

## Little Moor Allotments Committee Meeting 1 March 2025

Present – Philip B, Chris H, Dorothy R, Tony R, Sara G, Liz B,

Apologies – none

Minutes of January Meeting agreed.

### Review of Actions from previous meeting

- Re the Lease. Signed by The Freeman and now with the Council. Hopefully we will get resolution soon. **Carried over.**
- Update on plot signage and Site Map. Work continuing. At the 2026 AGM, we will table a proposal to completely renumber the Site so that it “flows” and makes more sense. **Carried over.**
- Re getting a Grant to build additional Restricted Mobility Plots and build a Pond.
  - We have made provision for these in our Accounts but cannot apply for a grant because of the situation with the Lease (same with the Pond project) **Carried Over**
  - Work has started on the Pond project and good progress made (thanks to the BT volunteers). Further work will be done by the BT Volunteers on the 11/3. **Carried Over until completion.**
- The Trading Hut clean & paint project. There are approx. 20 BT volunteers visiting the site in May. **ACTION** – Lesley to contact BT to see if this is a possible project for them.
- Notice Boards – are not being used. Agreed that we would keep the one by the Trading Hut but remove the rest. **ACTION** – Chris to email members to advise.
- Painting white lines on Moorfield by the gate to make it more obvious it’s a no parking area. **ACTION** – Chris to speak to a Plot Holder who had Council contacts.
- End of year accounts. **DONE**, emailed to all Plot holders and posted on the website.

### Chair’s report

- Nil Report but a formal thanks from the Committee to Phil for stepping forward and taking on this role.
- **ACTION** – Chris to email Ken to transfer his LMAA Chair email address to Phil. Also, to delete his access to the LMAA database
- **ACTION** – Phil to email LB with a phot for the website.
- **ACTION** – Chris H to remove KF from Companies House and replace with PB.

### Membership Report

- We have 1 person on the Waiting List, and they are being shown a plot w/c 3/3.
- There are 2 plots available and a further 2 or 3 will be available soon due to current plot holders giving up / moving area.
- A banner “plots available” will be erected w/c 3/3.

## Secretary's Report

- **AGM** - The AGM was held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> Feb at South North Cricket Club. There were about 40 people in attendance, including the committee, so not a great turn-out given the number of plots we have on the site. It was a very positive meeting with some excellent interaction with the members who did attend. An email has gone out, thanking people for their attendance.
- **Lease** - The most recent version of the lease has been approved by the Freeman and has now gone to the Council solicitors for approval. This assumes that the Council will still want the freemen to be responsible for the wartime allotments, however, the Council are seeking feedback from all stakeholders about the new setup so this situation may change.
- **Restricted Mobility Plots and Pond** - The restricted mobility plots are now taking shape on plot 25, due to massive assistance from Rob, Tony and Iain, plus 14 volunteers from BT who came on site on Wed 19<sup>th</sup> Feb. We are indebted to all of them for their hard work on the raised beds.  
Also, thanks to Frank, Tony, Eric Styan and the BT volunteers, for their help in digging the pond out. We are hoping to get the pond liner installed on 11<sup>th</sup> March when we have a second lot of BT volunteers on site. We are also looking at costs for fencing around the pond.
- **Seed Swap Event** – Chris H attended the seed swap event in Whitley Bay on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> Feb. It was very busy but there were plenty of seeds available to buy for 50p per packet (or free if you had seeds you could swap), many of them heritage varieties.
- **Hedge Trimming** -Hedge trimming on the north side of the allotment took place on 2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Thanks to both Ronnie Malia and Frank Snowden for wielding the hedge trimmer and to all the people who turned up to help move the hedge trimmings to the dead hedge.
- **Gates & Fencing** – Chris H obtained a quote for the gate repair and a fence around the pond from one of the contractors who does work for UG/council. It appears from talking to Tony and Iain that what we've been quoted for, for the gate is not suitable. The fence around the pond is very expensive. This was discussed at the committee meeting - see Matters Arising.
- **Topsoil for Restricted Mobility Raised Beds** – Chris H has worked out we need about 18 cubic metres of soil for the beds which is about 23.5 tonnes. This was discussed at the meeting – see Matters Arising

## Trading Hut Report

- Sales have picked up in the last few weeks with compost being the biggest seller.
- Summer trading hours start on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March from 10am – 12pm
- We need more volunteers to work in the Trading Hut on a Sunday morning, as we've lost a couple of volunteers due to health issues and moving out of the area. **ACTION** – Chris to email the members requesting help.

## Communications Report

- Nil report

## Finance Report

- Balances as follows.
  - Current Account £5.5k
  - Instant Savings Account £19.5k
  - 32 Days Notice Savings Account £35.5k
- 2025/6 Rents are being paid. Any outstanding will be chased after 10 March.
- **ACTION** – Dorothy to remove KF from the Current A/C and replace with PB after 10 March
- **ACTION** – Dorothy to discuss with KF re the “SumUp” card machine so that monthly payments can come direct from LMAA account. And investigate any benefit of transferring to “Zettle” and using a pre-paid machine.

## Building and Structures Report

- One enquiry made and the requisite form sent.

## Items for the Newsletter

- Volunteers needed for the Trading Hut
- Reminder that peat free compost is for sale at the Trading Hut
- Information re the volunteer arrangement we have with BT and their employees.
- Update on the Pond and Restricted Mobility plot projects
- KF resigning as LMAA Chair and PB taking over.
- Notification re the type of things that should not be added to the dead hedge.
- Notification re Rat poison and the recent legal change **ACTION** – Sara to check the exact legal situation before posting.

## Matters Arising

- AGM – the February meeting went well. In order to get more members attending we will consider inviting a speaker and also look at possible alternative venues. **ACTION** – Lesley and Chris
- Fencing and Gates – these were discussed, and it was agreed that we would get 3 prices for the Ilford Road fencing complete replacement and for fencing around the pond. **ACTION** – Chris to give Tony the phone numbers of those she has spoken to so far and Tony to get others.
- Topsoil for the raised beds in the Restricted Mobility plots. This was discussed at length, focusing on how much would be needed and the possible price. Our original plan to use the soil from digging out the pond could not be actioned because there was mares’ tail in the soil. Whilst expensive to but, it was put to the vote and the Committee (all but one) agreed that we should go ahead and do all the raised beds. **ACTION** – Chris H and Lesley G to get 3 quotes and proceed asap with the cheapest.

- CIC – Dorothy has emailed Connected Voice and has a contact there who will help with our transition to becoming a CIC as agreed at the AGM. **ACTION** – Dorothy to progress
- NCAA v NAS membership. Our membership of NCAA is up for renewal at the end of March. The advantages / disadvantages of LMAA being a member of either Association was discussed, and we decided that we would probably get more out of NAS membership. **ACTION** – Lesley will contact NAS to check whether all members will get access to their magazine, what is included in & the cost of their Annual Insurance (compared to our current provider Zurich). Depending on the answer to these Qs, we will move to membership of NAS.
- BT Volunteers – due again on the 11 March and in May and their contribution has been highly valued and much appreciated.
- Lease – with a new lease imminent, we need to align with its content, and this means we now need to turn our attention to
  - a new Tenancy Agreement with Plot Holders
  - a review of our policy templates (we should get draft templates to help us with this from NCAA as part of our current membership)
  - our existing Rules and Regulations
  - **ACTION** – once we have the new Lease, this work will be shared between Committee members

#### Next Meeting

- Date of next meeting Saturday 29 March 9.00 at LB's house.