

Minutes of the TGAA Committee meeting held at 2.30 pm on Tuesday 20th February 2018 at 23 Chalfont Road, Oxford.

Present: Tony Hollander (chairman); Virginia Wallis (secretary and lettings secretary); Bob Crabtree (treasurer); Chris Beckett (shop); Pete Jarvis (pest control); Roger Mumby-Croft (lettings secretary).

Apologies: Neil MacLennan (deputy chairman)); Michael Wheale (compost); Jonathan Clark (website and machinery).

Matters arising

Further to the action points completed since the last committee meeting on 6th November 2017:

- TH has six brambles potted up which he will plant next to the new gate to deter intruders once weather conditions have improved
- Simone, the gardener who worked on the bee-friendly beds will be coming to prune the communal orchard on 13th March 2018
- The harvest supper went well but there was not enough food. Participants at the next harvest supper on Saturday 17th November 2018 will be encouraged to bring enough food for twice the number of people in their party
- The rogue mulberry tree has been removed but Ian Salisbury has planted another tree very close to the path which he claims is a replacement for his 'sickly Malus Aldenhamensis'. Doubts were expressed that this was actually the case
- NMc has not received a reply to his email to Julian Cooper concerning the pollarding this year and in future years so NMc to chase. The council tree team did an excellent job trimming back vegetation coming through the perimeter fence. It was suggested that to keep the weeds and brambles down we should spray the base of the fence with glyphosate twice a year. It was felt that it would be preferable to engage David Haynes to keep perimeter vegetation under control
- David Haynes is good value and does an excellent job of turning the compost heaps which he does two or three times a year. TH and MW to liaise over engaging him to repair the compost heap posts. TH to approach the contractors who have replaced Carillion to ask them to provide us with the necessary wood.
- The next committee meeting will take place at 18 Hayfield Road if it is felt that there is a need for it. Otherwise, the next meeting will be on Tuesday 16th October at 23 Chalfont Road as usual
- There has been no news about the owl box.

Agenda for the Annual General Meeting on Tuesday 27th March 2018

It was agreed that the agenda for the AGM would be as follows:

Apologies

Matters arising

Chairman's report

Treasurer's report including the proposal to charge new members a non-returnable joining fee to fund a contractor to clear plots left in an overgrown state.

Secretary's report including proposed changes to rules on fruit trees, sheds and polytunnels and dates for this year's plant sale and swap at the allotment shop.

Lettings Secretaries report

Website and Machinery

Pest control

Communal compost and bonfire

Allotment shop

Photo competition.

It was hoped that Neil and Sally would provide welcome drinks and nibbles as in the past two years.

Financial report

The bank balance has gone up largely due to the £3,900 secured by JC from Carillion. Income from fees has also increased partly because of plot turnover during the year and also possibly because of the increase in the number of quarter plots which have the same membership fee as half and full plots but a lower plot fee. Without the Carillion money and extra fee income we would have a deficit as expenditure exceeded income. Although the cost of servicing the shared equipment has gone down, the figure in the accounts represents two years' worth of servicing costs and so looks rather high. It was agreed that we couldn't cut costs by not getting the equipment serviced once a year.

Oxford & District Federation of Allotment Associations (ODFAA) meeting

The ODFAA has asked all allotment associations to read and comment on their lease, OCC rules and constitution in preparation for the lease renewal in 2018. The ODFAA is celebrating its centenary in 2019 and to mark it would like each association to write a short history of their site by September 2018. ODFAA would also like all associations to open their site to visitors.

Action VW to get hold of a copy of our lease (if such a thing exists). TH and PJ to write the short history. TH to attend the next ODFAA meeting on Tuesday 10th April 2018.

The shed policy

Action VW to update the guidance on sheds, polytunnels and other structures to introduce both a requirement for plot holders to consult a committee member about the size and positioning of a proposed shed before buying one and a maximum size of polytunnel (to be the same size as Bob's) that can be put up.

New rules for fruit-tree planting

Action VW to update the rules on fruit trees by adding:

- a permitted rootstock for cherries (Gisella 5) to the various permitted rootstocks already in the rules.
- A requirement for plot holders to consult a member of the committee about the positioning of a fruit tree (which should be at least two metres away from a communal path or other person's plot).
- A requirement for people who already have badly-positioned fruit trees to prune back branches that overhang communal paths or another person's plot.

Deliveries of manure and other heavy items

Because of the problem of ground being churned up when it is soft – at whatever time of year - it was agreed that plot holders will be asked not to order manure or other heavy items without first checking with one of the Port Meadow keyholders (Chris Beckett, Jonathan Clark and Pete Jarvis) that the ground is sufficiently hard for any such delivery to take place.

Any other business

The shop is well stocked, new suppliers have been found and new price lists are now available online and at the shop itself. From now on, people who have no means of paying for goods will no longer be allowed to owe the shop money. CB will put his phone number in the shop so that people can ask him to open the shop when they do have cash or a cheque with them. CB plans to order a bespoke storage rack for all the rolls of materials for about £300. CB also plans to buy a blow torch to be used to stop ground cover fraying.

Sue Howarth memorial bench This has been delivered to the allotment site and will be put in its final position on flagstones near the old pond in spring.

Solar panels and pumps for wells It was suggested that to make well water more accessible, at some point, wells could be fitted with pumps powered by solar panels.

The meeting ended at 4.20 pm