

ALSAGER GARDENS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13 FEBRUARY 2018

PRESENT

Chairman – Adrian Ford

David Pitt (Treasurer) David Spall (Trading Secretary)

Derek Hough (President) Hilary Robinson (Membership Secretary)

Mike Smith, John Nixon, Mike Hubbard, Pauline Hubbard, Susan Plowright, Lesley Quartermaine, Jane Smith

John Quartermaine, Brian Plowright, Muriel Dale, Ken Jones, Roger Pask, Peter Edwards, Margaret Brooks, Mike Brooks, Julie Salisbury, David Salisbury, John Willets, Judith Ford, Tom Egley, Hilary Egley, Neil Challinor, Helen Challinor, Tony Smith, Sean McCabe, Lynn McCabe, Doug Heath, Les Papiernik, Henry Cox, Stewart Challinor, Fred Stark

(35 attendees)

Opening Remarks

The Chairman opened the meeting by explaining that Keith Biggs (secretary) was absent from the meeting due to illness but is progressing well. He has been sent our best wishes for his recovery. In view of this Mike Smith has agreed to act as temporary Site Representative at Coronation Avenue and Pauline Hubbard will present the Secretary's report on behalf of Keith. David Spall was thanked for providing the refreshments which will be available at the close of the meeting.

1. APOLOGIES

Keith Biggs (Secretary): Bob Cliffe

2. **MINUTES** of the meeting held on 14 February 2017 were agreed as a true record

3. **MATTERS ARISING** There were no matters arising

4. TREASURER'S REPORT - David Pitt

David reported

- The accounts to year end 31st December 2017 have been audited by Macintosh and a letter detailing key issues has been provided and a copy of the audited accounts was distributed to the meeting.
- This year Gross Trading profit is £1532 which represents 30.8% of sales and is due to seed and plant sales: sales have increased by 18%. Stock in hand has reduced from £1955 last year to £1255 this year.
- A total of £538 profit was made generated from our members generous donations of plants and seedlings, which were subsequently sold at the highly successful Allotment Open Days and The Annual Show. In addition, a further £161 was made from the raffle/tombola.
- In 2017 the AGA Membership increased from £3.00 to £3.50. This was required to support an increase in the NSALG Affiliation fees. This is reflected in the accounts under **Subscriptions** which show an increase of £96 and under the **Affiliation Fees** showing an increase of £81 (£576 this year compared to £495 last year).
- Income from plot rents has increased by £257 (£3854 compared to £3597). This is due to a £1 increase in rental fees per half plot and that we have let an additional 5.5 half plots this year when compared to last year.

- The accounts reflect the holding of £2045 Grant Monies received for the Accessibility Raised Beds Project. This money is ring fenced for the specific project use.
- Allotment expenses this year were £4785 compared to £2762 last year. This reflects the investments made in works at Lawton Road and Cedar Avenue.
- A figure of £1965 has been allocated to the Profit and Loss Account as this is expenditure which cannot be capitalised and relates to work on the Accessibility plots.
- Overall the 2017 accounts show a net loss of £1082 compared to a loss of £1979 last year. The accounts include a figure of £2494 depreciation for buildings included for this year (£10,538 -£13,032). If the accounts are viewed without this depreciation, then we would have a healthy profit of £1412. However, capital items will require replacement at some time in the future.
- The Balance sheet shows capital which relates to the following Grants which been received from the following sponsors who we would like to formally acknowledge and to whom we are most grateful:
 - £2806 from **The Big Lottery Fund**
 - £1000 from **Cheshire East Borough Council**
 - £1000 from **Persimmon Homes**
 - £ 500 from **David Wilson Homes**

Note: Following closure of this year's accounts a further Grant of £500 was received from **Seddon Homes** this will be shown in the 2018 AGA Accounts

5. TRADING SECRETARY'S REPORT – David Spall

David first thanked the school for providing the venue for the AGM and for the facilities for refreshments.

He opened his report with an expression of thanks to all members for submitting their seed and potato orders before the end of October deadline. This is much appreciated and helps with the task of collating the information and sending the order off to the supplier. He apologised to the 7 people whose orders were incomplete which had occurred due to an unforeseen technical hitch. Sorry!

David thanked Mike Hubbard for the tremendous work he has undertaken in “Transforming” the Trading Hut with new shelving and updating it with “self-serve” facilities and providing much more room for customers inside the shop area. This has been achieved at no cost to the Association.

He then went on to thank the volunteers who assisted with the very large delivery of over 120 bags of compost, several sacks of potatoes and other supplies for the shop. As a result of the , valuable help on the day, the work was completed within a couple of hours rather than the several hours it would normally have taken.

The Trading hut will reopen Sunday 4th March. It has been restocked with compost, grow more, a range of fertilisers and all other key garden/allotment requirements. David drew attention to the difference in the composition of the *Clover Compost* and the *Professional Compost* which is priced at only £1 in difference. Our supplier has advised that *growing* with the Professional Compost is guaranteed!

Peat free compost also remains available for purchase.

David responded to a question about netting – Is any available from the hut that will deter Pidgeon's from eating the seedlings? David confirmed that a range of netting is available for purchase from the Trading Hut.

