

**Present**

Trustees: Alex Sylvester, Carrie Anker, (Chris Speirs), (Damian Rafferty), Gemma Harris, Jane Howson, Jo Homan, Lorena Vila, Lucy Nacson-Jones, Mary McHugh, Richard Vials (chair), Sarah Bush, (Vanessa Morris)

Members: David Reid, Patrick Maher, Geraldine Adams

**Apologies** - Nick Turner, Jamshid Maylanchi

---

INTRODUCTION

-Meeting is framed as 1<sup>st</sup> meeting as a CIO although we have yet to hear from the Charities Commission re: our application

-Purpose of meeting is explained - to inform trustees of on/off-site developments so that they can help guide decisions, and offer their contributions to activities where appropriate

-AGM confirmed as Friday 14<sup>th</sup> October, 2-4pm

-Aims of ELL are reiterated: a) propagate edible plants, b) donate edible plants, c) educate people about edible plants

-Review of successes 2011-present, including:

- 1,100 plants to 80 community projects
- 200 species growing in 1/10<sup>th</sup> acre
- 53 CAFG students qualified to equivalent of GCSE A\*-C
- 650 volunteer days per year
- 200 people trained in Permaculture and plant propagation

-Group are asked how they would like to see ELL develop 2016-17. Suggestions are:

- Harvesting leaves and using commercially e.g. w/ CropDrop
- Continuing PACT meals
- Using more of ELL's edible plants in our meals
- More accurate inventory of our plants
- Quantified research on yield of our plants
- Better communications - raising our profile in public awareness esp. through photos
- Expanding diversity of plants ELL grows/gives away, esp. high calorie crops
- Continuing CAFG courses
- Developing links w/ schools
- Reaching a wider range of age groups through our activities, esp. the elderly
- Satellite sites (either replicating ELL or managed differently)

-Responsibilities of a trustee are reiterated: a) manage the affairs of the CIO b) execute all the powers of the CIO c) use care & skill + special knowledge and experience to contribute where appropriate

---

UPCOMING ISSUES

Manor House Lodge move

-Haringey Council have yet to provide certainty on whether move will happen, or if so when

-Jo & Richard attended meeting w/ Simon Farrow in November which left them with strong impression that move is 70-80% likely

-Current state of MH Lodge site is neglected, w/ its managers Friends of Finsury Park (FoFP) running only 1 vol workday per month. Their Facebook page has not updated for over a year

-Alex & Richard attended meeting w/ FoFP chair Kevin Duffy on 13/1 – he indicated that the FoFP have not totally neglected the garden and are likely to want some input into its care. Alex & Richard have arranged meeting with FoFP garden managers.

-Currently garden is designed as “wildlife garden” w/ professional signage. Kevin Duffy said that ELL moving in would need to be a case of merging/harmony rather than the 2 groups staking territory

-Kevin indicated FoFP would be opposed to ELL using the strip of grass in front of the lodge as a showcase bed as they would prefer the area’s current highly-clipped appearance (esp. as it is the 1<sup>st</sup> thing many people see on entering the park). Richard indicates this may be because forest gardens are by nature somewhat untidy and take time to mature and look their best – but prejudices may be overcome

-Kevin indicated he had seen plans in 2011 that ELL’s current site in the Haringey Plant Nursery has been planned for development, but Jo stated she believes this is unfounded

-Gemma reiterates that ELL’s site tenancy has always been uncertain and that the move is not confirmed, so best attitude is “business as usual”

#### Jo’s relationship with ELL & ELL courses

-ELL’s funding has stopped as of Jan 2016 – there is no funding to run courses and Jo is currently operating as a financially independent freelancer (1 day taster sessions) associated with ELL

-Jo’s self-funding status would allow for ELL to submit more modest funding applications to grant-giving bodies

-Jane states that courses have been a central part of all areas of ELL’s success as they have also played a vital role in recruiting volunteers, and that their loss is a serious issue

-Lucy suggests that ELL could run smaller courses based on the content of CAFG. Chris indicates that having quantified courses makes it much easier to secure funding

-Group agrees that skills and knowledge are there but that running courses depends on organisation and funding – will funders be willing to give us money when site tenure is uncertain? Or could ELL’s model be adapted to be mobile in the same way as e.g. Made in Hackney?

