generally waiting less than 12 months for a plot. The annual accounts for the year ending 2020 had been circulated and noted a healthy bank balance. The election of Executive Officers and Committee members as detailed on the agenda was passed unanimously.

THERE WAS LIVELY DISCUSSION ABOUT THE REPORTS AND A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS/POINTS WERE RAISED BY MEMBERS DURING THE MEETING:

The new lease – we have been advised that the rent for 2022 will remain the same.

The concessionary plot rental rate is given by Trafford Borough Council to the over 60's.

Should the membership fee be increased to pay somebody to get all the grass paths cut across the site?
The feasibility of this would be discussed at a future Committee meeting.

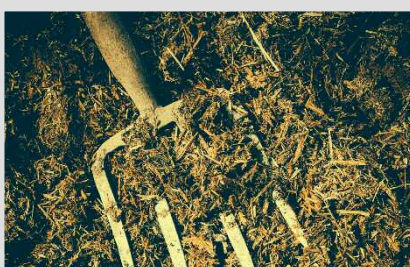
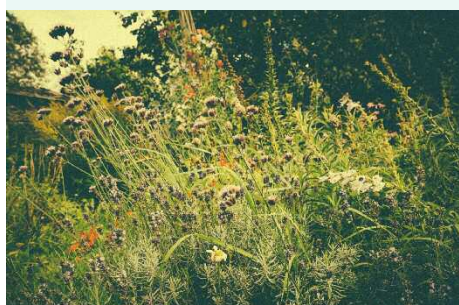
A number of members were unaware of the toilet facilities in the Hoedown. The ordering and availability of keys to be discussed at the next Committee meeting.

Should people be limited to how much manure they take? Manure is delivered throughout the year and can be collected at any time and stored. It would prove very difficult to monitor how much people took.

Wheelbarrows – a number are broken, can we buy some more?

Skip – can we have one?

Facebook site – discussion took place and a number of members offered to organise a site.
It was suggested that a proposal to be sent to the Committee for consideration.



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SHAS ANNUAL PLOT AWARDS

Congratulations to the following people who were awarded Trading Hut vouchers at the AGM for their efforts in improving overgrown plots:

Sarah Ashton Plot 37c / Craig Bradley Plot 47 / Carol Marshall Plot 26
Bernadette and David Miller Plot 54b / Michael Roche Plot 50a
Hilary Shorthouse Plot 48 / Louise Virabi Plot 14b

TRADING HUT NEWS



The Trading Hut is now closed. A huge thanks to Elaine, Peter Jackson and all the volunteers for their hard work in running the hut and putting orders together during the year. The over wintering onion sets and garlic sold out in September. Let's hope we get a good crop!

Seed potatoes, onion sets and shallots are on order for next year and we plan to reopen the Trading Hut in February 2022.

As mentioned, we do need somebody to manage and run the Trading Hut. If you are interested in helping out in any capacity, please contact Tony Turnbull.

VEHICLES ON THE ALLOTMENT

As the winter months approach and we have more rain which inevitably makes the grass paths softer, please avoid bringing your vehicle onto the site.

If it is necessary for you to bring a vehicle onto the site, for example to deliver or remove heavy or bulky items such as a shed or greenhouse, you should use one of the two end gates, and not drive beyond the hard standing areas just inside these gates. **Please avoid driving onto the grass paths.** Should you have to drive a vehicle onto any of the grass paths to get closer to your plot, you must ensure that the ground conditions are suitable and once your job is completed your vehicle should be removed as quickly as possible.

Should your vehicle get stuck or cause any damage, you will be liable for all costs incurred in making good any damage caused.

NEW PLOT HOLDERS

Welcome to our latest plot holders to whom we wish an enjoyable and rewarding allotment experience.

Rosemary Budd Plot 19b / Steven Rigg Plot 25a

DONATION TO ASHTON ON MERSEY VILLAGE IN BLOOM

Louise Virabi took over plot 14b a few months ago after Malcolm Scott sadly passed away. The family gave Louise Malcolm's shed and tools and as a thank you she gave a donation to Ashton on Mersey Village in Bloom.

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

Chris Abbott Chair, Plot 2

T 07521 490475

E chairman@shas.org.uk

Phil Gorman Treasurer, Plot 15

T 07982 723042

E treasurer@shas.org.uk

Jane Lucas Secretary, Plot 39a

T 973 9704

E secretary@shas.org.uk

Tony Turnbull Membership, Plot 21

T 283 0783

E memberships@shas.org.uk

Valerie Mulligan Social Secretary, Plot 8

E socialsecretary@shas.org.uk

Louise Black Plots, Plot 36

T 283 7415

Kenneth Bostock Equipment, Plot 45

T 07982 622481

Janet Cripps Newsletter, Plot 44

T 962 3277

SHAS Website www.shas.org.uk

BONFIRES ON THE ALLOTMENT

Fires are allowed from 1 October to 31 March

We have been contacted by Janet Long at Trafford Council who has already received complaints from neighbours of other allotment sites and we sense that the Environmental Protection department are receptive to these complaints, to which the answer would be easy – a total ban on all allotments.

The ability to continue to have bonfires is very much in our own hands and the rules are well known but as a reminder for new plot holders:

- Only burn dry material, to avoid creating excessive amounts of smoke
- Do not light bonfires if the wind will blow smoke over the surrounding houses
- Keep the duration of the bonfire to a minimum
- Bonfires must be attended at all times while lit
- Ensure that bonfires are completely dead before being left unattended

In the best interests of all members and neighbours please adhere to them.