

# CAGA Committee Report



Presented to the membership at the AGM in March 2019.

## 1 - Summary

It was a scorcher of a summer in 2018 which broke all kinds of records for temperatures and lack of rainfall in Barnet. The sweet corn, strawberries and melons all did very well with judicious amounts of watering and a fair dollop of sweet summer sunshine to help them along. However, it was also a time of sadness for some when Clive Critchley sadly passed away in July. He will be much missed by those of us who remember him well and witnessed at close hand what he brought to the site and the committee during his time as Chair and Treasurer.

Clive steered the Association through the tricky transition from Council control to Self-management in 2012. He worked closely with others from the Barnet Allotment Federation to make this happen smoothly and ensure that the lease worked as best as possible in the member's best interests. Clive also worked for a charitable organization called Freedom from Torture which aims to provide a safe and meaningful transition environment for refugees fleeing persecution in their home countries. Clive used his plot to facilitate language acquisition and cultural assimilation for many of these clients who spoke little English and came from a multitude of backgrounds. He made a huge difference to their lives by letting them meet, dig, grow and harvest on our site and we are all grateful for his endeavours in this field.

This year the committee has been striving to ensure that members are able to cultivate, grow and enjoy the fruits of their labours while feeling safe on site and creating a stronger sense of our community. We began by continuing a long fight with BT to have a telephone line installed. This was finally achieved in September 2018 after many letters, emails and phone calls and this will eventually allow us to stream CCTV images to the internet. This means that if the site is broken into, or wrong doing is occurring, even interfering with cameras or equipment will not prevent individuals from being identified. We have subsequently obtained several quotes for the installation of CCTV but they are all over budget at the moment. The committee in 2019 will continue to ensure value for money on this project and will do it's very best to provide a facility which is fit for purpose and affordable. A well attended volunteer day saw up to 15 members clean, tidy, sand and paint the Trading Hut and surrounding area. Thank you to all those who took part to improve our site.

Our website remains an important place for members to access information about events, news and reporting issues so please visit [www.colindaleallotments.com](http://www.colindaleallotments.com) if you haven't yet done so. You can also contact the current committee on [admin@colindaleallotments.com](mailto:admin@colindaleallotments.com) and we will be able to discuss any concerns or thoughts you have at the next committee meeting.

## Contents

Summary	1
Finances	2
Committee Elections	3
Future projects	4
Survey	5



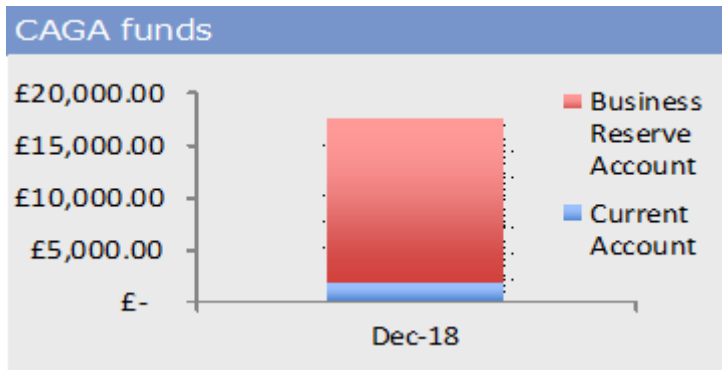
In memory of Clive Critchley (1945-2018). An enthusiastic horticulturalist, activist who worked to support refugees fleeing torture in other countries and an energetic servant to Colindale Allotments and Garden Association.

## 2 - Finances

CAGA's financial reporting year runs from January to December. The financial situation is reasonably healthy although projects such as installing broadband and the very high water bill have meant a deficit for this year.

It will be important for all members to remember to use the water wisely next year so that profits made can be used to fund improvement projects, rather than to pay bills.

