

Tudorville Allotments Association

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 25th October 2017, 7.30 pm

At Tudorville Community Centre

MINUTES

1. **Apologies:** Tim Waters, Dave Merritt, Dylan Stokes, Phil Angus, Bryan Bunting, Tony Hearne, Glyn Jenkins, Graham John, John Walters (Committee Member), Peter Reynolds.

Attending: (Members): Martin Barr (Chairman), John Taylor (Secretary), Phil Jenkinson (Treasurer) Avril Fuller (Committee Member), Bernard Staite, Jean Staite, Paul Bailey, James Weatherhead, Lynn Howells (Committee Member), Fred Ellis, Phil Wheeldon, Marilyn Reynolds, Peter Wade, Pauline Hemmingway, Maurice Thompson, Jan Parsons, Jonathan Billinger, Tom Courtney (Committee Member), Graham Carter, Tim Ward.

2. **Minutes of the Last Meeting:** The minutes had been displayed on the notice board for several months. The minutes had also been circulated to members by email giving details of the AGM.

3. **Approval of the Minutes:** It was proposed by Tom Courtney and seconded by Peter Wade and unanimously accepted by all members attending that the minutes be adopted as a true record.

4. **Matters Arising:** There were no matters arising from the minutes.

5. **Chairman Report:**

A very quiet year again with no major projects of any kind. I am glad to report that the association is in good heart.

We have had a few members come and go this season so to the leavers' good luck and thank you for your contribution to the Association and to our new members enjoy your produce. Again (the records stuck) equipment and grass cutting have been an issue off and on through the season. I would again implore members to respect the machines provided especially cleaning after use and do not cut more than your own little patch to spread the load and thanks to the many that do.

Finally thank you to the Committee for their unstinting support which has kept the Allotments in such good order.

6. **Secretary's Report 2017**

The committee have met three times this year on the 2nd November, 12th June and 18th September.

My report will concentrate on administrative matters that your Committee has deliberated on this year.

Following last year's AGM we were asked to set in place a procedure to allow members to have a second plot. This is now in place and was fully reported in the Committee Meeting minutes. Briefly members wishing to have a second plot must put their request to me in writing as Secretary. I will then add their name to the waiting list. The Committee further agreed that there should be a limit of 180 sq. metres on the total plot holding of any one member. This will not apply retrospectively.

The Committee decided that we should no longer be members of the National Allotment Society. This was as a result of a further uplift in the membership fee. The Treasurer will comment about this further in his report.

The date of the AGM is now the last Wednesday of October as was agreed at last year's AGM. The Constitution and Rules have therefore been amended to this effect. A copy of the revised Rules and Constitution has been placed on the Notice Board.

A matter which came up during the year was the removal of chattels of members giving up their plots. Clearly when membership of the Tudorville Allotments Association ceases it is up to the outgoing member to remove their chattels and harvest any produce. In most instances the outgoing member is able to sell his chattels – shed, greenhouse tools etc to the new member.

This is not a matter for the Tudorville Allotments Association. We had one instance this year when the outgoing member thought he had sold his shed to the incoming new member. However the new member changed their mind and this resulted in a row between the parties. I am pleased to say after several weeks of bickering the matter was finally resolved when the outgoing member gave away his shed to the new member. This is not a situation that your Committee wishes to get involved with. The Rules are quite clear that when the rent becomes overdue membership of the Association automatically ceases and all chattels to be removed within 7 days. Any chattels not removed will be seized by the Association and sold off. Any monies arising will be paid into Association funds. I invite your thoughts about this. Should we tighten the Rules making it clear that any member leaving us must remove their chattels within 7 days?

One other matter is making sure that I have your up to date contact details. Please if you have changed address, phone number(s), email etc in the last 12 months please let me have your new contact details.

Finally may I thank your Committee for all their help, support, advice and guidance during the last 12 months.

7. Treasurer's Report:

Mr. Chairman, Mr. Secretary, Committee Members, Ladies and Gentlemen, here we are again twelve months later from last year's AGM. I for one do not know where the time goes.

I hope everyone has a copy of the balance sheet?

Our biggest expense this year was the purchase of a Honda mower. As you know it was agreed that we should keep upgrading the mowers in order to make life easy for members to keep the grass areas looking neat and tidy. You will also see we had to purchase a couple of drive belts and a new blade for one of the mowers which was damaged by one of our members. The mower was put back into the shed without informing anyone of the damage. Last year we purchased two Honda Strimmers, they are not one year old yet but already one of them was put back into the shed damaged and the rope spring missing.

We are still having mowers put back in the shed without being cleaned and in some cases with the box still full of grass cuttings.

When are the members going to realise that this equipment belongs to all of us and we should all be keeping the equipment in first class condition and not abusing it.

I am asking members again to respect the equipment. If any member sees someone abusing the mower or strimmers I would ask them to report this to the committee.

As you may be aware we used to share the cost of water with the Council, this has now changed. The Council has now passed onto the Association all charges concerning water to our plots. I have explained all this in the letter I am sending with your rent renewals.

In short it means we will all now contribute towards the payment of water and I suggested to the Committee that we charge an extra £ 2 per member per year to help pay the water bill.

This was passed by the Committee.

The rents will stay the same as last year at 0.25 p per sq. metre which is still far cheaper than other allotments.

You will notice this year on the balance sheet we have not paid money to the Allotment Society. This is because their subscriptions keep increasing by 25p per member per year last year's payment was £159.50. This year they wanted £174. As we get very little from the Society the Committee voted and agreed we leave.

