

Little Moor Allotments Committee Meeting 30 May 2024

Present – Lesley G, Chris H, Dorothy R, Tony R, Liz B

Apologies – Ken F, Sara G, Peter C

Review of Actions from previous meeting

- Chris has emailed the Council again for a breakdown of costs re legal/surveyor fees but has had no reply. So the action is carried over. Will chase again and also discuss with West Jesmond Allotments **Action – Chris**
- The offer for coffee grounds from the Café on Newlands Road has now been put in the Newsletter. Closed.
- Open Day in August - we still need a team of people to organise so action is carried over. Chris will do an outline of what needs doing and see if she can get someone interested in leading it. **Action – Chris**
- HMRC re registration. Now waiting for an Activation code, which may have gone to the address we are registered under. Chris will contact David Banks to enquire. **Action– Chris**
- Lease – none of the Allotments have had feedback from the council. As at 30/5, this is till the case so the action is carried over. **ACTION – Chris to continue to pursue.**
- Peter Calver has agreed to take on the role of Building & Structures. His photo needs to go onto the website. He has been asked for one but nothing received – action carried over. **Action – Chris to chase.**
- Personal Data requests – we need to ensure we have the correct emails and phone numbers of members. To do this we need to confirm that we will act in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Chris has done some research and we need a “Privacy Notice” and a Retentions & Disposal Policy. The Committee discussed & agreed it would be appropriate to keep records for up to 3 years after a plot holder has left . We now need to inform members of this. **Action - Chris**
- Plot Signage - Tony is continuing to work on this and will do a walk round with Lesley to prioritise. Action carried over. **Action – Tony, Lesley, Chris**
- Fencing round the site is in disrepair. **Action – Tony & Rob will do a survey to establish how many posts & gates need repair /replacing.** Lesley suggested that, when this is done, a letter be sent to Urban Green and the Council. This would state the effects that a 3 year delay with the Lease has caused in non repair/damage to the fencing. This was accepted as a proposal.
- “Restricted mobility” plots. Tony has looked at alternatives – cost approx. 1 plastic bunker type shed for £350+. It was agreed that these would be inappropriate and it would be better to replace them at some point with new, small sheds. In the meantime, we would repaint. One of our plot holders is ex ICI and may be able to get the paint much cheaper. **Action – Tony will talk to him.**

- Drainage – there have been issues across the site. **Action – Chris to speak to Ian to review the Drainage Map. Not yet done so carried over.**
- Frank’s demo on the 20/4 was well attended and enjoyed by all 25 people. Chris took a video but its too big to send and post on the website. Chris will screen shot some of the content and write text so that it can be then posted. **Not yet done so carried over. Action – Chris, Liz**
- Chris will email to plot holders reminding them that they need to go through the formal process when considering a new structure. Completed.

Chair’s report

- Nothing to report

Membership report

- There have been 13 new members since January 2024
- There are 2 people on the waiting list.
- Vacant plots include 57 and 94
- It was noted that several plots are not being cultivated. **Action – Chris to email advising people that if they want/need to give their plot up, they must let us know asap or else they will receive a Warning letter.**
- One member has asked for another bath to be installed on the South side and this has been agreed.
- Following some complaints, Chris will email all members reminding them that dogs must be kept on a leash while on site. **Action - Chris**

Secretary’s Report

- Chris is meeting, in w/c 3/6, with West Jesmond Allotments to discuss
 - Membership of the National Allotments Society
 - Our shared concerns over the Lease and non communication from the Council about the Lease and the rationale for the £1500 Surveyor Fee
 - She will report back any progress. **Action - Chris**
- A member has requested to give up some of her plot. We have approached someone potentially interested but haven’t heard back. Will now approach others. **Action – Tony**
- Mare’s Tail – a number of plots are having problems. Chris has spoken to Frank and he will give a talk re how to treat this. **Date to be advised.**

Communications Report

- Apologies that Mark’s photo is still on the Website as Building & Structures, but this will be replaced when we have Peter’s.

Finance Report

- Current Account - £5077 Savings Account - £ 44,426 earning £44 a month in interest.
- As Interest rates on Savings are going down, we agreed to withdraw £20,000 from the existing savings account and put it into a higher rate account. **Action - Dorothy**

Trading Hut Report

- Plant Sales over the last 4 weeks has brought in £2030!
- Silvergrow peat free compost is increasing in price again. We have been offered a cheaper alternative from our supplier and have agreed to try this out.
- Oil tank is now repaired, photos taken and is up for sale.

Building & Structures Report

- Peter has had 6 requests for structures – 5 of which have been approved so far and are already erected

Matters Arising

- Next Tidy Up Day is Sunday 2 June - Jobs include clearing the Wood chips / tidying raspberry beds and clearing Plots 94 & 57 to get it ready for grassing.
- Urban Green competition. According to their email, one of the criteria will be allotments that are different in some way or have a unique feature. Chris will email members to inform them of this and see if anyone comes forward. **Action – Chris**
- Hiring out strimmers. We discussed the risks associated with this, particularly with the heavier strimmers. Agreed that an assessment be made of a person's suitability to use the equipment and, if we think there are concerns, we will suggest that someone else do it for them (for a fee of £10). We also agreed that we would buy another light weight strimmer to rent out. **Action - Tony**

Next Meeting

- Wednesday 19 June at 7pm – either on the Allotment field or at Treherne Rd, depending on the weather