

# MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

## Committee Meeting

5.30pm on Tuesday 5 December 2023  
Nunsmoor Centre, Fenham, NE4 5AH

### NOTES

#### Present

Richard Littlewood (Chair), Simon Rutherford, Steven McDonnell, Nicola Francis  
Susan Pownall, Nick Coster, Karen Brown, Emily Sweetman

#### 1 Apologies for absence

Frank Lightfoot, Sarah Farrell, Barbara Taylor

#### 2 Minutes of previous meeting (7 November) and matters arising

With reference to the suggestion at the previous meeting that the committee review and tighten rules on construction of greenhouses, sheds etc, it was **AGREED** to consider this once the terms of the lease (as yet unsigned) were resolved. It was further **AGREED** to review the tenancy agreement at the same time.

**ACTION: Emily** to add to forward plan.

It was noted that Steven McDonnell had advised Plot 33 that 75% of the plot should be under cultivation and to restrict the size of their planned patio accordingly.

#### 3 Chair's Update

##### • Lease

Nicola Francis planned to attend a meeting called by Newcastle City Council on 8 December to discuss the lease. It would be an opportunity to reiterate the committee's objections to the proposed lease. The committee noted that both Frank Lightfoot and Emily Sweetman had recently made overtures to the Freeman to request an invoice in order that rent owed could be paid.

**ACTION: Nicola** to report back.

#### 4 Other updates

##### (i) Treasurer (Nicola)

Nicola was obliged to request committee signatures on bank forms again. Those present were able to sign. Transfers for the Year End had been completed and accounts were being prepared for January's meeting.

**Action: Emily** issue forms to Sarah Farrell and Frank Lightfoot and return to Nicola.

It was **AGREED** to continue to retain the Plants Scheme as a separate budget line and to combine headings for community plot and open day into a single 'events' heading.

(ii) Trading Hut (Susan)

Trading hut takings for November were £265.10. Susan reported a Year End turnover for 2023 of £7008.00 which represented an increase in the previous year, although in part because of inflation. The net profit figure was not yet available.

Susan had recently completed a stock take. There was a small amount of paraffin remaining for sale to existing plot holders only. It was unclear whether future bulk supplies would be obtainable. The holes in the container sides used by rats had been located, and were to be welded. Susan intended to keep the shop open on Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve.

(iii) Inspection (Nick)

Nick added plots 7 and 9b for monitoring. The fence between plots 13 and 14 was looking in need of repair.

It was agreed that, given the continuing inclement weather, the committee would wait until early January to take action in respect of plots that were under review or had received warning letters in October / November, and that the December Chair's Update would encourage people to address their plots during the Christmas holidays.

**Action: Emily** ensure note in Chair's Update

Emily noted that the Inspection summary included an error. Plot 89a had not received an advisory letter.

**Action: Nick** to correct

(iv) Lettings (Barbara)

Barbara was in receipt of all the paper documents from the former Lettings Officer. Susan advised there may be an electronic version of a tenancy agreement in her possession which contained some previously proposed amendments.

**Action: Susan** to locate.

(v) Health and Safety (Steven)

Nothing to report.

## **5 AGM 2024**

It was **AGREED** to hold the AGM in the week commencing 26 February (avoiding half term), ideally Wednesday 28 February, from 7.30pm and to provide tea and coffee on arrival.

Members would be reminded in the December Chair's Update to supply any motions they wished to have considered (although these could also be proposed on the day).

**Action: Emily** to include AGM reminder in Chair's Update.

**Action: Emily** to book Saint James & Basil Church Hall.

Nicola reminded the committee that earlier in the year it had considered proposing some changes to the constitution.

**Action: Emily** to circulate a copy of the constitution, invite committee members to bring proposals to January's meeting, and add the item to the January agenda.

The committee was reminded that all members stand down for re-election at the AGM. According to the current constitution the maximum size of the committee was twelve. There were two vacancies in the existing committee, although it would be possible to increase this by agreement at the AGM. It was **AGREED** that all those standing for election would be asked to complete a nomination form containing some information about themselves and their reasons for wishing to join the committee. The intention was to provide members with a basis on which to vote, and to make committee members more visible to the wider membership. It was confirmed that the constitution says each person standing should be proposed and seconded at the AGM.

**Action: Emily** to draft new nomination form.

The January meeting would also set the rents for 2024, to be approved at the AGM, after which rent letters would be circulated.

## **6 Tenancy Agreement (Attached)**

It was **AGREED** to defer this until the new lease arrangements were concluded.

## **7 Any other business**

- Field drains on east of site

An email had been received from a long-term plot holder regarding flooding in the East lane and the contribution of the field drains alongside the Moor. It was agreed to ask Frank Lightfoot to raise this with Kevin Batey.

**Action:** Frank to raise with Freeman.

Susan noted earlier, incomplete actions, including the container roof repairs, the replacement lock on the WC ladies, and the renewal of noticeboard.

Steven McDonnell proposed paving the manure area for easier access and usability. Susan said there would be an advantage in paving an arc to accommodate the gate opening more easily.

## **8 Date of next meeting**

Emily noted that the next meeting was scheduled on 2 January when many committee members would still be travelling/holidaying with families and friends. It was **AGREED** that the next meeting would be held on **5.30pm on Tuesday 9 January 2023**, pending confirmation of availability of venue.

**Action: Emily** arrange with Nunsmoor Centre Trust and confirm with committee.

(ES)