MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 10 MAY 2011 AT 5.30 P.M. IN THE COMMUNITY HUT, MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS

PRESENT: Peter Whewell, Krys Gaffney, Sue Brophy, Sue Johnson, John Reid and Tony Whittle.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE were received from Sue Pownall.

MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING held on 5 April 2011 had been distributed to Committee members. **PW** would post stills on the website from the *Wildplaces Project* DVD when he received his copy. Neither **PW** nor **SP** had yet been invited to a meeting with Karen Brown from Nunsmoor Allotments., to discuss how management functioned at Moorside. Tree felling was in progress on the site and members would be able to use the logs produced. Keys for the top gate are available only to residents of Moorside North but it is unclear how many residents actually use the gate. One member held an unauthorised key to the gate which he would be asked to return.

SECRETARY'S REPORT
KG had received one more application for an allotment as had **SJ**. **KG** had received a copy of the Tenancy Agreement and a questionnaire from the Allotments Officer; **PW** would complete and return these.

TREASURER'S REPORT
NL was not present at the meeting.

TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT
Topsoil had been delivered in bags and was selling well. The soil improver had been sold but future supplies would be delivered to the manure area. All scaffolding planks had been sold and Dave Eason had kindly used a couple to create shelving in the container next to the toilets to create more storage space. Some items were completely out of stock and would be re-ordered on **SP**'s return from holiday. A local newsagent had donated a large quantity of seed packets which were being put out on the table each weekend for members to take, against a donation to the Association. The team of Trading Hut volunteers has agreed that it will clean the toilets when they are on hut duty. Tony Francis has been keeping the verges tidy with the little lawnmower although a lot of people were making an effort to tidy outside their own plots.

BEE GROUP
The bee group had met in April. **PW** had not received any response to the final report that he had submitted for the bee grant, so it can be presumed that the spending of the grant had been approved. The bee interpretation board was nearing completion and would arrive early in June. £450 remained in the bee account and this would be used to buy a spare hive to house any possible swarms of bees. Any surplus bees generated could be sold and the proceeds returned to the Association. Each individual beekeeper needs to complete a form stating their training and status. Following Hamid Haykal's recent bee-swarming incident, it was agreed that the swarm gatherer's contact details should be posted on noticeboards and on the website.

NAWG MATTERS
PW, **SB**, **TW** and **KG** had accompanied a group of twenty visitors from the Allotments Officers' Forum on a tour of the site. The group was very impressed with the overall appearance of Moorside.

MOORSIDE 2011 SHOW
Steady progress was being made with arrangements for the Moorside show. Details about the show would be advertised in local churches and schools. Emma Hughes was in charge of arrangements for the Moorside stalls at the Wingrove Garden Festival and members had been asked to supply surplus seedlings and home-baking. **SB** would vet stalls at the Wingrove Garden Festival for possible stalls at our show.

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PLOTS

Following the site inspection on 7 May, the team agreed that the following tenants should be contacted about the state of their plots:-
Plot 30a - a stern letter about the state of cultivation
Plot 59a - a termination letter
Plot 101a - a letter concerning weeds and marestail
Plots 42 & 43 - a letter acknowledging that progress was being made
Plot 41 - advice on the large tree in the middle of the plot which was affecting cultivation of the plot
Plot 40 - advise that the height of the hedges needs to be reduced to around 5 ft.
The plot clearance group would need to help out the tenant on Plot 55b.

TASK GROUP FEEDBACK

1. Drive maintenance – Tony Francis has been mowing the paths and verges.
2. Plot clearance – on Plot 55b would take place on 4 June; a date would have to be arranged to clear the back of plot 30b.
3. East hedge maintenance – the saplings had been trimmed and removed from their casings.
4. Disabled beds – the Allotments Officer will get quotations for paving and PVC beds, a greenhouse and a shed; he also suggested sources for funding the project. The site would need to be level before work commenced.
5. Floral displays – Jesmond Nurseries had not recalled their containers... Proceeds from the sale of compost last year were still available to buy plants.
6. Bee garden – it had been suggested that patches of bulbs, woodland and shade-loving plants should be planted in the strip that fronts the site. The Association had been given a quantity of bulbs that would be planted out on 14 May at 10.00 a.m.
7. Plots 1 & 2 – bulbs could be planted in the woodland garden.
8. Health and safety – this task group was not yet running.
9. Green energy – **PW** had visited a house in which photovoltaic cells set up by Susenergy were being successfully used and discussed Moorside with the firm's consultant. He was willing to visit Moorside to give suggestions on how PV cells be used on the site.
10. Wildlife – Frank Lightfoot had produced a map of Moorside which could be used to delineate the location of bird-boxes and wildlife areas on Moorside. There were fox cubs on the site. **SJ** would contact the group for a meeting on 28 May.
11. Community Hut – SP was organising the maintenance of the hut. Donations would be taken for the damaged chairs we had received from the Robert Stewart Memorial Hall.
12. Toilets – the Trading Hut volunteers would clean the toilets on the days when they were on duty.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- Prize leeks had been stolen from Frank Lightfoot's plot and his garden had been flooded.
- Amir, the project worker for the Comfrey Project would like more involvement with, but not membership of, the Committee. **PW** would contact the Comfrey Project and invite him to the next meeting.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Committee meeting will be on Tuesday 7 June 2011 at 5.30 p.m. in the Community Hut.

The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.