6. SECRETARY'S REPORT – Keith Biggs

The Chairman then introduced Pauline Hubbard who presented the Secretary's report on behalf of Keith Biggs.

- In his report Keith expressed deepest regret at the sad loss of our Vice Chairman, Peter Dobson, who was also the site representative at Cedar Avenue. Peter had done a considerable amount of work for the Association and achieved a good deal of progress at the Cedar Avenue allotment site. His wife Sheila continues with her allotment at Cedar Avenue.
- Many thanks went to Mike Hubbard for the work undertaken at Cedar Avenue and for taking on the role of site representative. There are no plots currently available at Cedar Avenue and a waiting list is now in place.
- Many thanks also went to Adrian Ford for work at the Lawton Road site and to John Nixon at for his work and support at the Talke Road site. Only ¼ plot remains vacant at Talke Road.
- Pauline expressed thanks to Keith Biggs for his work at Coronation Avenue. Mike Smith was thanked for offering to take up the role of temporary site representative at Coronation Avenue which currently has no vacant plots.
- Keith expressed thanks to Pauline Hubbard for her work in developing the Web Site which has been expanded to give more information and photographs about our events and the Annual Show. It also now gives electronic access to our range of forms and documents including our rules and regulations. Members were encouraged to contact Pauline if they had ideas about what they would like to see on the web site.

To view the web site, go to <http://www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk/>

- Thanks, was given to the range of people who assisted with the organisation of the Annual Show held on 2 September 2017. The produce displayed was of a high standard with a significant increase in entrants.
- Maintenance standards have improved at all sites. At Lawton Road a new path has been laid stretching from the gate to the toilet/tool store, provided using funds from our maintenance budget. Two new sections of palisade security fencing at Lawton Rd have been erected which were paid for from the Town Council Budget.
- On behalf of the Association, Pauline thanked Keith for the sterling work that he has undertaken in securing grant funding for the Accessibility Raised Beds Project. The amounts secured are reported above, under the Treasurers report. Wain homes have indicated that they will provide funds in April 2018 and there are other firms that Keith has contacted, that we wait to hear from.
- The grants have been used to commence the first 4 raised beds at Lawton Road which are now in place. They will shortly be filled with Vegetable soil and have paving installed around them. An order will be placed at the end of February, by the Town Council, for the sleepers required for the raised beds at the other allotment sites. Construction work will be undertaken in stages. Once Lawton Rd is complete, we will concentrate on Cedar Avenue followed by Talke Rd. Individual plot preparation can commence at any time that help is available.
- A huge thank you went to the teams of volunteers who have, along with Colin and Tom Cartledge, helped on several occasions with the heavy work of weeding, digging and the construction of the Raised Beds.

7. MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT – Hilary Robinson

Hilary reported we currently have around 200+ members, this fluctuates a little up/down during the year and that about 1/3 of our membership are not allotment holders.

8. PRESIDENTS ADDRESS – Derek Hough

Derek introduced Councillor Jane Smith and welcomed her as the Town Council representative for the AGA.

Derek reflected on the 2017 growing season; a cold and wet winter and rain which started in July 2017 which continues. He also referred to the impact of global warming.

He thanked the Officers of the Association for their hard work throughout the year. He referred to the Annual Show and the compliment from the Mayor of Cheshire East, Councillor Arthur Moran, that the produce was the best he had seen at all the shows he had visited. We will look forward to welcoming the New Major, Councillor Lesley Smetham, to our next show In September 2018.

Derek also thanked Bob Cliffe for his tremendous help and all his hard work. Bob has previously sourced and delivered quantities of materials at no cost to the association and has recently delivered a large quantity of top soil ready for the raised beds project.

9. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Derek Hough confirmed that all current officers were willing to stand. He sought any further nominations from the floor for all the positions and those of Vice Chair and Show Secretary.

The following were elected

President	Derek Hough
Chairman	Adrian Ford
Vice Chair	Pauline Hubbard
Treasurer	David Pitt
Secretary	Keith Biggs
Trading Secretary	David Spall
Membership Secretary	Hilary Robinson

The position of show secretary remains vacant. Derek requested that anyone wishing to take up the roll please contact the Secretary.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10.1 Change to AGA Rules and Constitution

The Chairman drew attention to a rule change of the AGA Rules and Constitution that needed to be reported and ratified at the AGM.

The following change to Rule 2 was agreed:

The Association manages the four allotment sites in Alsager for the Alsager Town Council. It collects rents from plot holders, allocates plots to prospective tenants and monitors the standard of plots. It organises regular maintenance and improvements at the sites using the annual maintenance budget provided from our rental payments to the Council.

10.2 Assets of the AGA

Derek Hough reported that the Town Council Asset manager has raised the issue of ownership of allotment assets and issues of Health and Safety. The Asset manager is to meet with the AGA Treasurer, David Pitt.

11. CLOSE OF MEETING

The meeting closed at 9pm.

Members were invited partake in the excellent refreshments provided by David Spall and his wife. A variety of seed and potatoes were on sale.