

TIDBURY GREEN PARISH ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Held on

Thursday 12 January 2012 at 8pm, Cheswick Green Village Hall

Present: John Marshall (Chairman), Brian Wood (Hon Secretary), Leighton Wardell (Hon Treasurer), Derek Reade, Peter Townsend, Roy Lippett (Committee members), Councillor Elizabeth Child, Sally & Tony McCabe, Marcia & David Manning, Mick Enright, Marilyn Howard, John Corbett, Bill Strange, Lyn Reade, David Millichamp, Shirley & Jim Vaughan, Caroline & Tony Inwood, Joy & Mike Dennison, Dave Matson, Jerry Mitchell, Peter Davis, Mr & Mrs Norton, T. Cox, L. Griffin, J. Wardell, A. Millichamp, Barry Daniels (Visitor Tanworth in Arden Allotment Association)

The Secretary welcomed Councillor Child to the meeting and new members Marcia & David Manning. It was also the first meeting for Peter Davis, Dave Matson and Barry Daniels.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from K. & B. Fellowes.

The Treasurer read out a letter that had been received from Bill Needle who had been a member of the Allotment Association for over twenty years and who unfortunately had to hand over his plot due to failing health. Bill expressed his thanks for the tree of appreciation and included in his letter a donation of £30 to the Allotment Association. This donation will be formally acknowledged with the good wishes of the Allotment Association.

2. MINUTES OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2011 had been circulated and were agreed.

Proposer: D. Millichamp Seconded: T. Cox

3. MATTERS ARISING

Constitution - The Treasurer had found a specimen Constitution for an Allotment Association, but having read through it, it would appear that everything has already been covered by our current Agreement.

The Secretary raised the issue of segregating the orchard from the bottom two allotments and reported that the problem had resolved itself as L. Beddowes had now given up her plot and this was now used for compost.

Rotovators - As agreed at the previous AGM, a notice had been attached to the handle of the rotovators reminding users to return them in a clean and good condition after use. However, the rotovator had not been used much during the summer due to unserviability.

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council – At the last meeting S. McCabe had suggested contact was made with SMBC regarding the possibility of a donation to the Allotment Association and had subsequently given a contact name. However, the Secretary and Treasurer felt that it was possibly not the right time to approach them due to the present economic climate.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman had nothing to report other than to keep up the good work.

5. SECRETARY'S REPORT

The Secretary reported that it had been quite a good year on the allotments although very dry which had been reflected in the cost paid for water. One irritating problem was that of leaf miner. However, produce for the Flower & Vegetable Show was exceptional and attendance was marginally better than the previous year. Financially it was better and this was partly attributed to the issue of £10 worth of raffle tickets to each plotholder.

The Quiz Night was also successful.

Another superb day out - excellently organised by J. & M. Dennison - to Buckingham Palace took place in September.

The Secretary reported that the Association's insurer Bluefin had informed the Association that they were now independent of the National Association and as such could offer a slightly cheaper policy. The matter was discussed with the Treasurer and the Committee and it was agreed that the insurance renewal would be with Bluefin. The Committee also agreed that it was not worth continuing with the National Association as the only benefit appeared to be the quarterly magazine which would not present value for money.

The Allotment Association Agreement states that plotholders undertake to keep their plots in good order. There had been two plots of concern and in both cases the plotholders had been contacted by the Secretary. He emphasised the need to keep the plots in good order and if any plotholder was experiencing difficulties in maintaining their plot they should inform the Committee.

The waiting list for plots has reduced and presently stands at seven.

Regarding segregation of the orchard from the allotment plots, an email had been received from the Clerk to the Parish Council who had discovered that the Woodland Trust, in order to mark the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, was offering free packs of trees/shrubs. An order has been placed by the Secretary for the tree pack containing 105 trees which will provide a natural hedging screen. The order has been acknowledged and the Association should know early-February if we have been successful. B. Strange commented that it would certainly help the drainage but hopefully would not interfere with the light source causing shading of neighbouring plots. The Secretary stated that it would be maintained as natural hedging and the trees not allowed to develop fully.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

The Treasurer gave an overview of the accounts which had been circulated to all members. The Quiz Night made £111 as opposed to £120 the previous year. The Flower & Vegetable Show raised £460 as opposed to £385 the previous year. There had been a donation of £100 from the Parish Council towards new trophies purchased for the Flower & Vegetable Show. Expenditure overall was quite high this year.

