

Minutes of the TGAA Committee meeting held at 11.00 on Tuesday 15th October 2019 at 23 Chalfont Road, Oxford.

Present: Tony Hollander (chairman); Neil MacLennan (deputy chairman); Bob Crabtree (treasurer); Virginia Wallis (secretary and lettings secretary); Chris Beckett (shop); Jonathan Clark (website and machinery); Michael Wheale (compost); Robin Nicholas (water sub-committee).

Apologies: Roger Mumby-Croft (lettings secretary).

Matters arising

Further to the action points completed since the committee meetings on 18th June 2019 and 12th August 2019:

- VW has still yet to update the TGAA rules on the shed policy and fruit-tree planting but plans to do so. She will also simplify them and align them with the city council's rules set out in the new lease document. A draft will be circulated for discussion at the next committee meeting;
- Rat poison and rabbit boxes are now available from the allotment shop;
- TH has been in touch with John Howson concerning the erosion on the access path who plans to allocate his County Council financial allocation from the Walton Street fund to pay for the path to the railway bridge to be re-surfaced;
- Martin Carr is not prepared to give up half of one of his plots so he still has three plots in total;
- JC will engage Adam Shea (son of plot holder Ellie Barnes) to mow the wild flower meadow area;
- Tree pollarding on the boundary with Burgess Field was scheduled to begin on 14th October 2019;
- JC to hire a skip and have it positioned where it will not interfere with waterworks;
- VW has a list of 17 nuisance trees in need of removal and will organise a tree surgeon to deal with them;
- CB has decided to continue to manage the shop and so will not be stepping down which is excellent news.
- the next TGAA committee meeting will be held at 11.00 on Tuesday 18th February 2020.

Water plans update

Thanks to NMc for circulating the Trap Grounds Watering system proposal notes, to Robin Nicholas for attending the meeting and to all the members of the Allotment Water Project – in particular, its main engineers, Robin Nicholas and Mike Godley - for all their hard work in drawing up the final proposal.

Since the extraordinary TGAA committee meeting held on 12th August 2019, the proposed bore hole has been drilled, both the amount of water and the rate at which it can be delivered have been measured and the water has been tested for pollutants.

The bore hole is fully functioning and producing 10,000 litres of water a day which is more than enough for our needs. It could produce 20,000 litres which is the most that can be extracted for free. The analysis of the water compared it with UK drinking water standards. The conclusion of the analysis was that it is safe to use it for watering plants but that it will be unsuitable for drinking.

The next step is to position the water tank on top of the shop (for which we need permission) and attach a pump to it before digging trenches for the main piping. It was agreed that a contractor with a trencher would be engaged at a cost of £1,320 (including VAT) to dig the trenches. However, to keep costs down, a large number of volunteers will be needed to link up the piping once the trench has been dug. This is not a huge amount of work but has to be done carefully to avoid the risk of leaks.

Action: NMc to check that we have the city council's permission to put a tank on the shop.

Funding the water project

Even allowing for a large part of the work to be carried out by volunteers, the estimated cost of the water project is £14,722 (including VAT but not delivery costs). The TGAA bank

account can provide £8,000 towards this together with a five-year interest-free loan of £5,000 from an anonymous benefactor. To make up the shortfall (and enable us to repay the loan), it was agreed that plot and membership fees would be doubled over the next two years which should generate around £9,200 in total. Members would also be asked to make a donation to the waterworks fund. It was agreed that before any further work is undertaken, rather than presenting it at the harvest supper, the final proposal along with the proposed funding methods would be emailed to the membership for their votes (one per plot holder) and a meeting would be set up for members to ask questions about the proposals.

Action: TH to ask anonymous benefactor if s/he wants a legal agreement drawn up (done).

Action: VW to draft text to be sent to members for committee approval.

Action: VW to book the St Margaret's Institute Hall for a Sunday morning (done – the hall is booked from 10.30 to 12.30 on Sunday 24th November 2019)

AOB

Communal compost TH to engage David Haynes to turn the communal compost heaps.

Harvest supper is taking place on Saturday 9th November 2019. Action: VW to send reminder email and RC to organise pre-dinner drinks (as last year).

Joining fees Since these were introduced, we have collected a total of £510 and spent £160 on having plots tidied up prior to letting which makes them less daunting for new plot holders.

Annual General Meeting will take place on Tuesday 24th March 2020.

The meeting ended at 12.40