

# MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

## MINUTES OF COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON SATURDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 10.00 A.M. IN THE COMMUNITY HUT, MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS, FENHAM HALL DRIVE

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

There were no **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**.

**MINUTES OF PREVIOUS COMMITTEE MEETING** held on 31 July 2010 had been distributed to Committee members. **PW** would check the origin of the topsoil from Dinnington. There had been no feedback yet from the Northumberland in Bloom judging. The minutes were agreed.

### **BREAK-INS AND SECURITY**

WPC Simone Riley from the Community Police had been invited to the meeting and was aware of the recent spate of break-ins and thefts at Moorside; events of this type were happening at other sites in the city although there were few reports of serious vandalism. She gave the Association a supply of leaflets with police contact details and some shed alarms for members; she would also try to obtain a supply of warning posters which could be posted around the site. Patrolling of the site might discourage intruders but not if it put individual members at risk. The activity of the bottle-diggers and motorbikers on the Moor was being monitored by the police and by helicopter surveillance. Large items of equipment owned by the Association could be marked with infra-red pens and registered with the police; the infra-red can then be detected on recovered stolen items. **SP** would liaise with WPC Riley to action this.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

**KG** had nothing to report.

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

**NL** reported that there was £4,000 in the Association's bank account and £5,800 of bee grant money. She was sourcing the forms to open a separate account in which to deposit grants. There was £2,700 in the deposit account. The show had broken even and engraving the shields had accounted for most of the expenses. Additional tables would be needed for next year's show.

### **TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT**

The welding repair on the Trading Hut was imminent. **SP** would order more paraffin and manure, and David Vincent was to order seed potatoes. The Trading Hut rota needed a few more volunteers.

### **GRANTS AND FUNDING APPLICATIONS**

The grants sub-committee would re-convene with **PW**, **SJ** and **JR** as volunteers. It was suggested that the area next to the toilet block could be developed with raised gardening beds, and possibly a hut, for disabled and elderly gardeners to use; a grant could be obtained to finance this project.

### **BEE GROUP**

Alison Benjamin had been impressed by the bee garden on her recent visit and was rewarded with a jar of **TW**'s honey... Hamid Haykal had set up a second plastic hive on his other allotment without consulting the Committee which was causing concern to some of his neighbours; it was agreed that all those who were affected would be consulted and Hamid would be asked to move his hive. **TW** reported that what had been a reasonably successful bee season was now at an end.

### **NAWG MATTERS/MOORSIDE 2010 SHOW**

The City Show had made a profit of almost £1,000. It was agreed that preparations for the 2011 Moorside show should begin earlier. It was felt that the date of show this year had been too early since many members were away on holiday in August.

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## GARDEN CLUB 2010

6 people had attended the most recent Garden Club. Rob Germany was willing to continue running the club although it was not certain that **NS** was willing to do so.

## SITE INSPECTION TEAM

A site inspection had taken place on 11 September. Cultivation levels, the presence of noxious weeds and the state of paths had been criteria considered during the inspection. As a result, **PW** had written to 12 members; the tenant of Plot 6 had been given notice to quit and another member whose plot was less than 50% cultivated had been contacted. The Association had taken over the back half of Plot 101 for a year in an attempt to bring the marestail under control; it was agreed that the plot should be divided in half lengthwise (not front and back) and that the plotholder would be advised accordingly. **PW** and **KG** volunteered to join the working party to clear the infested half of the plot.

## MOORSIDE SIGN BOARD

**SP** reported that the sign board was nearing completion.

## PROJECTS FOR PLOTS 1 & 2

This project had been on hold during the summer. **PW** would visit *B&Q* to submit the grant application. It was proposed that a hedge would be planted to separate the garden from the manure area.

## FLOODING UPDATE

**PW** had written to Nigel Hailes but had not yet received a reply.

## SITE MAINTENENCE

The Committee needed to consider strategies to maintain communal areas and paths on the site to put before the membership at the AGM. It was suggested that local communities could tend their own areas or an honorarium could be offered to a member willing to take on a maintenance role; it was felt that the latter option could lead to a rise in the rents for plots.

## VENUE FOR COMMITTEE MEETING IN THE WINTER

A room in the Nunsmoor Centre was available for meetings at £10 per hour, with water available to make hot drinks. It was agreed to hire the venue for a trial period.

## NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

The full report is now available on the Association's website. In summary, the research revealed that individuals want to work at their own pace without feeling pressured; this allows an individuality of, and a balanced approach to, allotment gardening.

## ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- ◆ The leader of the Scout Group was unable to provide figures for the number of scouts attending sessions in the garden but was aware that the plot had not been extensively cultivated this season. The Association had been given an assurance that any young offender would be supervised whilst on the site.
- ◆ The canopy between the Trading and Community Huts would be taken down for the winter.
- ◆ The mower would be repaired.
- ◆ It was noted that **FL** had not attended three consecutive Committee meetings without apology. Separate conversations with the Chair and with the Secretary indicated that it was unlikely that **FL** would attend future meetings. It was agreed that **FL** was no longer a de facto member of the Moorside Committee, though he remains nominally a member as there has been no letter of resignation.

## DATE OF NEXT MEETING

## **MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION**

**This will be on Tuesday the 26<sup>th</sup> October 2010 at 5.30pm at the Nunsmoor Centre**  
The meeting closed at 11.45 a.m.