

Highfield Lane Allotments



Minutes of the AGM held on the 21st February 2019

1 In the absence of the Chairman, Mr W Stone, the meeting was Chaired and opened by the Honorary Secretary Mr A Maynard at 7:34pm

2 Members attending: C & M Smith (1667); D Barker (1720); A & K Maynard (1719), S James (1727), J Morley (1724 & 5), J & M Macquisten (1722); R Cox (1706), B Farnsworth (1682); M Sutton (1682); K & C Simpson (1702D & E); A Hollingshurst (1672); L Pritchard (1673B) and L & W McCauley (1676) K Woodward (1669); E Pooles (1673A); J Spencer (1705); R Hill (1739); E Turner (1691); D Astle (1712A) & H Smith (1712A).

3 Apologies received from J Sharp (1679), R Stringer (1693); W Stone (1671); B Hollingshurst (1671); M Hollingshurst (1670); M & E Taylor (1675),

4 Minutes of the 2018 AGM were available on the website and were taken as read.

5 There was one matter arising from the minutes: Item 16 Defibrillator. It was confirmed that one has not yet been purchased but advanced works have been carried out: New metal face to the meeting room door and fixing of hasp and staple with a gate key, so all plot holders can gain access. Once the unit has been obtained training will be given to those who would like it.

6 The 2018 AGM minutes were accepted: proposed A Hollingshurst and seconded by R Cox with all being in favour: The meeting Chairman signed the minutes.

7 There were no correspondence pertaining to the AGM.

8 The meeting Chairman reported that last year was mixed but that is nothing new. With a dry summer weeds were down but so were some crops. We still struggle to get more than just the core group to help on the maintenance of the site. But you need to understand that we are doing extremely well compared to other sites in Derby.

We continue to have a nucleus of very good people who have Highfield Lane allotments and this association very close to their hearts, they have worked tirelessly for the good of everyone, without asking for thanks or reward and I am confident that we will be able to add to this band of good people. However, our Chairman, Walter, has stepped down.

We continue to have all our plots let. We also introduced the payment of rent from October. This has worked well with those giving their plots up allowing new people to get their winter digging started ready for planting in the spring.

Many good things have happened on and off the site with a tremendous amount of work being carried out by the Show and Events Committee.

You all know the great things you have achieved this past 12 months and I am confident that the next 12 months will be even better.

Leaving here tonight you should all feel very proud of yourselves.

So on behalf of the committee I would like to say congratulations and a Big Thank You.

9 To discuss any matters arising from the meeting Chairman's report. None.

10 The Trading Secretary reported that this year has been about the same as last year subject to treasures report.

We have had record orders for “kings seeds” and seed potato orders.

We have introduced “Durstons” farm yard manure which is selling well.

I would like to thank all those who helped unload lorry deliveries.

A big thanks to Jenny for keeping shop rota going and to those who help keep shop open you know who you are. We could not do it without you. We can always have more volunteers to help run the shop we will give training.

11 From the Trading Secretary’s report it raised by Mr R Cox that “spent hops” had not been collected due to his health issues. He requested if anyone else could collect them. A couple of plot holders indicated that they could help and arranged to meet Mr Cox to discuss details.

12 The Treasure circulated copies of the audited accounts and reported the following:-

12.1 Chaddesden in Bloom Account. For 2018 there are still several receipts outstanding and I shall report in full at the next committee meeting.

12.2 The Allotment accounts. Copies were provided to those present.

On page 1 the allotment income (rents etc) is about £100 more than last year, mainly due to sale of scaffold planks and a shed. (Thanks to Jack for those). CEFAS for those who don't know are the Centre for the Environment, Fisheries and Aquaculture, based in Lowestoft.

Adrian provides them with a sample of root vegetables, and they check for radiation in the soil.

The allotment expenditure this year is lower than last year. This is mainly because we didn't have a skip for rubbish removal. The water bill continues to be a problem, we have now got an account with Water Plus and they did send a bill, however they have not read the meter and it was based on a wildly inaccurate estimate.

As well as completely losing track of us as a customer in the handover from Severn Trent they also appear to have lost the records of previous meter readings. I have just written to them again and we shall see what happens.

We have expended about £990 from the development fund, which was for the work on the area near the shop.

The shop itself has sold less than last year, although the seed order was a record at over £1000 so the total income was about the same. I have separated the seed order figures from the sale of shop stock in the accounts.

Turning over the page and looking at the Shop Profit and Loss account.

