

Members' Meeting AGM 28 Feb 2017

A quorum of the members were present.

Presentation of the accounts: The budget has already been agreed for this year. Thanks to Roberta Sunderland and our accountant Ryan Corkery for getting the accounts done. We did make a loss of £2208 as anticipated. Because we had some last-minute donations, we ended with £1764 in reserves. Miriam Schoen and the crowdfunding team worked really hard to raise money, and other members have worked hard as well. The accounts were accepted by the members. You can find the 2016 accounts online [here](#).

Election of the Board: Kristin Sponsler and Simone Osborn stood down from the Board per the Sims Hill Articles of Association, and they were both re-elected to the Board.

Growing update. Miriam Schoen thanked all the members who participated in the various activities of last year, especially the workdays. Last year was a difficult year. Buying in veg was a big cost, so she wants to not have to do that again. She is very glad that we now have more of our own equipment for our own cultivation. We have our own tractor now, which is old and but is in good condition. Miriam is also going to buy some more implements to go with the tractor. We might have to do some fundraising later on in the year.

Growing plan: Miriam is not growing many maincrop potatoes because of all the special equipment and because they are very cheap to buy in. She wants to focus on greens, kale, cabbages, and more root crops as well. We can hopefully set up our own propagation tunnel soon. Miriam is putting 2 of the 8 plots of the Sims field into green manures. Half of the field has been ploughed already. Miriam has taken out the grass strips because she wants to clean up all the weed problems that have occurred up until now. In the future she would like to put in some fruit and wildflower strips instead. Last year it was a big problem to get the field ready in time to grow the crops the way she wanted. One side of the field will be brassicas and leeks, and the other side will be root crops. The left side of the field will have fruit crops, onions, sweet corn, etc. She wants to alternate with field beans so that will help fix nitrogen. This will help with the organic matter for the soil. With our own equipment we can work the field when the weather conditions are right.

Update on education and the Community Food Centre project:

Anyone who wants to help with the Community Food Centre Project is very welcome. People who would be referred to be a food bank can come to us instead. They can garden, help cook a meal, take some veg home, and order some Real Economy food. We have two or three people who come regularly and really seem to enjoy it. It will be good to have more people, but it is a good atmosphere and a good sense of community. People start coming around 10 and the meal is around 1.

We are still trying to get the school project going. Kirsty has several different offerings available. We need to mainly work with primary school children from deprived areas for the grant, but this has been very difficult. We now have two schools signed up which is really good. We are also offering sessions for free for the deprived schools.

Outreach update: Our new Outreach Coordinator Alice Lee introduced herself and talked about some of her plans for recruitment for the year. Events and volunteer days have worked well in the past, and she thinks that getting people up on site will work too. Advertising will be very important.

It would be great to get some signs up in the field, and to have Sims Hill aprons/shirts for the delivery people. Alice would like do some members-only events so we can get some feedback from people. It would be good to make some link ups with local breweries for the members-only events. We need to get more flyers out to all places that we have connections with. The crowdfunder has really helped to raise our profile. We really need to work on telling our story still. Alice is going to be working on Thursdays so she can start getting more input for stories, such as little videos, photos, etc. She wants to reach out to media, and hoping some people can help tell our story at food-related events. It would be really nice to have a nice summer party. We should have a presence at 25th March at Feed Bristol for the 5 year anniversary. This is going to be a big event!

Please give Alice any ideas that you may have to help engage with the wider community. Her email is aliceleith@gmail.com.

AOB: Where is hope coming from? Chris thinks we should form an alliance for an earth-friendly city with other organisations with similar values. This could take the form of a city-wide celebration. Chris will keep us posted on how this develops. This will be a grassroots alliance.

Corra Boushel brought up that perhaps we could get some hop rhizomes as there is a group offering them out to community groups, and we are up for having some.

Chris reminded us that the share price might rise slightly in the summer if we don't get enough members, so please everyone help us think of ways to bring in more members.

Thanks very much to Shannon Smith for the lovely homemade cake.