

Committee Meeting 10.00 am Saturday 16th September 2023 - Minutes

- Present:** Ken Fawcitt (KF), Liz Bennett (LB), Chris Hodgeson (CH), Lesley Greenwood (LG), Dorothy Robson (DR), Tony Robson (TR), Mark Fuller (MF).
- Apologies:** Sara Goodman (SG).
- Previous minutes:** The minutes of the previous meeting, August 2023, were agreed as being a true record, however software issues are currently preventing uploading of these minutes.
- Chair's report:** Many areas of the site have been strimmed including the wildflower area on the North site. Plans for the wildflower area for next year need to be discussed before the spring.
- Membership update:** LG advised: **Waiting list** – 45 currently on the waiting list. 3 plots currently empty and being offered. There are several plots requiring attention and the plot holders will be notified.
- Secretary's report:** CH advised: **Freemen Lease** – following discussions with the Triangle Allotments (over the Metro lines from the North site) and other Wartime Allotments, the best option for moving forward at present appears to be a move to becoming a 'Company Limited by Guarantee (Ltd.). This should be achievable by the Freeman's 15th October deadline and at minimal cost to the association. **Break-ins** – There have been more break ins and damage to property and produce on the South Site, if you have experienced this please notify the Police directly. **Allotment Show** – unfortunately the association were unable to physically support this year's Urban Green Newcastle Allotment show with a stall on 15/16 September, but hope to do so in future. **Sunflower competition** – due to other commitments Judging has yet to take place but should be carried out shortly.
- Website:** LB advised: Nothing to report, still investigating how to make the website more secure.
- Financial report:** DR advised: **Account balances** – all healthy, however the association currently owes back rent as the last biannual rent payment was made in June of 2022. This is due to the move from Urban Green to the Freeman, and further delays since arising from wording of the new lease.
- Trading hut:** CH advised: **Sales** – Produce sales have been very good thanks to the polytunnel and Frank Snowden. The volunteers who turn out and help at the Trading Hut with the produce sales on Sunday mornings have been a great help and also deserve our thanks. **Stock order** – a request to order compost and other supplies was discussed and agreed. **Paraffin tank** – disposal of the redundant paraffin tank was discussed and it was agreed that this should be expedited to free up stock space as soon as possible. **Spare gardening tools** – the association has a stock of used gardening tools that have been donated, a date for displaying and making the tools available to members for a small donation was agreed for Sunday 8th October on the North site communal area.
- Buildings/Structures:** MF advised: One greenhouse request from plot 26 has been received and agreed. A revised shed request application from plot 72 has also been received and will be processed shortly.
- Matters Arising:** **Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)** – following discussions with the Freeman and other allotments regarding the pressure to sign the new lease agreements, an EGM has been called for 11.00am on Sunday 17th September at the association's Trading Hut. For the sole purpose of affirming the change of status of the association to a Limited Company. It was agreed by the committee that this is currently the best option but that alternative options should be investigated when time is available after signing of the new lease. KF and CH agreed to meet on 19th September to progress the application in the event that it is approved at the EGM.

Committee Roles and Responsibilities – a discussion took place regarding redistribution and reorganisation of the Membership committee role, after discussion it was agreed to appoint North and South 'Site Managers' and to seek a volunteer to compile and produce the association's newsletter, allowing the membership role to focus on the allocation and management of plots and plot records. **Association Printer and Consumables** – during discussions it was noted that members were printing association documents and paperwork on their own machines. It was agreed that the association purchase a printer and consumables for the Secretary primarily to print any required documents for the association. **NCAA courses** – The Northern Counties Allotment Association are offering courses in allotment management and finance, it was agreed to investigate the availability of the courses for the benefit of all committee members to attend in the future. **CPR Training** – A plot holder has offered CPR training for members, it was agreed to investigate further and to facilitate if possible. **Plot Holder Appeal** – a plot holder is requesting an appeal against a committee decision regarding their plot. They have been advised of the process and they have requested relevant documentation, which has been supplied. **Tree Pruning** – There are oversized trees on the site which require pruning to remain within the terms of the associations lease with the Freeman. It is planned to carry out this work on Sunday 1st October and seek help from volunteers to clear the pruned material

Next meeting: The next meeting is scheduled for Saturday 7th October at 10.00am.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 12.10 pm.