**The Marlow Allotments Association over 40years – a Brief History**

Back in 1982 Marlow Town Council advised tenants of HH that they had arranged for a firm to take over the site to build houses.

Tenants were understandably upset then angry and determined to ‘Fight for their Right’ to have an allotment.

Led by Bernard Loosley, a retired senior policeman in Marlow Town, tenants gained publicity for their campaign through exposure in the local press, with the aim of raising support from Marlow residents. The local MP was contacted.

In a search for help and advice, NSALG was contacted and the legal position clarified. The Association was formed shortly afterwards, with our first AGM in November 1983.

We were able to bring the tenants of Foxes Piece on board, as they were just as likely to face loss of their site from development at any time in the future.

These actions, along with advice and legal support from NSALG, were instrumental in demonstrating how strong and determined the opposition was against this proposal and it was withdrawn.

The threat never disappeared completely. In 1999/2000, an early draft of the Wycombe District Local Plan showed part of the Hanging Hill site as a possible development area. At the time there were quite a few vacant plots on both sites, an argument used to justify the proposal. Led by the formidable Bill Masser, we encouraged existing tenants to take on additional plots to ensure there was no justification to close either of the sites. Fortunately the proposal was withdrawn. The Association had of course objected formally.

Led by Bill Masser, we embarked on a site clearance programme to bring the entire site back into cultivation.

Around this time, we also offered to organise viewings of available plots to newcomers, liaising with the Council our landlords at all times, thereby ensuring plots are relet as soon possible after vacating. In addition, if the waiting list slows down, we also organise publicity with notices around town and the occasional article in the local paper.

Regulations covering planning applications have changed since 1982 which give us more opportunity to oppose any such actions at the early stages, plus we work closely with the Council, taking on and assisting with many of their duties as Landlord, as a result of this we would like to believe that we have a good working relationship with them.

We appreciate their support and endeavours to ensure both allotment sites remain available to Marlow Residents to enjoy, especially in these current times.

The Association remains vigilant to any type of threat to our Allotments Sites. Lastly, we do have money in the bank which we hold as a fighting fund, should this become necessary.