-Accredited “portions” of the CAFG course could be delivered on single training days

#### Fundraising

-Esmee Fairbairn £90,000 application was rejected in November 2015

-Another application for £60,000 was submitted in December 2015 – no response yet received

-Haringey 20/40 funding for £3,000 to test contamination levels of ELL’s soil/plants was submitted by Damian/Nick/Chris – no response yet received

-Chris suggests that any funding applications be focused on training as this is more “fundable” and also that already long-running initiatives like ELL’s training days would need to be re-invented/re-vamped as “drop-in training” to attract funding

-Richard suggests that the group take collective responsibility for fundraising as the administrative burden is considerable. One organisation is unlikely to provide £60,000 single-handedly so many will need to be applied to. Suggested funding bodies to research are:

- Tesco Community Grants
- Awards for All (Big Lottery Fund) - £10,000
- Dulverton Trust
- John Ellerman Foundation
- Garfield Weston Foundation
- City Bridge Trust
- Capital Clean-Up
- Hackney Council Health & Wellbeing
- Postcode Trust
- Groundwork
- Grow Wild
- The Naturesave Trust
- Galaxy Hot Chocolate fund

-Jo estimates that it costs £600 per student to run a CAFG course – could this be funded again w/ a Tesco grant? If funding is secured for this as a “one-off” then other subsequent applications would have more credibility

-It is suggested that data capture on who our volunteers are (disabilities etc.) would help us to know who to target for funding

#### Monday & Friday Session Leaders

-New session leaders seem comfortable with their inductions and managing the volunteer days

-Jane suggests that we develop more structure to volunteer days to help retain volunteers and prevent them feeling lost or unguided

-Jo states that the days need ideally to be “covered” 2 months in advance and that the GoogleCalendar for April needs completion

#### Links with schools and DBS checks

-Sarah confirms that meetings with Madalena are upcoming on 27/1 re: arranging after-school activities with Gillespie School

-There is uncertainty about DBS requirements:

- Checks are free for volunteers, but the organisation has to sign?
- Checks are only needed if a volunteer has contact with children more than 4 times a month
- If adults supervising children are accompanied by another adult there may be no need?
- Schools have different policies and requirements
- Ratio of adults:children cannot be lower than 1:8
- Cost of a DBS check is £30-£45?

-Sarah is currently being DBS checked

#### Generating plants to donate – home-growing by trustees

-Richard suggests that as a way to increase ELL’s stock of plants for donation, and to encourage trustee involvement, trustees take responsibility for experimenting with growing a few plants at home to bring into ELL as seedlings which can then be potted on if they survive

#### Communications – raising ELL’s profile

-Lorena describes her recent article about ELL published on the Friends of the Earth website

-It is agreed that ELL trustees need an agreement on what are priorities for communicating and what messages ELL needs to send – about forest gardening? Or Permaculture?

-Jo suggests salad bags for CropDrop are a good focus, esp. photos of people eating leaves

-If we do circulate leaves could we provide a newsletter?

**-Chelsea Fringe GQT?**

-Jamshid & Vanessa discuss possibility of holding a festival w/ a creative element @ ELL in 2016/17, perhaps celebrating our new status as a charity. They also mention they would like to produce more on-site art for ELL.

---

#### Other business

-Upcoming events needing volunteers are highlighted including:

- Planting of a forest garden by volunteer Alison Roberts
- Planting in 1<sup>st</sup> week of March @ Kingsmead Primary school by Damian
- Edible hedge moving day @ ELL

-Lucy expresses an interest in forming link with Our Lady's Convent school in Islington, and David suggests starting a google group discussion about the recent Paris summit

---

Meeting ends. Next meeting Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Chair TBC