

Alsager Gardens Association

Minutes of Committee Meeting Held On 27 February 2018

PRESENT

Members: Adrian Ford (Chairman) David Pitt (Treasurer) David Spall (Trading Secretary)
Pauline Hubbard (Vice Chair and Minutes) Hilary Robinson (Membership Secretary) Mike Smith
(Rep Coronation Ave) Lesley Quarter Maine (Rep Talke Rd)

Visitors: Liz Pinkney and Linda Poole (Community Allotment Request)

MINUTES

1. APOLOGIES

Mike Hubbard (Rep Cedar Ave) John Nixon (Rep Talke Rd)
Keith Biggs (Secretary)

2. MINUTES of meeting held on 30 January 2018 approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Error in the minutes: Treasurers Report: Delete line 7
Trading £4,793 c/w £4,056 + £737

3.2 Request for a Community Allotment at Lawton Road

A paper was distributed with the agenda which outlined the proposals and arrangements for developing the Community Allotment. Following discussion and clarification that the objective of the group would be for "Gardening Together" and open to all members of the public.

It was agreed to allocate the plot subject to the following conditions being met at all times:

- The tenant of the plot would be a named individual Liz Pinkney/ Linda Poole
- The tenant of the plot will be responsible for paying the annual plot rental fee (currently £14.50)
- There will be two named key holders Liz Pinkney/ Linda Poole and only 2 keys will be distributed. The copying of any further keys is not allowed.
- All members of the "Alsager Community Allotment Scheme" will need to be individual members of the AGA for insurance purposes. Payment of the individual AGA fee of £3.50 is to be made in person at the Trading Hut along with a completed application form (available from the AGA web site) when a membership card will be issued
- PH to send a copy of the membership form to Liz Pinkney
- A maximum of 8 individuals on the plot at any one time is recommended

Any requests to changes to the above will need to be ratified by the AGA committee.

It was agreed that Adrian and Liz would meet at the Lawton Rd site to formally identify the site for Liz and handover keys etc. There is a meeting of the project being held at the Community Church on Monday 5th March at 3pm. David Spall will attend if possible.

PH

DS

4.TREASURER'S REPORT

DP reported on the accounts

Cash in hand/current Account	£2719
Reserve Account	<u>£4355</u>
Total	<u>£7074</u>

This includes payments already made totalling approx. £4750 made up as follows:

Rent to Alsager Town Council	c £2700
Supplies for the Trading Hut	c £1700
Tree pruning at Talke Rd	c £350

The association has no liabilities at this date.

Trading, attributed to sales at the AGM, is £53 as at 18/02/18 c/f £59 at this point last year

Rents received are £899 for 31 half plots representing an increase in early payment when compared to £672 for 24 half plots at this point last year.

Subs £112 received from 32 members c/f £84 from 24 members at this point last year

5. TRADING SECRETARY'S REPORT

DS reported that all potato orders have now been distributed and that the remaining potatoes will be on sale in the Trading Hut.

An amended price list is to be finalised taking account of price changes in the recent order. DS to forward a word copy of the price list to PH for publishing on the website.

The Trading Hut opens on Sunday 4th March at 10am. HR confirmed that the updated members list and "Red File" will be provided along with copies of the membership forms.

AF distributed the Hut Rota.

6.SECRETARY'S REPORT

6.1 Accessibility Plots

PH reported that the Town Council has requested further information before approving the order for the sleepers. The information had been provided but the order will not be placed until the new fiscal year in April, so the budget of £1316 will be carried forward. Given this, work on constructing the Accessibility Raised Beds (ARB) will be delayed. However, it was noted that, due to the boggy soil and the current weather conditions, it would be difficult to work on the Accessibility plot 32.1 at Cedar Avenue

DS

HR

The weather and conditions were noted and the *It was agreed* that the 5 sleepers currently in stock at Lawton Road will be used to commence the first bed footprint at Cedar Ave on the Accessibility plot no 22.1, near the gate. MH to action.

MH

The meeting then reviewed the order of the phased development and the benefits offered by first developing plot 22.1. This plot benefits from easy access from the car park, easy access to the toilet and easy access to water. This makes this plot more suited to those individuals with restricted mobility or wheelchair users.

It was agreed that plot 22.1 Accessibility Raised Beds (ARB) should be constructed first in advance of any development on plot 32.1.

The committee agreed that Plot 32.1 will now be stage 2 and developed for those individuals with mobility and other issues that require a raised bed but do not need such easy access to the car park or toilet block.

It was also agreed that each stage of the project should be completed prior to commencing work on the further stages, subject to finance being available to enable completion.

