

COCA Core Group : June 15th 2015

present : Stuart Johnson (SJ), Gill Lewis (GL), Gerald Miles (GM), Caz Miles (CM)
Anthony Bullock (AB) Rhiannon Tate (RT)

Skype : Dave Thomas (DT) Anne Curran (AC)

member observers : Belinda Ray

apologies : Dave Hunter, Gabrielle Sloane, Nathan Walton

corrections to May minutes : 1.remove out of date Action Points list.
2. price comparisons are not yet on the web site.

Accepted.

David Hunter sent in his resignation from Core as too busy to attend meetings. Will continue with supermarket price comparison. Accepted, with regret.

Growers Report : after 2 weeks without volunteers assistance (other than local members, particularly Lesley) the first UNA camp arrived plus a short term WOOFA. UNA were a good team under a well organised team leader. Total 6 people for 2 weeks plus 1 WOOFA for 1 week has been enormous help to Caz. Caught up with weeding in field (mostly), trimming tomatoes, transplanting all the brassicas into field and into seed bed. Tidying field shed, helping with harvests, watering etc. 2 have stayed on for a further week (Irene and Tomos). Tomos will be leader for the next UNA group starting June 20th. One of the UNA vols, Chantal, was a senior volunteer (ie over 50) for whom we were actually being paid £30 per day so as to give her better accommodation. (AB or DT to check with UNA as to payment schedule for senior vols)

Irrigation equipment has been revised. A compensating drip feed system is on order, enough for four feed lines from 6 tap points at the top of the field (this may be a technically inaccurate description!) Cost about £500 so far, less than previously budgeted. A diluter, for applying organic soluble feed (eg seaweed or comfrey feed), would cost a further £150, that item is deferred until another year. Shelter netting has been put up along top fence, enclosing further two areas for delicate and over-winter crops (eg sweetcorn, pumpkins and wintering salads, chard and broad beans. Very dry and cool conditions means that working has been easy but crops are delayed ... we need rain (or irrigation!)

Harvest and Distribution : Last month's action to promote to over 60s in St Davids and Roch for a hub not yet done...

ACTION GL

Own crops ran out mid-month, apart from salads from Polly 1. More outdoor salads now coming on fast. Buying in veg this month has included "exotics" such as celery, tomatoes, peppers and courgettes because all Welsh-grown seasonal fresh veg virtually nil.

Finance and fundraising : Cash flow staying positive, No 1 account just over £6K, higher than forecast in the budget. Cost of irrigation still to be accounted. Buying in veg continues this past month (because of "hungry gap" of our own produce), still at max of £3 / £1.50 per full/ small share. Salads from the polytunnels and outside abundant enough for sales in next few weeks, increasing income. Less outlay on volunteers than forecast (lack of WOOFAs in early May.)

Raffle at the Really Wild Food Fest only raised £48 over 2 days.

Price rise for shares will start from July 1st, to £47/mth for full, £25/mth for small shares. A short piece will put up blog to explain the reasons for increase. Letters will be put in boxes

this week. Plus a text to each and post on website/email
(done!)

ACTION RT

Note that price rise is voluntary for those who are already paying above the normal amount. Work share proposal (discussed in May Core) to be promoted along with price increase. NB Anyone who has problems paying the increase should contact a Core member (Nathan?) to discuss options and workshare.

Membership :

- we have highest numbers ever with several new small shares this month . Numbers on June 12th : 26 full shares, 26 small shares 1 trial small share.
- There has been one leaver : reason : “now growing own veg”.
- Haverfordwest hub has 2 full and 3 small shares; Fishguard has 1 full and 4 small shares.
- Hence monthly income from shares now £1558 + extra £185 from voluntary higher payers.
- Follow-up personal contact needed with the names of interested folk picked up at Really Wild. ACTION DT to send his list to DL.(done)

Workshare clarification :

- 6 hrs for one full share per week. 3hrs for one small share per week
- NB that work has to be arranged in advance with Caz, should be other than volunteer workdays or harvest afternoons, and be on a regular basis, not a one-off.
- Leaflet distribution, drop-offs at hubs, promotion work all to be considered, doesn't have to be just field work.

