



DORKING ALLOTMENT HOLDERS' ASSOCIATION  
Annual General Meeting  
Tuesday, 12th November 2019 at 8.45pm  
Held at St Paul's Church Centre, Dorking



In attendance were 33 members. Matt Peskett, the Chair, welcomed everyone. No apologies had been received by the Secretary.

**The Minutes** of the annual general meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2018 were accepted.

**Matters arising** Matt reported on DAHA's actions arising from the discussions at the last AGM. A wheelbarrow had been purchased for Coldharbour and the deer fence repaired. St Paul's has been supported with the purchase of timber to construct holding bays for leaves, manure, etc. Coldharbour site set up a crowd funded second skip and DAHA made a contribution towards the full cost. Some potholes in carparks had been filled by site neighbours. Only outstanding action is the notice board at St Paul's.

**Chair's Report (see DAHA website for full report)**

Matt stated that overall the year had been a really successful one for DAHA and there are waiting lists for allotments on all sites. DAHA had been represented at various local events to promote allotments and growing. The RHS Wisley visit was oversubscribed and the BBQ was well attended on a sunny evening at Coldharbour. In recognition of environmental concerns the sale of peat free compost had been introduced and was going well. Goods are sold at cost with a small rounding up to cover costs of delivery to members' plots. Matt thanked Chris for this much appreciated service. The DAHA website has been improved and will soon be able to take member's orders, membership applications and payment of renewal subs.

Matt ended by thanking Chris, this year's pumpkin show co-ordinator, and all the volunteers who had helped to make the show such a success. Despite damp weather on the day it was well attended by families and wider community. It has been estimated that approximately 400 hours of volunteering time goes into the event – growing, promotion activities and detailed planning as well as setting up, clearing, then followed by sale of spare pumpkins. Peter Almond proposed the Chair's report be accepted and all present agreed.

**Membership Report (Pat presented Vicki's report)**

DAHA ended the membership year at the end of August 2019 with 120 members. This is an increase on the previous year – up from 109. Vicki has been the membership secretary since 2016 and membership has stayed fairly static during that time, although it's good to see an increase in the last year. This is as a result of more great events being held for members and the continuation of excellent member offers like deliveries of heavy items to your plots. This current year sees an increase in the membership subscription to £5. If members pay by standing order they need to check that they have made that change and some have not done so yet. New members can now join on line. Vicki thanked all who have joined again for this year. She is standing down this year and leaving the membership administration in the very capable hands of Andy Whitehouse so he is the person to contact him from now on about membership matters.

**Treasurer's Report**

Those present received a hard copy of the final summary accounts. Andy confirmed DAHA is in a healthy financial position with a needed reserve of £1,000 to cover the increased bulk purchasing of goods for subsequent sales to members. This service is increasingly being taken up by members and is being run as a DAHA 'not for profit' activity. Andy thanked the members for prompt payments of purchases and he confirmed there were no debts.

The 2018 pumpkin show made a one off income of £600 and this was being ploughed back into benefits for members as described in the Chair's report. There were no questions from

the floor and Bronwyn Howard-Browne proposed the Treasurer's Report be accepted. All agreed.

Chris Dale proposed and all agreed to the appointment of Alastair Meldrum as Independent Examiner for DAHA 2020 accounts.

### **Election of Officers**

Michael Fairweather took the Chair for the election of DAHA officers.

<b>Office</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Proposer</b>	<b>Secunder</b>
Chair	Matthew Peskett	Chris Dale	Mark Rawson
Committee Secretary	Pat Hand	Marina Roberts	Mark Rawson
Treasurer	Andy Whitehouse	Chris Dale	Julien Stallard

Matt suggested the DAHA committee could consider the idea of a DAHA Media Secretary.

The following are willing to continue on the committee – Marina Roberts (Ranmore), Andrea Jardine (Ranmore), Michael Fairweather (St Paul's and deputy Chair), Mark Rawson (Coldharbour), Monica Draper (Ranmore), Chris Dale (Ranmore) and the co-opted Site Agents - Caroline Whyte (Bentsbrook), Andy Whitehouse (Coldharbour), Richard Woodman (Ranmore) and Karen Ruddy (St Paul's). *Noted no representation from Pixham site.*

### **DAHA Constitution**

The proposed amendments to constitution were clearly shown on the draft and as there were no objections Michael Fairweather proposed and everyone approved the changes.

### **Discussion points raised from the floor**

1. A mentoring / buddying scheme for plot holders new to growing. It was felt that 1-1 link with an experienced allotmenteer would be best and ideas such as using email, WhatsApp, Facebook, or on-site meeting to be taken back to the DAHA committee. Marina offered to facilitate a Facebook site. Pruning help request responded to by Chris and this raised the idea of a 'knowledgeable people' list that members could refer to.
2. Matt presented a proposal that the MVDC annual invoicing process for plots be moved from April back to October so those giving up their plots or being evicted for non-cultivation can do so easily at the end of the main growing season and new plot holders can begin work by the spring. Michael asked how supportive members felt this change would be for their site management. Any concerns about the timing of bills would be addressed. There were no objections and the majority felt it was a positive move.
3. Carolyn suggested asking MVDC for a smaller skip for Bentsbrook and arrangements be made for Coldharbour and Ranmore to have skips to match their high volume of waste. It was also suggested that the Local Authority Allotment Rules be reviewed so they meet current environmental concerns and keep sites clear of harmful materials, plus MVDC meet their obligations under the rules.

As there was no other business the formal part of the meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Chris Dale presented the Pumpkin Show report and drew attention to the list of volunteers involved in making the day a success. He then went on to present the certificates and trophies.