

Little Moor Allotments Committee Meeting 25 October 2024

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

Apologies – Ken F, Peter C, Sara G

Minutes of September Meeting agreed

Review of Actions from previous meeting

- A meeting was held on the 19 October with 7 local Allotments represented. The Lease was discussed and it was generally agreed to accept as much of the Council's version as possible BUT several clauses did have to be changed. The Council will be contacted re these changes. **Carried over.**
- Re Personal Data requests and whether we need to be registered with the ICO. Still awaiting a response? **Carried over.**
- Update on plot signage. Work continuing. All the signs are done. An updated Site Map will be produced before fitting the signs. **Carried over.**
- Re getting a Grant to build additional Restricted Mobility Plots. One of our members has experience of Grant / Bid application and Tony was to talk to him to get his support. **Carried over.**
- Also, Dorothy was to research grant possibilities. This had been done and 2 possibles had been identified – the National Allotment Gardens Trust (up to £2k) and the Community Gardens Grants (up to £5k). **ACTION** –
 - Chris will download the application forms
 - Dorothy will also research the Lottery Grants and estimate costs
 - Tony will measure existing sheds/ greenhouse to estimate costs for the new plots
- Chris has calculated the amount that needs to be “ring fenced” to cover outstanding rents is £11k.
- Lesley contacted Kevin Batey, Town Moor Steward to see what help, if any, they could provide with our Pond project. They weren't able to offer any help and don't have a digger we can borrow. Kevin did suggest we may need permission to install a pond but we have checked the Lease and there's nothing in there to suggest that. **ACTION** - We will need to rent a digger – Chris to speak with a contact to see if they can drive it.
- Current Reduced Mobility Plots - Chris has not yet emailed those affected re the rent reduction from March 2025 and detail planned maintenance. **Carried over**
- The Trading Hut clean & paint project is scheduled for Sunday 3 November at 11.00. **ACTION** – Lesley to ask CB if he can get the paint.

Chair's report

- Nothing to report

Membership report

- We currently have 4 people on the waiting list AND 1 new plot holder
- Re applications via the NAWG site not being forwarded to us. This has been reported but there is still no resolution. The system seems to have broken, and no one is taking responsibility. We may need to produce our own banner and use our own website to process applications. **Carried over**

Secretary's Report

- Manure - Three lots of manure were delivered, one on the south side and two on the North. Unfortunately, the top gate beside Albemarle was blocked by a car, so two loads had to be dropped at the Newlands gate. All gone so a further 2 loads have been ordered for delivery Wed 30th Oct, one for the south and one for the north at the Albemarle gate. Suggest putting a sign up beside the Albemarle gate to deter people from parking there.
- Lease – Seven committee members from Littlemoor, Triangle, West Jesmond, Highbury South and Highbury North met up on Sat 19th Oct to discuss the lease. The general principle was that we'd accept as much of the council's version as possible, but some clauses had to be changed.
- NHSN – The Natural History Society of Northumbria have been in touch to advise they have a project going on to involve as many people as possible in the Gosforth Wild Web area in noticing and enjoying nature. This was discussed and we feel we don't have the resources to help them at the moment.
- Confirmation Statement - The treasurer and the Secretary met up to file the Confirmation Statement with HMRC. We've advised that nothing has changed with the information we provided when we first became incorporated
- UG Survey - A member of the allotments forwarded the link to the Urban Green Newcastle's Parks and Allotments 2024 survey which is seeking people's views on the current and future set up of parks and allotments in Newcastle. We need to collate our views and ideas and feedback by 9th Nov.
- Sunflower and Pumpkin Competition – The tallest Sunflower measured 8'2" and the heaviest pumpkin weighed 10kg. There were only 2 entrants in the pumpkin competition, possibly reflecting the poor weather we've had this year

Communications Report

- Nothing to report. The website needs a "tidy" and update. **ACTION** – Liz to do

Finance Report

- Balances are as follows~
 - Current Account £6,811
 - Savings Account £9,552

- High Interest Account £35,234
- Connected Voice have been contacted and will do our Audit again this year at a very competitive price.

Trading Hut Report

- Sale of produce stopped mid-October. Despite the poor weather this year, we have had a successful year in terms of sales. Our thanks go to Frank Snowden for all his efforts.
- Potatoes and onion sets have been ordered for sale in the New Year. Delivery will be in January/February
- Opening hours will reduce from Sunday 3rd Nov from 2 hours to 1 hour. The hut will be open from 10am to 11am

Building & Structures Report

- Nothing to report
- **ACTION** – Lesley will reinforce to new members that an application must be made if they want to erect a Greenhouse.

Matters Arising

- AGM – date sent for 4 February 2025. **ACTION** – Chris to contact the Venue to see if we can book this and, if that date is busy, another date that week
- Site Plan – our current version is out of date. **ACTION** – Chris, Tony, Lesley to walk around the site and re draw a map – planned for Tues 29/10 at 10.30 – which we will then hand on to someone to produce a graphic.
- Notice Boards – are not being used. Agreed that we would keep them for now and review later. **Carried over.**
- When the Trading Hut has been cleared and painted, we will review the items we need to stock for sale. **Carried over.**
- In terms of resource to do the many things we want to do... BT have previously contacted us to see if we can support their employee volunteer day programmes. **ACTION** – Lesley will ask BT for available dates in 2025.
- It's been a while since we produced a Newsletter. To help with this we will add an "Items for Newsletter" to the monthly agenda. **ACTION** – Chris to include in Agenda template.

Next Committee Meeting – Thursday 21 November October at 7pm at Liz's house.

