

Minutes of Land Group meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2011 at 147 Albert Road.  
Present: Kevin (chair), Heather (minutes) Stella, Ronin (arrived towards end of the meeting)

Apologies: Marion, Huw

Stella welcomed onto the land group in her role as volunteer co-ordinator

- 1) Management committee report back.
  - Kevin reported Bardy and Sarah requested a “wish list” for fundraising. We generated a list comprising hand tools, equipment, manure and compost. Estimated total about £2,000. **Action Kevin** to check it out with Darrell then forward to Bardy and Sarah
  - Kevin brought the draft share offer which is ready to launch in about 2 weeks time. Heather had one comment to note which she will email to Joan. **Action Heather**
- 2) Huw's update (email pasted at end of these minutes as Appendix 1)
  - Equipment. Let Huw know our beds are currently 5 ft wide with 2 ft paths in between. Will this be considered when choosing the tractor and machinery? **Action Heather respond to Huw.** NB 23<sup>rd</sup> Nov. Huw considering light weight tractor which would work with 4 foot wide beds
  - Kev to show Darrell the list for comments. **Action Kev.**
- 3) Fertility of the soil.
  - 20 tonnes green waste compost been delivered; half for polytunnel and half for the land.
  - Manure. Stella and Joan called into Mansion House Farm and talked to Mrs Atkinson and looked at the manure. Includes hay and straw and don't know its origins. Farm not able to deliver. **Action Stella** to talk with John Rose about possibilities of using his trailer to collect. also checking out the health of the manure Amnoopyrallid the weedkiller which goes up the food chain and into the manure which adversely effects broad leaved veg.(how discern teh safety if farm not know about what weed killers used?) Stella given Soil Association form for Mansion house to complete. We agreed £35 a trailer load delivered is the going rate, to be divided between farm and John Rose.
  - (Subsequent to the meeting, Heather visited Lightwood Farm. Kay Green very willing for manure to be taken away. Same issues as above. Heather will check out origins and weedkillers used before taking any further. **Action Heather**
- 4) Grower job.
  - Heather reported back on meeting Joan and she had with John le Corney. Notes from meeting pasted below (Appendix 2) Revised job description appended
  - We suggested we wanted a biggest field as possible to chose from. So if the person Darrell has in mind is keen and suitable she/he should be encouraged to apply and be shortlisted alongside everyone else. The advert should go as wide as possible on the free lists and sites available. **Action Heather** to relay this to Joan, Darrell and John Lecorney.
  - We agreed it will be vital to establish clear lines of accountability and communication. Darrell was welcomed as line manager. Kevin agreed to be the Management Committee and Land Group liaison person for the Grower with a review in one or two months on account of Kevin's pressure of time.

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5) Volunteer day the 20<sup>th</sup> November.

- BTCV insurance given to Stella and summary to Kev
- Stella has up to date first aid training.
- Stella looking for a deputy
- Work for volunteers for the 20<sup>th</sup>  
We agreed that it was very helpful for Stella and all the volunteers to have agreement in advance on what the jobs are for the volunteer day and they be put up on the website. We agreed the following:

Eradication of noxious weeds,  
harvesting onions,  
raking hay,  
inventory of hand tools,  
paint wooden labels ready to mark beds.  
Tool sharpening.

It was decided best to wait to spread the compost till we can use Huw's tractor. Collecting leaves for leaf mould was thought of but we accepted Marion's point that on ecological grounds they need to be left as part of the nutrient re-cycling in the wood.

- Ronin arrived at this point and contributed Marion's information and thoughts:  
The top bed is newly planted with green manure including black meddick. It could have brassicas planted into it in the Spring.  
Marion has broad beans to plant and suggested this as a useful activity for the volunteer day. A full discussion took place weighing up the pros and cons
- Pros: giving the beans a good start and likely to be hardier if planted now rather than in the spring. A nice job for volunteers to do. We have the beans now.
- Cons: Soil improvement needs to be the priority. Compost and muck needs to be spread all over in the spring with a tractor and beans coming up would impede this.  
We want to leave the new Grower some say in the rotation for next year so planting now interferes with this. There's not a lot of difference between the benefits of sowing beans now or in the spring. They can be brought on in the polytunnel. There are plenty of good jobs for the volunteers to do.
- Overall we decided that the soil fertility should take priority and that the beans should wait to be planted till the spring and or in the polytunnel.
- Stella to ask Bardy to circulate the list for volunteers. **Action Stella**

6) Marion has ordered £149 worth of potatoes, 6 varieties. Kev offered to help with chitting when the potatoes arrive.

