

Highfield Lane Allotments



Minutes of the AGM held on the 16th February 2023

1 The meeting was opened by the Chairman at 7.30pm.

2 Members recording their attendance: C Smith (1667); M Sutton (1682); B Farnsworth (1682); D Barker (1720); A Maynard (1706), S James (1727), J Morley (1724 & 5), J & M Macquisten (1722), L Pritchard (1673B); D Astle (1712A); K Woodward (1669); S Potter & C Potter (1711); P Creaney (1733); J Turner (1703); S Radford (1714B); R Stringer (1692); G Stringer (1692A); P Stringer (1693); E Fokam (1721) and C Achu (1695).

3 Apologies received from R Hill (1734); M Smith (1667); S Nicklin (1703); R Fish (1705); M Spilby (1698) and A Hollingshurst (1672)..

4 Minutes of the 2021 AGM were confirmed as being on the Allotment's website and read out in full by the Hon Secretary.

5 The following matters arising from the minutes included

- a) Previous 19a: Defibrillator battery has now been replaced and is ready for use in the meeting room which can be accessed by anyone with a gate key.
- b) Previous 16: Card Machine as Bank Transfers have been used it was agreed that there is no longer any need to consider the installing of a card reader.
- c) Previous 12: Fencing the pond (insurance requirement) this work is in hand and will be completed shortly.

6 The 2022 AGM minutes were accepted: proposed J Macquisten and seconded by S Potter with all being in favour. The meeting Chairman signed the minutes.

7 There were no correspondence pertaining to the AGM.

8 The Chairman thanked the committee for their work and effort in running the site and allowing the Chairman to look good. It was noted that there were one or two plots that were not looking good but, in spite of the hot weather last year, produce was good. On a positive note the machine shed is now full of donated plant and we might be able to get hold of a secure contained to replace the existing plant shed. One a negative point rubbish is still being deposited items include a freezer and plastic on the S&E scrap metal donation heap. If you see anyone depositing rubbish please name and shame we do not need the extra work in depositing these items.

9 To discuss any matters arising from the meeting Chairman's report. one question raised with respect if we know who had left the freezer. We do not know who it was.

10 The Trading Secretary report.

The association has still not been able to find a new Trading Secretary, so a Trading Sub-Committee (Jenny, Ken, Adrian, and Colin) is providing the report for 2022.

Firstly, the committee would like to express their thanks to Jack for using his lorry to fetch compost and manure. This significantly helps towards keeping the price down.

And thanks to the people who actually man the shop each Sunday. That is Jenny (who also compiles the rota), Mavis, Adrian, Ken, Mary and Colin. It is an opportunity for you to meet and talk with fellow allotmenters and if anyone would to give it a go, they would be most welcome.

Trading has been interesting last year, wholesale prices have vastly increased owing to various factors, but we have managed to keep the shop stocked. Paraffin has doubled in price, (we still have some old stock) , chicken pellets now come from Holland, as British chickens seem to be reserving their output to burn in the power stations. We were at one stage unable to get 60lt bags of compost, as the wholesalers had none, however they did have 75lt bags, so we got those instead. 60Lt sacks are now available again.

We have experimented with selling peat free compost this year (alongside the normal compost). That sells at £6.60 for 40lt as opposed to £5 for 60lt of the normal compost, and we have sold 10 bags this year (of which 4 went to an associate member). As you are aware sales of the normal compost are due to cease, I believe next year so we will have to see what happens there.

We have a full range of fertilisers available in £1 bags, the logic of this is a £1 bag contains enough to use on your plot, and you don't want to spend £40 on a full sack just to have it lying around in your shed for years. The shop has made a surplus of almost £700 this year, which feeds back into the general funds and keeps the rents low.

That concludes the trading report.

11 Matters from the Trading Secretary's report:

Compost is a hot topic and most plot holders do their own compost but there is an uncertainty where the bag compost comes from. Jack mentioned that "black" compost can be obtained in bulk but costs are related to a 4t load (his lorry can only carry 2t which costs the same as 4t). Does anyone else know who has a lorry of 4t capacity? Jenny confirmed that the shop will not be open on 7th May.

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

Starting with the allotment accounts.

The accounts are for the period 1st Jan 2022 to 31st December 2022.