Volunteers :

- timesheet for all voluntary workers ... yet to be done ACTION RT
- UNA needs first aid kit in each caravan ACTION GL (tick!!)
- “Crib sheets” requested with pictures of crops and tools to aid understanding for non-english speakers ACTION GL
- Next UNA group arrives June 20th for 2 weeks, a group of 5 + leader. (Tomos) Food provided as before . ACTION GL (tick!!)
- Last group of 6 people cost us £106 in bought in foods, but they also had “fregan” donations via Andy Dixon, plus surplus veg from the farm.
- Note we have very few WOOFAs booked ... two long-term volunteers have dropped out. Possibly put more enticing material on website, endorsements and volunteer blogs. An update to the volunteer web page needed ACTION : Nathan or RT?

Publicity : update volunteering info on website (see above) eg RT's interviews with 2014 vols, and the “singing Happy” video from first UNA group

Old promotion leaflet needs updating with new figures and drop-off points. DT has a Publisher file (PDF) of the 2014 leaflet, The 2012 leaflet probably with Richard Cotton (Jackie Sime is contact). New poster for local distribution also need.

ACTION: RT and BR

Getty Photo library of Women in the Workplace have approached via AC. We will be able to keep their pix.... a great offer! AS to co-ordinate ACTION :AC

Work of the Core Group needs promoting to the general membership some how? via web, or notice board or blog.

Events :

The Harvest Party , August 29th (Saturday of Bank Holiday weekend)

- AC, GM and DT are leading on this at present. Will need more assistance. Agreed to advertise the date now so as to deter further clashes with other local events.

ACTION AC

- Agreed format : Friday evening setting up, camping, an acoustic set / Saturday daytime : children's activities, talks and seminars, some music/ Saturday evening 2 bands, DJ, BBQ/ Sunday clear up and leave.
- Price £10 for all day Saturday, extra for camping.
- member volunteers on the day get a free ticket for minimum 2 hrs help. (limit number of free tickets)

Cartref COCA :

- DT has been revising design and costs, reckons minimum £8K will be needed. Size and quantity of bales being calculated and suppliers sought. Ongoing. ACTION DT
- Application to PCNP Little Green Fund for £1500 has been made.(update: secured!)
- Volunteer day on June 27th will be used for the foundation building.ACTION DT et al
- Planning consent and Building Regs not required, will be put in writing.
- Site will be levelled by JCB when Dai Murphy on the farm for other levelling work.
- Possibly use the project as a base for teaching courses? Participants would pay for chance of hands-on experience (eg CAT charges £600 pp for a weekend) Needs a skilled leader /supervisor. ACTION DT
- Page on website to keep a diary going of the work ACTION SJ

AOB :

- from GM: can COCA afford to pay Grower a further £50 per week? Accepted as temporary pay rise from week of June 15th. Finance Group will meet separately to discuss and give recommendation to next Core ACTION SJ, AB, et al
- UNA looking to send 11month long term volunteers from February 2016. DT co-ordinating with Michi in Cardiff office ACTION DT

DATE OF NEXT MEETING : JULY 14TH Caerhys (tbc) 7pm for 7.15pm

ACTION POINTS SUMMARY

GERALD : work with AC on Harvest Party bookings and other prep.

ANN :

1. advertise "Save the Date" for Harvest Party local papers/ radio / other media and web site.
2. Getty Photo Library link

STUART :

1. promote work group spheres of interest on web site to members.
2. create Cartref COCA page on web site
3. meet as Finance Group to discuss pay increase for Grower.

RHIANNON :

1. letters to members re July price increase.
2. timesheet for all voluntary workers
3. create/ improve content of volunteers web apge, to entice more to come.
4. renovate advertising leaflet. (with BR)

BELINDA : co-ordinate with RT to renew old leaflets and produce poster.

NATHAN ; co-ordinate with RT to update volunteer web site and create volunteer hours recording sheets.

GILL :

1. food for next UNA camp
2. first aid kits for caravans
3. crib sheets/ID for tools and crops.
4. (carry on co-ordinating green roof course with Cardiff Architects.)

Dave T :

1. carry on with Cartref project
2. Promote end of June workday.
3. enquire for setting up fee-earning courses to teach straw bale techniques.
4. co-ordinate with UNA re long term volunteers from Feb.