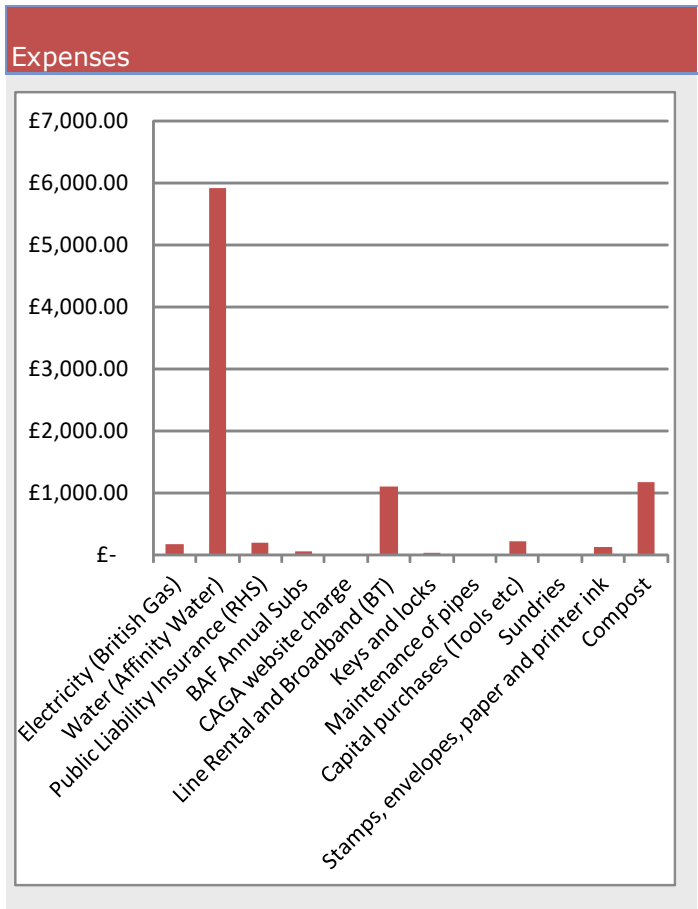
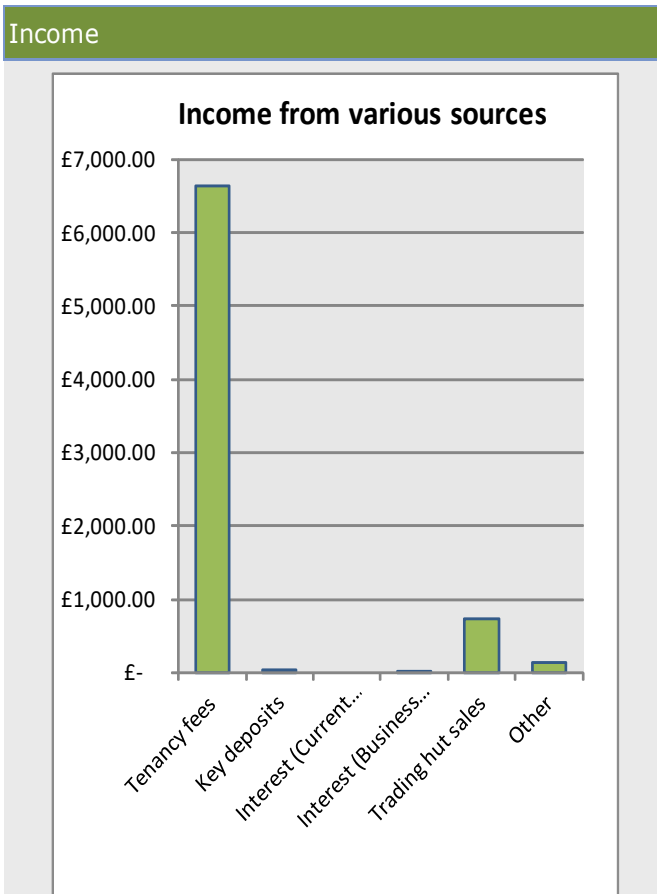
The business reserve remains steady at £15,791 while the current account balance has fallen to £1690.



The main source of income this year has been membership fees which accounts for £6635 in 2018. Trading Hut sales allowed members to access compost, canes and soil improver on site at trade prices, amounting to £733 with stock to spare.

The main causes of expenditure have been very high water bills totalling £5911 – an increase of 306% (although one of the debits represents a bill for 2017 which wasn't cashed until Jan 18), and the installation of a telegraph pole to run a broadband capable telephone connection which cost £700.