This year we have £725.74 more expenditure than income.

We have bought 10 tons of roadstone to repair the potholes in the road, and this will last longer if we all drive carefully on site. We have bought a new lock the one on the plant shed.

CEFAS have again paid us £150 (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 water bill is an estimate to 31st Dec. They last actually read the meter on 3rd October and I was unable to confirm the estimate at the time because it was a little wet in January and each time, I looked the meter was under water, however I have now had a look, and we are actually in credit.

Turning to the shop.

We have had sales of 3445.82, down £538.68 from last year. The seed order discount this year was £116.23. The shop had an excess of income over expenditure of £669.51 and the profit was £785.90.

This profit feeds into the general pot, and this year means we only made an operating loss on £56.23, which helps to keep the plot rents down.

The rent payable to the city council is due to increase on 1st April this year to £685.50 , an increase of £227.50. (£3 per plot) Up from £100 per acre to £150 per acre.

With regard to the insurance, we insure with the agent recommended by NSALG. The policy details remain the

same.

Just to remind you:-

We are not insured for the bees. They are insured by a policy Ken has thru the Beekeepers association.

The insurers ask if we have a pond, there is no extra cost, but they won't pay any claims unless we have a one metre high fence around the plot the keep children out, also gates have to open outwards, be self-closing and latch on the inside. We have reserved some money towards doing this, but it has not been done yet.

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

14 The audited 2021 accounts were signed off by the Auditor. It was proposed by J Morley that the accounts be accepted, seconded by M Macquisten. All presents were in favour. The meeting Chairman, Proposer and Secunder signed the accounts.

15 The Treasurer thanked Sue James for her work as auditor. Sue has agreed to perform the duties of auditor for 2022. C Smith proposed the appointment to continue A Maynard seconded and all present were in favour.

16 Discussion of proposal for cessation of bonfires on site: the change to rule 24.

Existing Rule: 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.

The background to this item is the National Allotments Society's support the cessation of fires on site. Following a frank discussion there was no seconder for the proposal to change Rule 24.

It was agreed that the current Allotments shedding scheme needs to be advertised better.

17 The current officers and committee were thanked for their work and dismissed but continue until the end of the meeting.

18 The Allotment Members to appoint new officers and committee from the "members attending". B Farnsworth proposed that the retiring committee be elected on block.

Written nominations were submitted for the following positions:

Position	Nominee	Proposed	Seconded	
Chairman	K Woodward	J Macquisten	C Smith	
Treasurer	C Smith	B Hollingshurst	A Maynard	
Secretary	A Maynard	B Hollingshurst	J Macquisten	
Committee	J Macquisten	A Maynard	K Woodward	
	D Astle	A Maynard	C Smith	
	S Potter	A Maynard	C Smith	
	J Macquisten	M Wragg	C Smith	
	B Hollingshurst	A Maynard	J Macquisten	
	M Spilby	By Phone		
	R Fish	By Phone		
	A Hollingshurst	By Phone		

A Maynard informed the meeting that this would be his last year as Secretary and asked if anyone would like to be Assistant Secretary for this year with a view to taking over the role of secretary in 2024.

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
Trading Secretary	Vacant			
Committee	D Barker			
Committee	J Morley			
Good Life Editor	M Macquisten			
Toilet Tech	J Macquisten			

All the above were elected by those present.

19 AOB:

- a) Communications: It was raised that there appears to be a problem communication with plot holders as many of them do not know of many items such as the defibrillator's location or access to it. It was pointed out that we have many ways of contacting the members but if they do not want to read the email; notices; Good Life; texts etc. then there is not a lot more that can be easily done. It was agreed that we all should speak to our neighbours to let them know of important issues the first one being about the defibrillator.
- b) Russel Cox, as guest and past plot holder, addressed the meeting explaining that he would no longer be able to manage the fruit plants of the S&E committee. He was thanked for his past work.
- c) It was confirmed that a new container for the site's plant could be obtained for £60. This will be confirmed at the first Committee meeting.
- d) Ken informed the meeting that the last of his Bees had died. He will be restocking in April.

20 To arrange the date of the first Committee meeting

The date for the first committee meeting of 2023 is for 09.30am at the Site Meeting Room Saturday 1st April.

21 The meeting was closed by the Chairman at 9.17pm