

**MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION**  
**MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 18 JUNE 2009 AT 7.15 P.M. IN THE**  
**COMMUNITY HUT, MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS, FENHAM HALL DRIVE**

**PRESENT:** Peter Whewell (Chairperson), Krys Gaffney (Secretary), Nicola Loose (Treasurer), Sue Brophy, Robert Germany, Susan Hrisos, Sue Johnson, Frank Lightfoot and John Reid.

**APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Sue Pownall and Niels Souter.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING** held on 7 May had been distributed to Committee members. The minutes were passed as a correct record.

**MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (not on the agenda)**

- ◆ A trainer was needed to instruct members on the use of the rotovator and strimmer; to date, one member had signed up for training.
- ◆ The Council has not been cutting down the roadside margins nearest the fence on Fenham Hall Drive; as a result, taxi-drivers use the long grass as a toilet. It was suggested that registration numbers of offending cabbies should be reported to the police. The neighborhood response team had been asked to cut the grass and trim the trees.
- ◆ The Seedling Sunday event had been a success.

**SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**KG** had nothing to report.

**TREASURER'S REPORT/TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT**

**NL** reported that all members had paid their rents. The rental for the site had been paid up till September 2009. The Trading Hut held a £50 float. At present it was difficult to assess income from the hut; **PW** asked the team to produce an interim trading report covering the period since the takeover from the previous Trading Hut managers. There was a 10% profit margin taken on merchandise and **SH** maintains a spreadsheet set up to monitor stock, prices etc.

**SHOW SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**SJ** (who was now co-opted onto the Show sub-committee) would contact local garden centres for raffle prizes; **FL** had a list of companies who had been generous with sponsorship in the past. **NS** had arrangements for the Show in hand; the member on plot 8/9a would be involved in Health & Safety on the day and the member on plot 89 (+ a friend) would manage the catering. The Allotments Officer would select the best allotment. It was agreed that the tarpaulins should be erected a few days before the show and that using the church hall as a contingency venue was not viable. There would be a stall for plants, DVDs, CDs, books and a table for the Scouts (but no bric-a-brac stall). **FL** would donate a set of cigarette cards as a prize.

**LETTINGS AND INSPECTION TEAM**

Plot 77a, which was overgrown with mareetail, had been let rent-free for this year. Very little work had been done on plot 77b; **FL** had offered to cover the garden with black plastic but had not heard from the tenant - **PW** would contact the member concerned. Plot 53 was now vacant and would be let to Anne of plot 37a who wished to move up to a full plot. **PW** had created a list of 4 tenants with half-plots who wanted to move up to a full plot.

**GARDEN CLUB**

**NS** was away and had not been in touch with **RG**. A date for the next meeting would need to be arranged.

**NEWSLETTER**

The newsletter for June was available on the website; **KG** would distribute it to members without email addresses.

## **MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION**

### **GRANT APPLICATIONS**

A grant application to *Grassroots* for printing the Association's constitution had been turned down; **PW** would re-apply to the Ward Grant Committee. **PW** had obtained a quotation of £2,185 for paving around the toilet block; this included paving 2-3 flagstones wide to allow for disabled/wheelchair access and fencing. **NL** would be able to apply for a grant through her firm.

### **WORKING PARTY REPORTS**

The Bumblebee Project was now well advanced and some stock plants had been planted. A meeting of the Flood Prevention Group was imminent.

### **NAWG**

This group is run by volunteers but they have been empowered by the Council to run allotment sites. Last year they produced an (as yet unratified) allotment strategy document whose main focus is on allotment provision; there is clearly a demand for plots in the City but a survey is necessary to gauge its extent. This item led to a discussion about extending the area of the Moorside site by asking the Council to approach the Freemen with a proposal to do so. NAWG has a budget which is used for financing the City Show and maintenance on allotment sites.

### **WILDLIFE OFFICER'S VISIT**

The Wildlife Officer had visited Moorside and **PW** had taken him on a tour of the site. They identified five projects which could be eligible for funding:-

1. Heritage signs and seeds for the Bumblebee garden
2. How to survey birds on the site
3. Hedging of dogrose, blackthorn and hawthorn on the east border
4. Enhancing the manure area as a forest glade
5. Hedging (preferably anti-cabbie) outside the palings on Fenham Hall Drive

### **YOUTH OPPORTUNITIES SCHEME**

The member from plot 56/57 had written to the Committee expressing concern about allowing young offenders on the site. After debate, the Committee voted by a majority (5 to 3) not to allow young offenders to work in the gardens. **PW** would write to Carol Preston informing her of this decision.

### **FORMATION OF A MAINTENANCE GROUP**

A maintenance group would be able to tidy up many areas on the site. **SB, NL, FL** and **KG** were all keen to be involved. **KG** volunteered to be the lead member with effect from October 2009.

### **TEAM TO PICK CATEGORY CONTESTANTS FOR NEWCASTLE CITY SHOW**

A team was needed to pick out gardens for the various categories in the City Allotment Competition. **FL, KG, RG** and **JR** volunteered to do so, although a definition of what constituted 'an organic garden' was needed for one of the categories.

### **ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

- ◆ There was debate about constructing a structure to house the stock of compost, which would entail unexpected technical problems. It was agreed that a small stock of compost could be stored in the Trading Hut and that the remainder should be stored in the cabin that had been bought for this purpose. **FL** volunteered to transport compost from the cabin to the Trading Hut when necessary.
- ◆ The Comfrey Project plots were beginning to look unkempt; it was agreed to monitor their state.
- ◆ There had been complaints about cars being parked on the site and blocking access.

### **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

This would be on Thursday 16 July at 7.15 p.m. in the Community Hut.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.