

MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 7 JUNE 2011 AT 5.30 P.M. IN THE COMMUNITY HUT, MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS

PRESENT: Peter Whewell, Krys Gaffney, Nicola Loose, Sue Johnson, Sue Pownall and Tony Whittle.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Sue Brophy.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING held on 10 May 2011 had been distributed to Committee members. The *Wildplaces* project was now ended and the individual responsible for producing the DVD had left so not many stills were available. There had been no communication from Karen Brown at Nunsmoor Allotments. Moorside North residents pay a peppercorn rent for a key which allows them to use the top gate as a 'courtesy gate' with access to the Moor. One resident had polled his neighbours and approximately five households make use of the gate. It was agreed that allotment members should not hold keys to this gate. **PW** had returned the tenancy agreement to the Allotments Officer. **PW** and **TW** would arrange to post contact details for the swarm gatherers on noticeboards and on the website at the next bee group meeting.

SECRETARY'S REPORT

KG had received details of the annual City Allotments competition.

TREASURER'S REPORT

NL had moved excess funds from the key account, leaving a balance of £1,600. £1,600 of the bee grant remained after David Rochester had been paid. There was £4,700 in the Association's account after spending had been taken into consideration.

TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT

SP had ordered more scaffolding planks and 100 metres of bird netting; she would also order insect netting and 1,000 heavy-duty polythene bags. The Trading Hut now stocked a variety of organic products. Dave Eason had installed more shelving in the storage hut. The half-year stocktake showed that there was £2,095 worth of stock and this would have to be compared with sales. **SP** suggested buying CCTV for the site with profits from the Trading Hut but it was decided that without lighting, images of intruders on the site would be unclear. The rota for the Trading Hut volunteers was working well.

BEE GROUP

SJ had almost completed her course and had the hive and sundries to set up her beekeeping area. Bees, however, were difficult to obtain although there was a possibility that **TW** could split part of his hive.

NAWG MATTERS

The Allotment Forum would take place on 9 June. **PW** was willing to continue as the representative for Area 6 (West of Newcastle). There would be a talk on bees and on composting at the forum.

MOORSIDE 2011 SHOW

The show booklet was nearing completion and would be printed soon.

PLOTS

The tenant on plot 30a had been given a month to tidy his plot; he had done so with the help of a friend and it was agreed that the Inspection Team would keep an eye on his progress.

The members from plot 59b had moved to plot 81a which left plot 59 fully vacant; it was agreed that this should be re-let as a full plot since it was difficult to manage as two half-plots.

Plot 20 had been strimmed but there was very little cultivation; the plot would be reviewed at the next inspection and it was agreed to suggest to the member that the plot should possibly be halved.

MOORSIDE TREE STRATEGY

PW had circulated copies of a possible draft for a Tree Strategy at Moorside. Amendments were suggested. Decisions on felling trees on the site are informed by the Allotments Officer and the Tree

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Officer although ultimately the Committee decides whether trees should be cut down. **PW** would produce a document for consultation to all members.

WINGROVE GARDEN FESTIVAL

This took place on 15 May and had been well attended; Emma Hughes had made a profit of £100 for the Association. **SJ** would write a note of thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Kell who had contributed a quantity of home-baking to the event.

TASK GROUP FEEDBACK

1. Drive maintenance – Tony Francis was continuing to clear the driveways but hedging at the crossway needed clearing. Clippings of marestail outside the Comfrey Project plots needed to be cleared. One member was throwing stones and weeds on to the path outside his plot.
2. **SB, PW**, Montse and Doug Palmer had helped clear Plot 55b on 4 June. Ben Rudden had asked for help on his plot but seemed to be managing it well with the help of his wife.
3. East hedge maintenance – nothing to report.
4. Disabled beds – no quotations (for paving, PVC beds, a greenhouse and a shed) were available yet.
5. Floral displays – approximately £100 was available to buy more plants.
6. Bee garden and Plots 1 & 2 – there would be a meeting on 18 June to plan planting for the strip that fronts the site. The bee garden was doing well. There were surplus wild flower plants which could be planted on plots 1 and 2.
7. Health and safety – this task group had yet to meet.
8. Green energy – **PW** had attended a Green Energy Champion's course and would be meeting with a consultant on 11 June to discuss photovoltaic cells on the site.
9. Wildlife – nothing to report.
10. Community Hut – this had been tidied and many items had been placed in the storage hut.
11. Toilets – there was a small leak under the tap of the washbasin in the ladies' toilet which would need the attention of a plumber.

JUDGING PLOTS FOR THE CITY COMPETITION

It was agreed that one of the show judges would be asked to judge which plots should be nominated for the City competition; he would be paid a small fee from the Association's funds for doing so. Organic gardeners needed to be identified.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- ◆ **PW** had agreed that small groups of schoolchildren from Westfield School, properly supervised, would participate in a bee count at Moorside on 24 June.
- ◆ **SP** would look into the possibility of buying a Sherpa truck for the Association.
- ◆ **PW** had been approached by Tim Townshend from Newcastle University who was looking for a small cohort of members over 55 to participate in a study of diet and wellbeing on allotment sites. **SJ, KG, PW**, Dave Walter, Pat Francis and George Taylor were considered to be possible candidates for this study.
- ◆ *Losing the Plot* was the result of the last research carried out by the University.
- ◆ The canopy between the Trading and Community huts would be erected in July; the date would be arranged at the next Committee meeting.
- ◆ There was evidence of foxes on the site!
- ◆ Harry Carter had contacted the Council about the rubbish that had been dumped outside the site.
- ◆ **SP** would arrange for more wood chippings and soil conditioner to be delivered.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be on Tuesday 5 July 2011 at 5.30 p.m. in the Community Hut.

The meeting closed at 7.20 p.m.