

Extraordinary General Meeting of RAGA March 6th 2017

As an introduction Paul mentioned the generosity of Gledhow Sports and Social Club as they have waived the fee for room hire as a kind gesture to RAGA. This prompted a round of applause.

1. The sequence of events leading up to the loss of our hut and eco loo was then outlined

26th Nov Hut break in and burning of the toilet

5th Dec First insurance claim for £2482.86, visit of loss adjuster, the excess of £250 was waived because we did our own clean up

Week prior to Dec 21st second break in, theft of small items

21st Dec arsonist(s) set a fire in two places and almost wholly destroy the large hut. The Lattimers were summoned by the Fire service at 4.20am by which time the fires had been put out and in the dark it was difficult to see the full extent of the damage.

The police came later that morning with a forensic team but no evidence had been left so it couldn't be taken any further.

9th Jan a second insurance claim was submitted, the loss adjuster did not need to come to see the damage (photos sufficed)

We have had an interim payment of £15,000, the overall claim is about 23 thousand we don't yet know if it will all be paid.

2. We had several clear up days with many members lending a hand and filling four large skips with all the rubbish. Not very much was salvageable from the hut. Tools that were not claimed and were still useable are now used by the Thursday volunteers. We had put any metal aside with the thought of selling it for scrap but were advised that we would get very little for it. Fortunately a fortuitous drive by of an open backed white truck with two very nice Eastern European men solved that problem and they took every bit of metal. The door grilles have been saved.

3. Options were discussed

Toilet? Yes we do want one!

Composting toilet would be about 2.5K delivered, to put one in a shed would be about £400 DIY, plus the cost of the shed. A concrete structure plus a concrete base would be about £1,300.

Flushable toilet would be of unknown cost.

All agreed that the next structure should not be wooden and perhaps could be incorporated into a main building.

Paul said that whatever the outcome servicing and maintenance of any new toilet must not be left to three of us, more people need to take responsibility for it.

Shop? Yes we do want one, without its generation of income we would have to fund raise annually.

Maintenance Store? Yes we do need a place for the equipment used by the Thursday Volunteers.

Member's Tool Store? Yes, Paul however did point out that demand for places always outstrips supply so we may have to have a stricter set of criteria to qualify for a space. Possibly those quarter and starter plot members plus those who habitually use public transport or come by bicycle to the site.

Electricity Supply? All agreed that this was a good idea. Paul mentioned about the proposal to put a sub-station on site but all grinds very slow with that, it is in the hands of LCC legal dept at present. There would be a cost involved to change our lease so they might allow us to have a power supply. A question was asked about consulting Planning for a sub-station but we don't know if it will even go ahead as yet so it didn't seem appropriate.

We could apply to have power diverted from the mains supply at a cost of about 2K.

The Allotment Officer was asked to enquire about planning requirements for our future structures, the answer was that it would be needed unless we were replacing like for like but no advice was given about options.

How do we now proceed with replacement buildings?

We have two rented shipping containers at present. (Cost £114 delivery and the same for removal, plus £12 weekly rental)

Similar containers to buy are about £1500 each, possibly less.

We have the offer of one from Gledhow Sports and Social Club for a nominal sum, but we would have to arrange the transport of it.

The company who supplied the security gates make fireproof metal buildings, they are as industrial looking as the containers and much more expensive. 20K for one the same size as the

wooden hut and from another supplier 12K but that was not erected. It was suggested that this type of construction is less secure than a container.

The majority agreed that to have containers was a good, hopefully fire proof solution and we estimated that we would need four or five. It was suggested that they are not the easiest things to open and close but this could be investigated.

There was a question about ventilation, light and temperature fluctuation but it was thought that it was no more of a problem than in the wooden hut. It is possible to have containers welded together, to have windows (not a popular option for security reasons) and for the structures to be staggered rather than put side by side.

Containers can be beautified and disguised with vertical planting.

Pictures to show this were passed round and most people were impressed with the look that could be achieved.

It was agreed that we would pursue this option, carefully measure out the footprint of containers required and Christian Sanders would produce workable drawings to put before the Planning Department. He suggested that it was best to use the £50 option because that often comes with some commitment from them even if there is an initial rejection of the plans.

We are as most members know constrained by being in the Conservation Area and as part of the Park Estate. This is the reason we cannot have a high secure metal perimeter fence.

A skills register was passed round, there were eight contributors.

Two people agreed to be on a re-building sub-committee.

There was some mention of fund raising, via Amazon and E bay and Lottery Fund Grants but no offers to take this on.

Our Treasurer suggested that a budget should be set. We have in excess of 30K available.

A member suggested that a one off levy could be asked of all members but this would have to be brought up at the upcoming AGM.

We will make a second attempt to have the police advise us on security.

The meeting concluded with Janey Moon proposing a vote of thanks to all those members who helped on the clear up days.