

Member's Meeting 25th November 2014

A quorum of Members was present.

Sim welcomed everyone and gave a summary of the year so far.

Key events this year included:

We became a Real Economy supplier at the September meeting.

We are building a cob build packing shed (nearly finished) on the Sims Hill field the labour for which has been partially funded by our Santander award. That award also helped us add the extra polytunnel earlier this year, and some compost bays which will be completed by the end of the year.

Tim has decided that he will not come back in a grower capacity (he injured his knee earlier in the year – not at Sims Hill), but he may still be involved in some way and came to the meeting.

Bruce joined us earlier in the year as an assistant grower.

James will be leaving us (and Bristol) for pastures new in March of next year, so we will be recruiting a new head grower for next year. James is confident that the growing is in good shape for someone new to take over.

We are continuing our relationship with Feed Bristol and growing on their site. They have had changes and uncertainty around their funding during the year, but are now secure for 2015 and moving to a more income funded model. We are finalising a new MOU with them and we have put in a Green Capital strategic bid with them as partners which we will hear about by the 24th of December. The GC funding is highly competitive with many more bids than there are funds.

We have prepared a separate budget plan for 2015 in case we don't get the funding.

With either plan it is essential that we recruit more Members to get the project to a more sustainable level.

Grower's Report presented by James

We have had a fantastic September, with epic harvests of squash, and not enough places to store them!

Most of the other veg is good, root crops, leeks, etc., and many of the veg being the best we have grown.

We have also done some seed saving, which we haven't done before. We saved some lettuce seed, and then sowed them, and we have already harvested some. This is old heirloom Irish lettuce that James has been saving for some time.

This is also the first year that we have made our own compost, about 4 tonnes of it. Most of this will go back into the greenhouse. This should really improve the quality of the soil. We are also growing

green manures at Feed Bristol, which are used as a cover crop and to help improve the fertility of the soil.

James asked for Member feedback on the veg: Member's said that the veg has been really fresh and tasty, and tastes better than organic! Some Members found marrow hard to deal with. Mike said that the Runcible Spoon chefs have seen and tasted the veg and they were really impressed.

We have continued growing some salads for sale for extra income.

The packing shed is nearly complete. We can store produce, pack produce, shelter from the weather, and use the space for SH events. Because of the insulation, it is cool in the summer and warmer in the winter.

Our polytunnels have suffered some vandalism, both were slashed. We have made some repairs but will be making an insurance claim.

We have a really good crew of workshares and volunteers helping on the site, and have also had help from Members with the polytunnel and the new shed at Windmill Hill.

There was a request to publish recipes on the blog once a week that will highlight what is in the share each week. Hopefully someone will take this on! Please get in touch if you're interested simshillsharedharvest@googlemail.com.

Financial update and budget presentation by Bobbie

Bobbie presented a budget that does not depend on us getting the Green Capital funding. This had been sent round to all the Members before the meeting. For the detail of this please refer to this paper which can be downloaded here. The summary is below.

- We want to grow from 60 to 90 full shares.
- We want to put the price of the shares up by £1 per share (full share up to £45/month, Half share to £26/month).
- As this plan does not include the £50k strategic grant, we would need to look for other capital grants to get equipment such as a tractor, etc.
- We want to hire a new head grower who is also a Farm Manager
- We also want to hire someone to focus on recruitment for 30 hours a month
- We will also help pay for a community grower who will be shared between Sims Hill and Feed Bristol. This will benefit both organisations and is a requirement for our relationship with Feed Bristol

After a brief discussion, the budget was adopted unanimously.

Sim Hill Needs You! - discussion

Bobbie then presented several areas where we will need help from the Members and asked if people could help with various activities, as well as to come up with other ideas as well.

Can you help with outreach?

- Leaflet your neighbours
- Invite some friends for a Sims Hill meal, and have a short presentation about Sims Hill
- Start a Real Economy Buying Group and encourage people to source from Sims Hill
- Take SHSH leaflets to other groups where you are a Member
- Put on a stall at local events
- Get together with other Members of SHSH from your pick up and do something together: invite others.

Media:

- Writing blogs or articles for media outlets
- Social media?
- TV or radio promotion?

Support:

- Ring round to help potential Members through the joining process?
- Ring Members to get feedback?
- Be part of an admin team?

On the Farm

- Help sort out shares on Thursday?
- Help deliver to pick up points on a Thursday? – either collecting from Feed Bristol and taking to a pick-up point, or collecting from St Werburghs and taking to a pick-up point.
- Help out with the growing?

IF YOU WEREN'T AT THE MEETING, PLEASE CONTACT US AT

simshillsharedharvest@googlemail.com IF YOU CAN HELP WITH ANY OF THESE.

Members wrote their ideas down and what they can help. Everyone agreed that we need to capitalise on the Green Capital events on next year.

We thanked Tim and James for everything that they have given to the project!