

5<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Minutes of a meeting of the Witney Allotments Association (WAA) Committee held on 24<sup>th</sup> April 2023 at 6:30pm at Mary's house.**

Item	Discussion	Action
1	Apologies Esther Leach	
1A	Introductions and welcome to new committee members were made by BJ Julie Charlesworth - Deputy Chair Tanya Mulraine- Allen – Treasurer Peter Lismer – Deputy Treasurer	
2	Minutes of the last meeting The minutes of the meeting held on the 6 <sup>th</sup> March were accepted as a true record of the meeting. Committee members also confirmed that there were no issues with the minutes produced from the AGM meeting held on 3 <sup>rd</sup> April. These will be ratified at the next AGM in 2024.	
3	Matters arising There were no matters arising.	
4	Treasurers Report To allow TA to have access to the account, TA and DN need to visit the bank to add new signatures to the account.  A brief update from the former Treasurer advised that the balance on the account as at 24 <sup>th</sup> April was £13,006.99.  At the time of the meeting there were only 20 plots that had not paid their fees for 2023.	TA, DN
5	Waiting list and available plots At present there are 198 people on the waiting list with no plots available.	
6	Site Reps Reports a. Hailey Road BB advised that all plots are let and the updated tenant list has been sent to the Waiting List coordinator and Secretary. There are two plots, 18A and 20, that are rather unkempt and BB will email them. BB advised that the new security gate had been fitted today and he had contacted AW at WTC to ensure that the new gate was set to the original code. The tenant of the plot causing the most concern has started to move rubbish and reorganise his plot after indicating his willingness to comply with the tenancy termination letter. He has until 12 <sup>th</sup> May to clear his plot. Given the plot holder's reluctance to visit the site (because of his stated fear for his welfare), the option of a half plot on another site was discussed but it will only be offered with a three-month rolling contract so that if things	BB         BJ

	<p>deteriorate again, plot termination will be easier. BJ to write a three-month rolling clause to be signed by the plot holder.</p> <p>b. Lakeside MK reported that one full and one half plot had been given up but both have been reallocated. The community plot is causing slight concern so MK will speak to the person who was keen to establish it to see if they still want it kept and whether they are able to improve it. MK is contacting local schools about two raised beds and the Scouts have offered to clear both beds. MK is also going to have a walk around the site and contact any plot holders of plots that do not appear to be being worked. DB expressed serious concerns about flooding on the Lakeside site already and this will only be made worse by the building of new homes recently agreed on land next to the site. It was discussed about whether the WAA could be more proactive in voicing concerns and how we could bring such pressure to bear. As the planning has been approved on appeal it would seem that the WAA would not be able to change or stop the development. DB reported that the fence has been vandalised by someone cutting through it, rolling it back and forming a new entrance. The additional small gate to the site is also being left open, probably as a form of protest. DB advised that the main security gate could not be easily opened or closed but that he had made some remedial repairs to solve the problem.</p> <p>c. Newland The new mower is working well. RT reported a minor dispute about a fence between two half plot holders that have adjoining plots. It was agreed that the site warden would ask them to talk to one another to try to sort the situation. The plot belonging to a tenant with serious health problems has not had much work carried out on it even though the plot holder's wife has confirmed they wish to keep the plot on. The WAA are prepared to help out and the site warden will contact Steve Stokes (WAA maintenance) to prune the tree and cut back the buddleia bush. There may be a nest in the shed, in which case, this may have to wait until after the nesting season.</p> <p>d. Windrush Place There are a couple of unkempt plots that are to be contacted by BJ. A plot holder who has recently relinquished his plot had a brand new rotavator for sale which BJ purchased for £100. It will be stored in the shed at Windrush Place but will be for all sites to use. Last summer's hot weather has underlined the importance of water ecology and consumption and BJ is looking to get more water butts around the communal shed so that the site is collecting as much rainwater as possible. It was suggested to contact Angus at WTC to see whether they can help by providing old bins that could be adapted to make water butts.</p>	<p>BJ</p> <p>MK</p> <p>MK</p> <p>MK</p> <p>BF</p> <p>BF</p> <p>BJ</p>
7	<p>Items for Discussion</p> <p>1. Independent judging of Best Plot competition Shilton and Carterton Allotment Association have contacted the WAA to ask if we would do an independent judgement of their best plots. BJ and MK have agreed to carry this out on 1<sup>st</sup> July and will ask them to reciprocate. BB has a useful document that has criteria for judging plots and it was agreed to use this as our guide.</p>	

	<p>2. Offer of manure (Standlake) The WAA has been contacted by Sara-Jane Sear (07470 755065) who has manure available for plot holders to collect from her in Standlake. Plot holders need to call in advance to arrange the collection time. JC to add details to website.</p> <p>3. Payment for repairs to parking spaces at Lakeside BJ will speak to WTC to ask if they can arrange for the repairs to be carried out.</p> <p>4. Communications between Committee decisions and tenants via minutes being displayed regularly on noticeboards - who is responsible on each site</p> <p>5. Is something amiss with group emails as some are not being received (MK) JC offered to help keep the website up to date with more news and hopefully a system that will advise tenants that new items have been added to the website. BJ to introduce her to PD (WAA Webmaster). Subsequent to the meeting PD advised that the website would not be able to send out updates to tenants.</p>	<p>JC</p> <p>BJ</p> <p>BJ</p>
8	<p>Structure Applications: Newland Plot 19B Tool store and fruit cage Newland Plot 24A Shed and polytunnel All structures were within agreed limits so were approved by the committee.</p> <p>It was noted that the structure application form on the website is not the up-to-date version. BJ will add the correct form to the website.</p>	<p>BJ</p>
9	<p>Any Other Business AW (WTC) has advised that gate installations are due to commence on 24<sup>th</sup> April at Lakeside, Newland and Hailey Road.</p> <p>BJ advised the committee about proposed above-inflation increases in plot fees by WTC and it was agreed that the committee would have a separate meeting to discuss this as it had already been agreed that plot fees will be going up on Windrush Place from 2024 to reflect the excellent facilities enjoyed by tenants on that site. BJ to go back to WTC to advise.</p> <p>St Mary's School in Witney is starting to do more growing and, as there is still £150.00 available from the WAA funds allocated for supporting local schools, MK will contact them to offer support. West Witney Primary School may also be looking for more investment and DB will contact them to investigate.</p> <p>BJ to send all site reps his welcome letter that he uses for all new tenants that includes the WAA Terms and Conditions and the site Terms and Conditions.</p> <p>The sending of weed letters and correspondence to tenants who are not working their plots was discussed. Weed letters are to go out by email from the Secretary's email. Site reps are to send the name, plot number and any details to be included to the Secretary who will then send out the email. The site rep will be bcc'd into the email. If the tenant doesn't take the appropriate actions the next letter is from the Chairperson.</p>	<p>BJ</p> <p>MK</p> <p>DB</p> <p>BJ</p>

	Final notice / eviction letters are also to be sent out by the Chair. Again, site reps will send the name, plot number and any details to be included. The site rep will be bcc'd into the email and will also send the email as a hard-copy letter that has to be signed for.	
10	Date of Next Meeting The next meeting will be held on 5 <sup>th</sup> June 2023 at 6.30pm at Barry's house.	

*B Jessel*

B Jessel

Chairman of the Witney Allotments Association (WAA)