7) Minutes of the last meeting. Ronin arrived with the minutes but we had run out of time to read or attend to them

8) Potato distribution. Heather has the sacks of potatoes in the cellar, weighed and labelled. She will bring to outlets as agreed before. Ronin will collect some to take to Regather.

9) Next Land group meeting Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> December 7.30 147, Albert Road

## **Appendix 1.**

Hello Heather,

Sorry that I can't come to the meeting tonight - I have a Farmers Market meeting where we are selecting the stalls for the next Market. There's been a lot happening recently, so here is an update for you to feed into the meeting as necessary:

The polytunnels were due to arrive this week, but have been slightly delayed and will now be arriving next Tuesday. James and I have moved almost everything from the steel container at the bottom of the field to the new one at the top, in order to have space to store all the components of the polytunnels safely. We will start on the construction straight away, but don't know exactly how long it will take.

I have lined up someone with a JCB to dig all the trenches for the water system - this will be done before Christmas.

The composting loo is now completed, and open for business.

I have ordered all the hedging plants (apart from holly, as we discussed) which will be arriving next week and will be heeled in until planted, early in the new year.

I have been talking to John and Aubrey about doing some work to extend the hard surfaced track into the field over the muddy patch - not sure yet when they can do it. The rest of the track will have the grass reinforcement mesh put down in early spring.

Lots of thought and research is going into which sort of tractor and implements to get - and I am consulting Martin and Matt, the other prospective growers. It looks like being a 4 wheel, 4 wheel drive diesel compact tractor and we are trying to make sure that the width of the wheels and all the implements are compatible in size - so that there will be a standard bed width that works with everything. Current thoughts are to get a 2 furrow plough, heavy duty rotavator, tipping transport box, chain harrow and/or weeder and possibly a disc ridger. also may be able to get a rotary mower that side discharges, which would mean we could sell the current tractor mower and afford a better or newer 4WD tractor. A 4 ft wide roller would be handy to roll in seeds, and give them a better chance of germinating. We should have established what to get within the next month, and it will all be on site early in the new year, in time for spring cultivations.

We had a great bonfire with several friends up at the top of the field on Saturday, and burned all the brushwood that Marion promised John that the co-op would deal with. The children had an amazing time running around in the dark and making up adventurous games. Lots of interest about what is going on up there!

Best wishes,

Huw

## **Appendix 2**

Notes of meeting between John Lecorney, Joan Miller and Heather Hunt 10<sup>th</sup> November 2011:

1. We welcome the opportunity for Hazelhurst and HCF to collaborate and work together

2. We agree that 20% of wages and NI would be an acceptable rate for the services offered by HCF to be reviewed in 6 months. This would include management time (from Darrell), training, office space and email, reception. These to be detailed in a Service Level Agreement.
3. Hazelhurst will pay for a part time Grower with the intention to start mid January, but John agreed there could be flexibility to increase hours if funding and need allowed.
4. To ensure "brand loyalty" to Hazelhurst, we agreed that Hazelhurst would be centrally involved in the recruitment process and a clear SLA be drawn up regarding accountability and lines of communication.
5. Joan and Heather would start by drafting an ad and SLA
6. Advertising will be via the free networks, locally and nationally.
7. John will check HCF liability insurance will cover the grower at Hazelhurst
8. John will supply a previous advert and any previous SLA (attached)
9. John will discuss with Dot, seconded to work at Sure start, if she is agreeable for Heather to contact her.

5) Ronin's resignation

6) Huw's report.

7)

8) Hello Heather,

9)

10) Sorry that I can't come to the meeting tonight - I have a Farmers Market meeting where we are selecting the stalls for the next Market. There's been a lot happening recently, so here is an update for you to feed into the meeting as necessary:

11)

12) The polytunnels were due to arrive this week, but have been slightly delayed and will now be arriving next Tuesday. James and I have moved almost everything from the steel container at the bottom of the field to the new one at the top, in order to have space to store all the components of the polytunnels safely. We will start on the construction straight away, but don't know exactly how long it will take.