We made a profit on shop sales of £415 which was down from last year, and we made £210 from the seed order discount.

All of this is summarised on the balance sheet which shows we have fourteen thousand pounds in the bank. However, this is vastly distorted by: -

- the water bill, which should, if Water Plus do their sums correctly be in the region of £1200. (I am rapidly losing confidence in them).
- Having, for the first time, collected the rents and affiliation for the year 2019 in advance, so the cash is in the bank account, but I have not included it in the allotment income for the year 2018. This amounts to £1858.
- the money for the potato orders, looking at the accounts as I write this, I really should not have included it as trading income, but it is something we have always done.
- the key deposit money, I have left this at £2440, but will have to revisit it next year as we have increased the key deposit to £30.
- the development fund, which stands at £1262

So, all in all we have about £7000 available to spend.

The only other thing I should mention is that there is still considerable uncertainty about the Council's intentions with the rent and the rent rebate when they eventually get around to renewing the site lease.

13 From the Treasurer's report there were no questions raised.

14 The audited 2018 accounts were signed off by the Auditor. It was proposed by C Smith that the accounts be accepted, seconded by L McCauley. All present were in favour. The Chairman, Proposer and Seconder signed the accounts.

15 The Treasurer thanked Sue James for her work as auditor. Sue has agreed to carry out the duties of auditor for 2019. C Smith proposed the appointment to continue and all present were in favour.

16 Discussion of the rule change relating to "Bonfires". Background: The Secretary has received many complaints in 2018 of smoky bonfires on site. Rule 24 states: -

"Fires, on site, are the responsibility of the individual plot holders. Smoke must not cause an annoyance to plot holders or local residence and must not be left unattended. No fires with 30 metres of buildings and to be put out using soil not water".

This rule is not working. During the discussion it was mentioned that many plot holders have had fires with no problems. The problem fires relate to those who are not aware of the rules and possibly have no regard for neighbours. Also, it was pointed out that there have been several "smoky" fires on the Cottages side outside our site. An addition to rule 24 was proposed by the secretary and seconded by Mr R Cox that we have no fires between April and September inclusive. This was approved by 13 votes to five against.

Rule 24 becomes: -

"Fires, on site, are the responsibility of the individual plot holders. No fires to be set between April and October inclusive. Smoke must not cause an annoyance to plot holders or local residence and must not be left unattended. No fires with 30 metres of buildings and to be put out using soil not water".

Action Honorary Secretary to post notices and send an item for inclusion in "The Good Life"

17 Discussion of the purchase of a card reader. The Trading Secretary, M Hollingshurst proposes that we get a card reading machine from "Izettle" so we can take card payments in the shop as well as cash. This proposal is seconded by Barbara Hollingshurst.

- The card reader is about £30.
- 1.75% charge is made on each transaction.
- A smart phone at about £50 with sim card from "O2" for pay as you go top up £10

Following a discussion where comments about the frequency of use (two hours a week) and the related cost of its purchase and operation, which would need to increase sales. The proposal was defeated by 20 votes to five. **Action** Honorary Secretary to include on the agenda for the next Committee Meeting.

18 The current officers and committee were dismissed but continue until the end of the meeting.

19 The Allotment Members to appoint new officers and committee from the “members attending”.

Written nomination was submitted for the following positions:

Position	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded	
Treasurer	C Smith	A Maynard	M Wagg	
Secretary	A Maynard	J Macquisten	B Hollingshurst	
Trading Secretary	M Hollingshurst	I Burton	J Macquisten	
Committee	J Macquisten	M Macquisten	M Wagg	
	B Hollingshurst	I Burton	J Macquisten	

The remaining appointments are to be made at this meeting. The Secretary was asked, at the last Committee Meeting, to remind people that should three meetings be missed, without a reasonable excuse, then that person would be deemed to have resigned from the committee.

Position	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded	Vote
Chairman	K Woodward			
Committee	R Cox			
	A Hollingshurst			
	K Simpson			
	C Simpson			
	D Barker			
	E Pooles			
	J Morley			
	D Astle			
	H Smith			
E Turner				
Good Life Editor	M Macquisten			

All the above was elected by those present.

20 AOB:

a) A vote of thanks, was supported, toward Jenny who cleaned and maintained the toilet.

21 The date for the first committee meeting of 2019 is 10.00am at the Site Meeting Room Saturday 16th March.

21 The meeting was closed by the Acting Chairman at 8.55pm