PH reported that work will soon commence on the ARB Paving at Lawton Road. Have been obtained for Vegetable soil which is significantly dearer than top soil. A supplier had recommended using top soil and adding in mushroom compost. After much discussion it was agreed that PH would arrange to order 3 x ton bags (or minimum delivery) for Lawton Road. DS suggested and agreed that once delivered he would arrange to complete a soil test such as that provided by RHS, to determine what nutrients would then need to be added to the soil to provide a sound growing medium.

PH

DS

6.1.2 Criteria for An Accessibility Raised Bed, Number Allocated per Tenant and Cost

- **Criteria**

PH reported that she has researched the web for criteria from other Allotment Associations and referred to the criteria used at Brighton and Hove.

PH presented a completed example "Accessibility Raised Bed Request" form that used the criteria. *The criteria and request form were agreed.*

- **Number of beds to be Allocated per Tenant**

A discussion took place on how many ARB's a tenant could occupy at any one time. *It was agreed that a tenant should only be allocated one Accessibility Raised Bed (ARB).*

This decision would be reviewed if it was found that take up of the ARB's was poor.

- **Annual Rent**

PH outlined the cost of building a raised bed and a discussion took place about the ongoing maintenance.

It was agreed that the annual rent would be £10 per ARB.

6.1.3 Individual Request for ARB

A request for an ARB has been made to John Nixon at Talke Rd. This is from a previous tenant at Talke Rd who had to give up his tenancy due to mobility issues. It was agreed that PH contact JN to establish if the individual would like to consider an ARB at Lawton Rd when completed.

PH

6.2 Allotment Open Days and Diary Dates 2018

The document Diary Dates 2018 was reviewed, updated and agreed as a useful tool going forward. AGM date provisional subject to confirmation.

*The allotment open days were agreed as the weekend of **12 and 13th May** which will be added to the Diary.*

Diary and Open Days to be published on the website

PH

A discussion took place about the Annual Gardens Competition and what involvement was required from the AGA.

HR asked if a category could be included for best Pollinator patch. This would need to be taken up with the Town Council as this is their event.

DS suggested PH contact Elsie Warrilow for details for any requirements they may have of the AGA.

PH

6.3 Annual Show

DP expressed concern that so far, we had failed to identify a person to undertake the role of Show Secretary. As the show represents the face of the AGA, as our main annual public event, it cannot go ahead unless it has the appropriate input. DP and DS already undertake a significant role to support the show and are not able to take on the additional responsibilities and work required by the Show Secretary.

The only other way forward would be to have a Show Committee and divide up the administrative tasks.

The meeting recognised this as a significant issue and agreed that as a first action AF/DS/DP would meet to review the show schedule and its categories and feedback to the next meeting when the Annual Show will be further discussed as a main agenda item.

AF/DS
/DP
PH

6.3 Annual Maintenance and 5 Year Plan

PH distributed a spreadsheet titled "Annual Maintenance and 5 Year Improvement Plan". This spreadsheet is derived from the document "5 Year Plan" produced by KB.

The spreadsheet aims to identify all required work categorising it as either maintenance/remedial or as an improvement as well as establishing the priority and cost of the work. Each year each site should establish any requests for ongoing remedial work and for and improvements.

<p>The process is that all site representatives undertake an <i>annual inspection</i> to inform the remedial work required (if any) on buildings such as toilet, tool sheds, work required to boundary fences, trees and work on paving if unsafe. The timing of the annual inspection should be such to inform financial planning for the following year.</p> <p>It is recognised that unexpected essential repairs cannot be planned eg something arising from storm damage etc which requires immediate remedial action to avoid further costly damage.</p> <p>The spreadsheet lists known improvements as detailed in the original 5-year plan and each has been given a priority rating.</p> <p><i>The committee agreed the spreadsheet and the priority rating but recognised that estimated costs, when known, may influence the order in which the work is progressed. It was agreed that the Trading Hut Door, as a security issue, needs urgent replacement. PH to obtain costs.</i></p>	<p>PH</p>
<p>Site representatives are requested to review the spreadsheet and provide any new requests for remedial work/improvements and any further information on priority or costs.</p>	<p>SITE REPS</p>
<p>7. ALLOTMENT OFFICERS' REPORTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronation Avenue- 2 x quarter plots are now available following a tenant taking up the vacated 2 x half plots from KB. • Talke Road – Site full. Work on trees completed. Some work is required to the fence running parallel with the railway. LQ to discuss with JN are report back with further details to add to the Annual Maintenance spreadsheet and agree priority and action required. • Lawton Road – Site full. Quarter plot allocated as Community Plot. • Cedar Ave – Site full. 	<p>LQ/JN</p>
<p>10 AOB</p> <p>HR reported that she had sourced a supply of mixed hardy annual seeds and would package them at £1.00 enough to cover approx. 1 sq. metre. Seeds to be available for purchase in the Trading Hut.</p>	<p>HR</p>
<p>11. Date of Next Meeting Tuesday 27th March 2018</p> <p>The meeting closed at 9.15pm</p>	