

Little Moor Allotments Committee meeting 3 May 2025

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

No Apologies

Minutes of March 29th Meeting agreed.

Review of Actions from previous meeting

CARRIED OVER

- Re the Lease. Still with the Council awaiting signature. **CARRIED OVER.**
- Restricted Mobility Plots and Pond. Dorothy to order the Seating. **CARRIED OVER until completion.**
- The Trading Hut clean & paint project.
 - BT volunteers visiting the site in May. BT need a Risk Assessment completed and sight of our H&S policy. **ACTION** – Lesley to get samples of both from NAS & Chris to complete.
 - Re BT Volunteers, other possible projects include painting of sheds on the Restricted Mobility Plots and/or painting outside of Trading Hut. **ACTION** – Tony to get a wire brush and remove the flaky paint from the Trading Hut.
- Remove KF from Companies House and replace with PB. Philip and Dorothy will meet to complete this. **CARRIED OVER.**

ACTIONS

- NCAA v NAS membership.
 - Chris checked the website, and we need to pay the £3.50 per member up front (approx. £600 for LMAA). **ACTION** – Chris & Dorothy to meet to action. David Banks at NCAA Northeast will be informed when their renewal is received.
- Lease – with a new lease imminent, we need to align with its content, and this means we now need -
 - a new Tenancy Agreement with Plot Holders
 - a review of our policy templates
 - our existing Rules and Regulations (Ali Coxon is circulating the Councils standardised R&R so we'll look at these too)
 - **ACTION** – itemise for discussion at the next Committee meeting how we will share this work between Committee members.
- Available plots – Chris and Lesley will decide which are split-able. We will record in R&R that plots will be split *only* lengthwise when creating 2 half plots. Also, we will offer only half plots to new tenants.

Chair's report

Nil report

Membership Report

- We have had 5 new members since end March.

- There are 11 people on the waiting list but two of those have not replied with their contact details.
- There are 3 plots available - One has been viewed but there are no takers. The previous occupant has been asked to tidy it up, which is being done. There are 2 full plots where members have asked to downsize to 1/2.

There are a number of plots that have not been maintained, and members will receive warning letters.

Secretary's Report

Restricted Mobility Plots and Pond

- The restricted mobility plots are almost complete. Greenhouses have arrived, will be erected soon and the first 2 tenants have taken over. We have one allotment free but no takers from the membership. If we can't let it, we'll cover the beds and wait until we have someone needing the plot.
- The pond is finished and once the sweet peas have grown up the fence and the pond plants taken hold, it will be a fabulous resource for the local wildlife. The area still needs to be grassed, and a seat purchased to allow people to sit and enjoy the area. (See previous minute for the action re this)
- Thanks to Rob Hodgson for all the work he's done on both projects, and to Frank Snowden, Tony Robson, Tony Leneghan and Iain McKinnis for their support.

Gates & Fencing

- The middle double gate has now been repaired so we can accept deliveries there again. We are still waiting for the lower gate to be repaired as it needs a special wheel fitted to make it easier to open and close.

Demos

- Frank S gave 2 demos, one on Saturday 12th and the other on Sunday 13th April for those people wanting to learn tips and techniques for growing veg and fruit. They were well attended, and the Trading Hut saw a surge in sales of fertilisers afterwards.

Tidy Up Day

- The tidy up day held on Saturday 26th April was a great success with a lot of people turning up to help. It's amazing how much can get done within just a couple of hours. Thanks to everyone who gave up their time to help us on a beautiful sunny morning. It is very much appreciated, and the site is starting to really benefit from people's efforts.

NAWG

- The NAWG monthly meeting was held on Wed 9th April. Ali Coxon, the allotment officer for the council (previously Urban Green), was in attendance and advised that the Newcastle Allotment Show is to go ahead in Exhibition Park on 14th September. Info on how to apply will be provided soon.
- He also advised that the sites transferring across to the Freeman will be added back into the allotment application process, which will save us having to advertise vacancies in future.

- Details about the unsafe willow tree on the perimeter of the allotment on Moorfield were sent to Ali to support the notification previously sent direct to the council. So far, we've heard nothing back, so will be writing to local councillors to express concern.

Polytunnel Theft

- We are sad to note that Frank Snowden, who does such a fantastic job growing seedlings to sell to plot holders, had 4 stock tomato plants stolen from the polytunnel on the night of Saturday 26th April.

Trading Hut Report

- The Trading Hut has had a great start to the summer season with compost being the main seller. Fertilisers have also been good sellers since Frank's talks and lawnmowers have been going out due to the lovely weather.
- We also started selling seedlings in early May - 2 weeks earlier than normal because of the beautiful weather.

Communications Report

- Nil report

Finance Report

- £6,802 Current Account Balance
- £21,617 Instant Access Saver
- £35,669 32-day Notice Account
- Spend to date on Pond and Restricted Mobility Plots stands at £3909 (with £172 still owing)
- The Giff Gaff account has now been transferred to the Treasurer and the monthly charge of £6 will now be paid direct out of LMA funds. **ACTION** – Dorothy - remove KF from the bank accounts and add PB and advise Companies House of this.

Building and Structures Report

- There have been 3 applications, all approved (1) Moving a greenhouse (2) erecting a new shed and (3) erecting a polytunnel.

Items for the Newsletter

- Article re Frank S's demos. **ACTION** – Chris to write.
- Article on the Pond **ACTION** – Lesley to write.
- Benefits of NAS membership
- The work of the BT Volunteers
- Sale of Plants
- Rationale and update on the Restricted Mobility Plots **ACTION** – Chris to write.
- 2025 LMAA Open Day
- "Date for the diary" – City Show
- Update on the new Lease

Matters Arising

- Signage – PB has sourced the sign, all agreed with the design, and it will now be erected.
- Polytunnel Theft – see Secretary's Report
- Open Day 2025 – an email has been sent to all members; The theme will focus on Health & Wellbeing to reflect the NAS initiatives. We will submit a Notice to the NAS to advise them of our open Day and help raise the profile. **ACTION** – Lesley?
- Our move to becoming a CIO - Charitable Incorporated Organisation.
 - The transfer will need an Extraordinary General Meeting to approve.
ACTION – Phil to check registration requirements and what policies etc we would need to change (if any). **ACTION** – Phil and Chris to meet on Friday 16/5 to discuss further.
 - Outstanding question - if we move to become a CIO, can we claim Gift Aid on Trading Hut purchases?

AOB

- Updating the Plot Map. Previously done on PowerPoint but difficult to keep up to date with the constant plot changes. **ACTION** - Lesley to send to PB to see if PP is the best software for this purpose.

Date of next meeting – Saturday 31 May at 10.00 at the Allotments