13)

- 14) I have lined up someone with a JCB to dig all the trenches for the water system - this will be done before Christmas.
- 15)
- 16) The composting loo is now completed, and open for business.
- 17)
- 18) I have ordered all the hedging plants (apart from holly, as we discussed) which will be arriving next week and will be heeled in until planted, early in the new year.
- 19)
- 20) I have been talking to John and Aubrey about doing some work to extend the hard surfaced track into the field over the muddy patch - not sure yet when they can do it. The rest of the track will have the grass reinforcement mesh put down in early spring.
- 21)
- 22) Lots of thought and research is going into which sort of tractor and implements to get - and I am consulting Martin and Matt, the other prospective growers. It looks like being a 4 wheel, 4 wheel drive diesel compact tractor and we are trying to make sure that the width of the wheels and all the implements are compatible in size - so that there will be a standard bed width that works with everything. Current thoughts are to get a 2 furrow plough, heavy duty rotavator, tipping transport box, chain harrow and/or weeder and possibly a disc ridger. also may be able to get a rotary mower that side discharges, which would mean we could sell the current tractor mower and afford a better or newer 4WD tractor. A 4 ft wide roller would be handy to roll in seeds, and give them a better chance of germinating. We should have established what to get within the next month, and it will all be on site early in the new year, in time for spring cultivations.
- 23)
- 24) We had a great bonfire with several friends up at the top of the field on Saturday, and burned all the brushwood that Marion promised John that the co-op would deal with. The children had an amazing time running around in the dark and making up adventurous games. Lots of interest about what is going on up there!
- 25)
- 26) Best wishes,
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- 37) Ronin's resignation
- Ronin has resigned from the Management Committee but will carry on his involvement with the Land Group.
- 3) Revised plan for Hazelhurst
- The Management Committee has adopted the plan to lease half a hectare of land and this will be proposed at the AGM.
  - Yvonne offered to do a scaled down business plan for £100 ready for the AGM.
  - Preferable to have it done by Weds 14<sup>th</sup> Sept to allow others to comment on. (**Action:** Heather to relate this info to Joan)
- 4) Employing grower
- Heather to talk to Darrell/John at HCF for appropriate job descriptions
  - **Action:** Ronin to talk to Nick about job descriptions and look for paper copies

- **Proposal is for** Grower to be accountable to Management Committee and have regular liason with Land Group.
- **Action:** Marion to look for copies on her computer
- Recruitment subcommittee meeting 5:30-7pm on 5<sup>th</sup> Oct at 147 Albert Road – everyone to email round any job descriptions ASAP.

#### 5) Potato day

- Proposal from Joan: Sun 18<sup>th</sup> Sept 12-5 to be a family day with potato baking. Agreed that the priority is to dig up potatoes ready to sell at the AGM. Seed potatoes cost £200, need to sell 13 lots of 25kg bags at 50p per kilo to break even, 5 sacks already harvested. **Action:** Marion to feedback this info to Joan.

#### 6) Volunteer days/rota

- Joan has proposed setting up a rota. In principle it is a great idea but concerns were raised about whether there needs to be a first-aider on site and who updates risk assessment for each activity. BTCV have been told for insurance purposes that there will be a first-aider on site and activities will be risk assessed. **Action:** Kevin to communicate concerns to Joan. **Action:** Marion to seek clarification of whether a first aider on site is necessary for work days.

#### 7) AGM

- 21<sup>st</sup> Sept from 7pm. Draft programme has been circulated.
- Land group to submit a brief written report.
- Oral History group to submit a brief written report.
- LG and OHG to do a brief oral presentation.
- Kevin cannot attend the AGM (**Action:** Kevin to feed back to Joan)
- Suggestion to swap order of 'nomination of officers' and 'Adoption of new approach' to allow people to know what they were standing for. (**Action:** Heather to feed back to Joan).
- Plan is to sell potatoes at the AGM at 85p/kilo. Action: **Heather** to bring a float.
- Need bags to sell them in – bring bags
- Paper bags are in the festival kit (**Action:** Kevin to see if Joan has it)
- Kevin to get plastic weighing scales to heather

#### 9) Veg credits

- Proposal from Ronin to give Gareth some potatoes as veg credits for providing marquees for the permaculture courses. These could be displayed in the window in Regather for sale to promote the CSA. It was agreed to split the remains from the AGM equally between Sharrow Marrow, Zeds and Regather for sale (Regather would not pay for them). **Action:** Marion to deliver to Sharrow Marrow, Heather to Zeds and Ronin to Regather. Try to get 50p/kilo but we will take 40p – state local and chemical-free.

#### 10 Work on the land

- Extra work day, digging potatoes on Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> Sept at 11am.
- Further work day, digging more potatoes on Tues 13<sup>th</sup> Sept at 4pm.
- **Action:** Kevin to ask Joan to advertise.

#### 11) AOB

- Heather doing a fringe meeting at 12.30 on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> Sept (final day of Green Party conference) entitled 'the politics of food' detailing experiences in Sheffield of scaling up food production.
- Date of next meeting – 7:30 on Thurs 13<sup>th</sup> Oct 2011 at 147 Albert Road.