Members were concerned that if we leave we would lose the 50% discount from Kings Seeds however John Walters has found out this is not the case and we are still able to get the discount.

I would like to take this moment to thank John for all his great work as the Seeds Rep.

8. Approval of Annual Accounts: There were no questions arising from the report. Phil went on to explain the background to the water surcharge. Further details are given under Any Other Business. It was proposed by Peter Wade and seconded by Jonathan Billinger that the Annual Accounts be approved and unanimously accepted by the members present.

9. Election of Committee members / officers

The following Committee Members were due for re-election – John Taylor Secretary, Phil Jenkinson Treasurer and Liaison Officer. There was also a vacancy because Jenny Clarke had now given up her plot. The Chairman asked if anyone wished to stand in Jenny's place. No one came forward from the members present. The Chairman asked if John Taylor and Phil Jenkinson were willing to stand again. Phil agreed but thought he should stand down next time. John Taylor said if anyone was willing to take over the role as Secretary he would stand down. As none of the members attending wished to contest the position of Secretary and Treasurer it was unanimously agreed by the members present that Phil Jenkinson and John Taylor be elected for a further period of 2 years.

The rest of the Committee consisted of Martin Barr (Chairman), John Walters (Seeds Rep), Avril Fuller, Lyn Howells and Tom Courtney.

10. Any Other Business

Water Supply – Phil Jenkinson gave more details of the future water supplies to the Allotments. In the past it was a shared service between the Council and Allotments Association and costs shared as much as 50%. However since there had been some vandalism to the water tap in the Cemetery and water had been wasted, the Council had decided to provide a water tank for Cemetery use which would be topped up from a mobile bowser from a separate source. This would leave the TAA as the account holder with Welsh Water responsible for paying the whole of the water bill. The TAA Committee agreed that a £2 supplementary water charge would be added to Allotment Rents for the 2017 /8 year to ensure that there would be adequate funds to cover future water charges. In 12 months time the matter would be reviewed in the light of actual water charges from Welsh Water. Phil went on to explain that the new plots had a separate meter from the main allotments and each meter attracts a daily meter charge on top of the actual water used. To enable the meter feeding the new plots to be removed (annual saving £75) the Council had offered to provide a digger and driver to enable a trench to be dug to allow the new plots to be connected to the water supply to the main allotments. We are still waiting to hear when they will provide the digger. Until this work has been carried out the TAA will not take over the Welsh Water account.

Water Troughs – the Secretary drew attention to his recent email asking members not to clean tools or vegetables in the water troughs. This causes silt to build up requiring the troughs to be drained and cleaned with the attendant loss of water. Please also keep the lids on the troughs to prevent evaporation in summer and prevent leaves and debris getting in.

Mowers – some members are not cleaning the mowers when putting them back into the equipment shed. Some have been damaged e.g. blades bent, drive belts breaking without the matter being reported to a member of the Committee, to ensure repairs are carried out in a timely fashion.

Theft – it was reported that a member had had a pumpkin taken from his greenhouse. The Secretary reported he had challenged 2 women this week who were on the allotments. They said that they had heard that there was a plot available. The Secretary had given them his email address so that they could apply for an allotment. To date no such request has been

received. Tim Ward stated that he too had had apples taken. It is up to all members to vigilant to people on the allotments and challenge anyone not known to them.

Communal Composting – Phil Jenkinson stated that consideration was being given to build compost bins near the equipment shed and provide a petrol driven shredder for use by the members. Tim Ward cautioned against this proposal because he thought it would need close supervision to prevent inappropriate material being deposited in the bins and maintenance of shredders is high due to keeping the blades sharp etc. The members present accepted that whilst it was a good idea it was probably unworkable and the proposal should be dropped.

Manure – Phil Jenkinson said we had a standing order to deliver farmyard manure each year. Fred Ellis considered it would be preferable to have a delivery before winter digging. Phil said that we are in the hands of the farmer and whilst we had asked for an early delivery it was dependent on the work flow of the farm. Phil Wheeldon asked if manure could be supplied directly to the new plots. This was difficult because tipping small amounts could not be achieved with the large tractor and trailer set up. Phil Wheeldon asked if he would be allowed to barrow some from the main plots. This was agreed and the Secretary would send out an email when the manure was to be delivered and notices would be put on the new plots.

Allotment Security – It was reported that the gate to the main allotment had occasionally been left open. Members were reminded to make sure the gate was closed before leaving site. The Committee was aware that the lock was in need of renewal and would deal with this as soon as possible.

Moles- Tom Courtney stated that moles were very active at the moment and asked if anything could be done about it. There were no immediate solutions that anyone could put forward. It was known that John Walters had placed sonic deterrents on his plot and that Tom should ask John how effective they were.

Seed and Gardening Sundries discounts – Avril Fuller queried the discount in the current seed catalogue. After some confusion it was realized that Avril's catalogue did not contain the order form showing the discount. Jonathan Bollinger said that good discounts to Allotment Associations should be available from most garden centers' applying not only on seeds but equipment etc. If Tudorville Allotments Association needed assistance in this area he would be willing to be co-opted on to the Committee for this task.

Seeds Rep John Walters – Bernard Staite on behalf of members wished to thank John Walters for organizing the purchase of seeds on behalf of the Association.

There being no other business the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting at 8:30 pm.