*A very high water bill has created a deficit for 2018 of £2832.*



## 2 Committee Elections

We are all members of the Colindale Allotment and Gardens association. In order for CAGA to function it has to follow some rules which include having a committee of between 3 and 10 members who are elected from the membership to:

1. Organise collection of membership fees
2. Administer memberships
3. Maintain communal paths and areas
4. Promote the constitutional aims of growing and horticulture
5. Ensure a safe environment for members.

The committee meets at least every two months, but often aims to be on site and available to members on a more regular basis. The roles include Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, Lettings, Trading Hut and Maintenance but committee members can also take responsibility for delivering projects or other roles. The roles are all voluntary and there is no payment for services.

The membership needs to elect members each year at the AGM and the committee can then invite two more members during the year to support their activities.

If you would like to know more about how the committee works or the responsibilities of specific roles then please feel free to speak to one of the current committee members. If you feel that you can volunteer some of your time and skills to support the CAGA membership then consider joining the committee and helping to make decisions that will support the whole membership.

## 4 Future projects

### 1. Installation of CCTV

Last year members voted in support of the idea to install CCTV on site to detect unauthorised individuals entering the site and to monitor activity. The local police also recommended that this would be a positive step in making the site more secure and reassure members and neighbours. However, if we store the images on site then it would be possible for people to break into the Trading Hut and delete, or steal, the equipment and recordings. It is therefore more prudent to stream the CCTV feed and for that we need a landline and a broadband feed. We now have the BT telephone line and broadband capability on site and have obtained several quotes for the installation of poles, cameras and wires. The committee felt that all of the quotes were overpriced and too ambitious so we are now recommending a simpler, and cheaper, system which will cover the main gates and first car park. Once the funds are available this will be a priority project.

### 2. Trading hut stocking and sales

Last year we stocked the Trading hut with supplies for members. This was sourced and purchased from Finchley Nurseries and sold on to members at cost price so that all members benefitted from the bulk prices and convenience. We want to continue this next year.

### 3. Toilets

Many members have expressed a desire to see toilets on site in one form or another. We trialled chemical toilets on hire but they were relatively expensive and not all users looked after them hygienically. We would like to find a solution that would deliver toilet facilities that would be well maintained, convenient for members and hygienic. This could include plumbing to a mains sewer, a composting toilet or chemical toilets but there are pros and cons for each option and a cost involved too which members need to agree with.

## The current committee

Chair/Secretary/Treasurer

Adrian Clargo

Ex-chair

Clive Critchley

Maintenance

Bambos Charalambous

Additional members

Mario Costa, Gloria Bernal,  
Mohammed Shahrudi, Reza  
Kerdari

Selected committee member  
and Barnet Allotment  
Federation representative

Afsaneh GNia

**Although Adrian is retiring and leaving the CAGA community, many of the current committee members are willing to be re-elected and volunteer once again. If you would like to join them then email your name and reasons why you would like to join to [admin@colindaleallotments.com](mailto:admin@colindaleallotments.com) by Sunday 10<sup>th</sup> March 2019.**

## Members Survey - Spring 2019

As a member of CAGA you have the opportunity to have your say.

What has gone well for you this year and what could be improved?

Please complete this survey and return it via post to CAGA, 81 Sheaveshill Avenue, Colindale, NW9 6RZ or complete the survey online by going to <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/NLH95PV>

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Plot Number: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How would you rate your overall enjoyment of our site?

**lowest** 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 **highest**

2. What grew successfully for you last year? \_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you feel safe when on site?  yes  no

4. What issues you are concerned about? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. Do you support the idea of CCTV on our site?  yes  no

6. Which projects do you think are important on site and would have your support? (CCTV, Trading Hut trading, Toilets) \_\_\_\_\_

7. How much time do you think you could volunteer to support the community? \_\_\_\_\_

8. Near the main gates are some small sheds. These belong to the whole association and no one plot holder. What do you think we should do with these spaces? Should they be turned into toilets, extra storage for communal tools, hired out to individual plot holders for an additional fee? How should they be allocated fairly? \_\_\_\_\_

9. What would make our site more satisfying for you? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Are you happy to receive all communications via email and the CAGA website?  yes  no