

Edible Landscapes London AGM (#2) - 9/10/2015

Present- Alex (chair) - Jo - Alison - David - Poppy - Jenny - Dereck - Jam - Gemma H - Richard - Patrick - Jane

Last meeting's actions

There were several uncompleted actions from the last meeting, including:

-Promoting Permaculture in our signage e.g. "12 principles" signs

-Fixing and making signage for treadle pump

-Volunteer session leaders devising a means of communicating outline plan before each volunteer day

These actions were carried forward to the next meeting. Registering Gilly as a director is now unnecessary as she has decided not to take up the role.

Accounts

Poppy queried the "PACTincomeQ7" payment of £12,552.99 on 1/10/14.

Jo confirmed that Eniola's full audit of the accounts is very nearly complete and that she has found no significant errors or discrepancies.

The directors approved the accounts for the financial year beginning September 2014 ending August 2015 with a few minor adjustments in wording.

ACTION: Jo to rephrase "PACT: CAFG" and "PACT: Permie Intro" to "income from courses" on accounts sheet

ACTION: Jo to forward any recommendations made by Eniola on completion of the audit to the other directors

Charitable status of ELL

The possibility of ELL registering as a charity in order to open up a wider possibility of funding opportunities was discussed.

It was agreed that the Articles of Association would need to be changed to include mention of trustees.

There was confusion as to whether trustees can be paid a salary by the charity they work for, and whether a trustee can simultaneously be a director of that organisation. Gemma believed that this was not possible whilst Patrick believed that trustees can be paid for the services they provide.

There was confusion over whether charitable status would mean that Jo would need to be considered as and paid for a consultancy role rather than a director role. Gemma also stated that if ELL were to register as a charity it would not be appropriate for Jo to be considered a director, as traditionally directors do not take an active role in running a charity.

Gemma also voiced concern at a lack of people engaged enough with the executive arm of ELL's work to be able to become a trustee in the event of ELL registering as a charity. Gemma stated that she did not feel that some of the current directors currently

participated actively enough to be able to become trustees, a heavy executive role, and that they would not have the time to do so and may not be willing to do so if Jo were no longer the leader of ELL.

It was agreed that the administrative burden (“checks and balances”) would be greater if ELL were to register as a charity, but that this would be worthwhile for the new opportunities to apply for grants.

It was agreed to hold a meeting in a fortnight to discuss the issue further in the light of research.

Jam offered the services of an acquaintance familiar with charity law to help answer any queries from the directors.

ACTION: Directors to research and clarify role and limitations of a charity trustee in preparation for a further meeting

ACTION: Jo to publicise meeting on Friday 23rd October at 2.30pm regarding charitable status of ELL

ELL as an employer

Jo requested that the directors sign a retrospective £30,000 p/a consultancy agreement June 2014 between ELL and herself in order to validate her income for mortgage purposes.

ACTION: Directors to review and sign Jo’s consultancy agreement at the next meeting following any alterations

Jane was concerned that we ensure that we are not breaking HMRC rules regarding the point at which freelancers working for only one person on a repeat basis can be considered employees and therefore attract the same benefits - holidays sickness etc. This could result in us owing money in employers NI payments etc

ACTION: Jo to investigate pathway for ELL to register as an employer

Fundraising

Richard updated on the application for a £90,000 grant from the Esmee Fairbairn foundation and the need to apply for further funding of £100,000 from other grant-giving bodies (e.g. Veolia). Jo provided details on the plan to provide salad bags to a local veg box scheme and to run an extra volunteer day per week. The potential of running a satellite site in Finsbury Park on the site of a current waste site was mentioned.

ACTION: Jo & Richard to investigate and submit applications to other potential funding bodies

The importance of registering as a charitable body to carry the potential funding forward was emphasised.

The need to recruit more directors to help with fundraising was raised.

Jo stated she felt the project would not be jeopardised if she were unable to continue taking a paid role in the project as she believed ELL could continue running as a

volunteer-led project, particularly with the level of time investment seen by some current volunteers.

Any other business

The suggestion that “pre-requisite” reading is issued to directors before each meeting was put forward in order to prevent confusion as seen during the current meeting.

Alison suggested running cooking workshops (with foods from forest gardens) on the site during volunteer days. The directors were in support of the idea.