Major expense was water at £829. As previously reported, for the last three or four years the Association had been in credit due to Severn Trent misreading the meter. On 28 April 2011 the meter was read and all balanced up. Between 28 April and 24 October 2011 the Association received another water bill for £476.

The Treasurer was sorry to report that there had been instances where the use of water had been abused with sprinklers being left on overnight and all day and asked members to speak to the offender if they see the use of water being abused.

The water was turned off at the main stopcock on the 5th November and the system drained to protect against Winter frost. On the following Tuesday, a telephone call was received by the

Treasurer to say that water was flooding down the central driveway because someone had turned the water on again. On the 26th November the Allotment Association Committee meeting was held and the use of water discussed. On returning to the allotments after the meeting a 4x4 vehicle was found being washed down by hose, a total and utter abuse of the Association's water for which each Member has to pay. D. Millichamp commented that sprinklers have been left on early morning and late afternoon, not always intentionally but often due to absent mindedness. In view of the charge now incurred should sprinklers not be banned and only personally used hoses allowed. Those members present agreed that action should be taken to avoid the heavy water costs.

The question was raised if there was anything in the Allotment Association Agreement which referred to water usage. It was the general opinion of those members present that some form of formal action should be taken, suggesting official written warnings or imposing a fine. B. Strange commented on the need to have a rule in place in order to discipline accordingly. The Secretary agreed to look at the Association rules and make a draft to specifically mention water usage. A suggestion was also made to fit a lock to the stopcock to prevent persons gaining access to the water once turned off.

B. Daniels informed the Committee that Tanworth-in-Arden allotments have recycled 80 litre barrels set-up to collect rainwater from shed roofs which is then used for watering and with the bonus of being better for watering than tap water. The Secretary agreed it was a good idea and would be discussed by the Committee. The Secretary also stated that a new rule will be put in the Agreement which states that the control of the water rests solely with the Committee and that no-one else is permitted to operate the stopcock and to stress that all the facilities on the allotment are for the sole purpose of the allotment.

The Treasurer gave formal notice that the water and rents will be set as they are but may be increased next year and concluded his report stating there was a balance of £794 with £373 in the bank and the remainder in the building society.

The Treasurer's report was accepted.

Proposer: J. Marshall Seconded: R. Lippett

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All Officers and Committee members were prepared to continue to serve. The Secretary reported that he had not received any other names for these positions. Lew Griffin suggested the Officers and Committee be voted in en bloc.

Proposed: L. Griffin Seconded: T. Cox

The Secretary reported that Mrs. J. Dennison had expressed an interest in joining the Committee and her offer was accepted.

Proposer: T. Inwood Seconded: T. Cox

8. SITE SAFETY

The Secretary reported he had slipped during the summer whilst mowing by his plot and cracked a couple of ribs. This had highlighted the potential hazards on an allotment site which ploholders should be aware of. He emphasised the need to keep pathways around plots clear and not blocked. He would attach a list of safety points to the Minutes.

9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

J. Dennison asked for Members to be reminded to ensure that the gate was locked as it had been found open on a number of occasions when the site was unattended.

Plotholders were also made aware that the seat in the orchard was presently not safe and would be removed.

J. Corbett asked who was responsible for the chippings deposited at the bottom of the site. The Chairman replied that they were from the Council by request and for general use but that there would be no more deliveries.

The question was also raised about delivery of manure. L. Griffin stated that enquires were being made and hopefully a delivery would be imminent.

The Secretary announced that the Flower & Vegetable Show will be held on Saturday 25th August 2012 and the Quiz Night on Wednesday 11th April 2012.

J. Dennison announced that a suggestion had been made for a trip to Windsor this year but explained the difficulty in arranging coach travel during the summer months as Johnsons Coaches, like others, were involved in transport contracts for the Olympic Games so May or November would be a better time. Please let J. Dennison know of any other suggestions for trips.

The Treasurer mentioned that the Olympic torch would be passing through Earlswood and suggested that once the route had been confirmed it would be an opportunity for the Allotment Association to show their support by displaying a banner and/or gathering along the route.

The Secretary thanked J. Wardell for the refreshments and A. Millichamp for the Minutes. The Secretary also mentioned L. Griffin, whose work was very much appreciated, and thank all those people for all the things they do in the Association's interest.

The meeting closed at 9.12pm.