

Little Moor Allotments Committee Meeting 21 November 2024

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

Apologies – Ken F, Peter C, Sara G

Minutes of October Meeting agreed

Review of Actions from previous meeting

- Re the Lease. The 7 Wartime Allotments have agreed on a Lease and this has been re submitted to the Council and The Freemen. The current uncertainty re Urban Green further complicates the issue as we don't know whether or not the Council want the Wartime Allotments back under their control. **Carried over.**
- Update on plot signage. Work continuing. An updated Site Map is half completed and the rest will be complete asap so that the signs can be done. **Carried over.**
- Re getting a Grant to build additional Restricted Mobility Plots.
 - One of our members has experience of Grant / Bid application and Tony to talk to him to get his support. **Carried over.**
 - 3 possible grants have been identified – the National Allotment Gardens Trust (up to £2k), the Community Gardens Grants (up to £5k) and The Lottery. Dorothy has registered us for a Lottery Grant and we now need to complete the application. Before that can be done we need to draw and cost our designs. We have space for 3 vertical plots, each with own greenhouse and a shared shed. Cost per 6x4 greenhouse approx. £370
 - NOTE - Following discussion, we agreed that if we don't get a grant, we will pay for these from our own funds. **ACTION** – Lesley to look at appropriate sites for free paving stones.
- Re the Pond project - and the need to rent a digger – Chris spoke with her contact but they can't drive it. Hiring a micro digger & driver could cost us between £400 to £600. Lesley spoke with her contact at BT re volunteer resource and they can help, but it would be 2025 and mid week.
 - We discussed wrapping the Pond Project and the Reduced Mobility Plots project into one Grant application
 - We discussed the
 - timing for both projects (the Pond needs to be started asap)
 - lack of resources for both projects
 - **ACTION** – Chris to email members to see if anyone could Project Lead on these and Lesley to contact one of the sites recommended by NHSN for funding on the Pond project.
- The Trading Hut clean & paint project scheduled for Sunday 3 November did not take place. **Carried Over until January.** Also, Lesley to ask CB if he can get the paint. When the Trading Hut has been cleared and painted, we will review the items we need to stock for sale.
- The website has been “tidied up” and some content will be archived early 2025.

- Lesley has reinforced to new members that an application must be made if they want to erect a Greenhouse.
- AGM – date has been set for 4 February 2025.
- Notice Boards – are not being used. Agreed that we would keep them for now and review later. **Carried over.**

Chair's report

- Nothing to report

Membership report

- We have one new member on plot 117.
- Plot 2 will be divided into two plots. It needs clearing before they are let.
- There are 2 people on the waiting list. They will be offered the plots on Plot 2.
- The website link to apply for a plot has been changed from the link to NAWG, which is defunct. Applicants are now directed to apply by email to the Secretary.
- Plot 94 needs to be grassed over in the spring. We have offers of two fruit trees and will buy more to fill the plot.
- Plot 26A to have a pond built. We may have volunteers from BT to help.
- Re applications via the NAWG site not being forwarded to us. The system seems to have broken. We will produce our own banner and use our own website to process applications. **ACTION** – Liz to draft a banner

Secretary's Report

- **Deliveries** – once again the Albemarle gate was blocked by a car so the next load of manure had to be dropped at the Newlands gate.
- We had the same issue again last week when West Jesmond Tree Surgeons tried to drop a load of woodchip and both gate were blocked by inconsiderate drivers. **ACTION** – Chris to write to the council and ask them to paint the white lines on the road to make it more obvious there's no parking
- **Lease** – The 7 Wartime Allotments have agreed on a Lease and this has been re submitted to the Council and The Freemen. The current uncertainty re Urban Green further complicates the issue as we don't know whether or not the Council want the Wartime Allotments back under their control.
- **Restricted Mobility Plots** – the people who have the current restricted mobility plots have been made aware that their rent in future years will be the same as a half plot rent
- **New Restricted Mobility Plots** – work by Rob and Tony will start this week to convert one full allotment to 3 small restricted mobility plots for our older members
- **Fire Complaints** – I've received 2 email complaints from a resident of West Jesmond about the issue of smoke from Little Moor bonfires. I've passed this on to all our members asking people not to have individual bonfires, and if possible,

to use the communal bonfire as Frank is very careful about when he lights it. I suspect we'll hear a lot more about this issue in the coming months

- **Sign** – I've written to Kevin Batey of the Freemen about erecting a sign on the perimeter to let the community and the wider public know who we are. Awaiting an answer
- **Urban Green** – Lesley and I attended a meeting of UG at their office in Jesmond Dene at the invitation of the NAWG members. It was useful to find out why Little Moor were taken off the waiting list for applicants (we were no longer council managed therefore weren't their responsibility)! It was agreed that Ali Coxon would add our names to the list, however he subsequently advised that the Freemen had to agree this first (no response from the Freemen on this subject so far), and we've now been informed that UG is likely to be disbanded.....
- **Waiting List** – still an ongoing problem – see previous topic, so we've decided to fund a banner advertising our own vacancies till a process is put in place
- **Hedge trimming** – Lesley found someone to help Frank with hedge cutting so Sat 23rd November was planned for this (but had to be cancelled due to the bad weather)

Communications Report

Tidy up done. Older material will be archived in January 2025. Some people are still having issues accessing the site. **ACTION** – Liz to discuss with Mat

Finance Report

Current Account £5931 Savings £9560 Long term Deposit £35301

End of year accounts. As a Limited Company we have to complete a CIC34 report which looks onerous. **ACTION** – Dorothy and Liz to contact Connected Voice re how to keep this manageable.

Trading Hut Report

The last day of trading for this year will be 1st December

Building & Structures Report

- Nothing to report

Items for the Newsletter

- 1958 photo
- Update on Urban Green (if there is one)
- Pond Project – explanation, importance, request for volunteers and a Project Lead
- AGM – time, date, venue
- Bonfires
- National Allotment Day (if the 2025 date has been announced)

AOB

- Plot 94 - **ACTION** – Tony to rotate it asap
- Bonfires. See the Secretary's Report. This issue was discussed and we feel that it will not go away. If we are to have communal bonfires only, our Rules would have to be changed and it would be an item for presentation at the AGM.
- AGM Agenda – We discussed having a Speaker attend for interest. **ACTION** – Chris to speak to GH re a 20 minutes presentation on NAS. Also, to look at the previous agenda and circulate it .

Next Committee Meeting – Saturday 4 January 2025 at 10.00 – venue either Ken or Liz's house.