

MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 15 JANUARY 2009 AT 6.30 P.M. IN THE COMMUNITY HUT, MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS, FENHAM HALL DRIVE

PRESENT: Peter Whewell (Chairperson), Krys Gaffney (Secretary), Sue Brophy, Harry Carter, Robert Germany, Sanja Ratkusic, John Reid, Niels Souter and Stan Tortoise.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Nigel Wood.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING held on 20 November 2008 had been distributed to Committee members. The Committee would need to investigate what grants were available since the grant application to *Awards for All* had not been successful. Members of Highbury North allotments wanted to visit Moorside, probably in March. **PW** suggested that Committee members should have specific responsibilities for a number of ploholders in their lanes; it was agreed that this would be left for the new Committee to decide.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

KG had received forms from Committee members who were willing to stand for re-election in 2009. **KG** had received an invoice from **PW's** daughter who had incurred £20 in expenses setting up the Moorside website.

TREASURER'S REPORT

There had been no increase in the rents for three years and **NS** suggested that there should be no increase for 2009; a small increase in 2010 would, however, be necessary. There had been no major purchases and the 2008 show had been cancelled due to bad weather. **NS** had bought seeds with the vouchers that had been donated to the Association and would distribute them at the Garden Club. The Association had bought an accident book and a first aid kit. There was £2,140 in the Association's current account. The insurance was due and the premium would be higher for 2009.

TRADING HUT REPORT

HC submitted a set of figures for the Trading Hut accounts for the period 1 December 2007 to 30 November 2008 and these were accepted by the Committee.

LETTING OFFICER'S REPORT

There were 22 people on the waiting list and two allotments were vacant at present. It was agreed that the waiting list should be kept open although the waiting time for a plot would be at least two years. A list of new members would be posted on the noticeboard.

PLOT INSPECTIONS

Some plots were still a cause for concern.

CULLING CROWS AND MAGPIES

One of the Association's members had a licence to shoot troublesome wildlife. Some of those present expressed concern at the idea of shooting on the site. Many members would be sensitive on this issue and it was agreed that the matter would be presented at the AGM for members to decide how the Association should proceed.

HERITAGE INTERPRETATION

Marian Jones had produced a draft of the document that will eventually be displayed on the site. **PW** would invite her to the AGM as a guest.

FLOODING UPDATE

A major drain on the outside of the fenceline would have cost £25,000 to install. It was suggested that minor drains could be installed to lead water off the site. **KG** would head a

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working party and volunteers to join the party would be sought at the AGM.

THEFT FROM SITE

There had been a spate of break-ins over the Christmas period. Many huts had been broken into and tools had been taken. Bottle diggers had begun excavating an area on the Moor; the Council had moved in to dig out the rest of the bottles but had only partially completed the job; this had encouraged the diggers to return. (**FL** had recovered some discarded tools from the bottle-digging site).

BUMBLEBEE PROJECT

PW had obtained a supply of booklets (*Gardening for Bumblebees* - £2 per copy) which gives planting suggestions for attracting beneficial insects, especially bumblebees. **SB**, **JR**, **PW** and **KG** would form the working party to clear and plant the Community Garden.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

The Committee would need to look at the grants which were available to fund projects on the site.

NOMINATIONS FOR 2009 COMMITTEE

No applications had been received from the membership. There were two vacancies on the Committee so if more than three nominations were made at the AGM, an election would have to be held.

MOTIONS FOR AGM

PW would put forward the motion that honoraria for the Trading Hut managers should come from the Association's funds. **NS** and **RG** would start a Gardening Club which would run on Saturday morning(s). The draft agenda for the AGM was accepted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- ◆ The member on Plot 14 had suggested a seed exchange scheme which would probably take place on a Saturday in March. Plants could also be exchanged and the event could be advertised by *Transition Newcastle*, and on the Moorside website.
- ◆ A member had requested a second plot. There is no rule in the Association's Constitution preventing members having more than one plot but it was agreed that only one plot should be allowed per household, and whilst there were people on the waiting list, no member should be allowed to have more than one plot.
- ◆ **NS** outlined the objectives for the Garden Club. He would distribute details at the AGM to gauge the level of interest in the project.
- ◆ The next meeting would be the AGM on 22 January at 7.30 p.m. in the Robert Stewart Memorial Hall. After that meeting, the new Committee members would elect its Officers for 2009.
- ◆ £75 was to come out of the 2009 accounts (£20 for hall hire for 2009 AGM, £50 for Auditor, £5 for photocopying and £20 to **PW's** daughter for website setup expenses).

The meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.