

Minutes of the emergency TGAA Committee meeting held via Zoom at 10.30 on 18th January 2021.

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

Apologies: Neil MacLennan (deputy chairman).

Vandalism of - and theft from - the allotment equipment shed

The emergency committee meeting was convened following the damage to the shared equipment shed together with other individual sheds and thefts from them. With thanks to Miranda Robinson for alerting the committee to the problem. Thanks to CB and JC for making the shed accessible and moving the equipment that was not stolen to the shop for safekeeping. Thanks to JC and MW for mending the hole in the fence (where the thieves got in) and the shed by the communal compost.

Action: MW to order shrubs to be planted near vulnerable parts of the fence to deter future intruders.

Repair work

The council responded very promptly to our request for repair work on the equipment shed door. This has been strengthened in such a way that it is now unlikely that future miscreants will be able to get into the shed without using an angle grinder.

Action: JC to thank the person at the Parks Department [Micheal Wood] who organised the repair work and to arrange for the council team [under Julian Cooper] to come back to install a metal box over the lock (like the one on the shop door).

Future security measures

Equipment It was suggested that, to improve the security of the shared equipment, we could either buy a lockable metal vault in which to store valuable equipment inside the equipment shed or acquire a separate small shipping container to store all equipment except the ride-on mower. However, it was agreed that as the repair to the equipment shed door had made it more secure than before the break in, a new container was both unnecessary and a potential eyesore and also no better protection to determined intruders armed with an angle grinder. It was also agreed that the equipment shed could do with a bit of a tidy/clearout to make more space. The equipment shed lock has been replaced and a temporary combination lock added. It was felt that the latter could be used alone during busy daytime periods when members would not have to find a keyholder in order to access the equipment shed.

Security surveillance There was some discussion about possibly acquiring a security camera and/or alarm. However, it was felt that a security camera could have the adverse effect of drawing attention to the shop and its solar panels as well as to the fact that we had expensive equipment to protect. And again, a security camera would not have deterred the recent thieves so it was agreed that we would stick with the status quo.

The meeting ended at 11.05