

Court Oak Road and Tennial Lane Allotments Association

Honorary President Alan Harbour Minutes of the Annual General Meeting

Held on Tuesday 23rd April 2013, 7.30pm at Quinborne Community Centre

Attendance

Ian Wilson Chair COR, John McQuay Treasurer COR, Andrew Large Secretary COR & TL, Roger Cobley COR, Stuart Guest TL, Dave Watkins TL, Marian Stanley COR, Andrew Moseley COR

1. Apologies

Alan Harbour, Glenys Nicklin, Pamela Baylay, Ming Sung.

2. Acceptance of Minutes of the 2012 AGM

Proposed John McQuay, Seconded Dave Watkins

3. Matters Arising.

None

4. Officers Reports

i) Chair

Thanks to everyone for their hard work over the year. The shop looks fantastic, our thanks to Stuart and Andy for their ideas and hard work.

There have been suggestions about buying a chipper to recycle green waste. We could turn the plot by the shed into a recycling area. We could ask the supplier who brings us chippings to offload them there and ask him to chip up any green waste placed there by plot holders. If this is successful we could look at purchasing a chipper.

The Council are withdrawing the collection of green waste over the next year so we have to be ready to help plot holders recycle large amounts. This could be a useful recycling amenity provided plot holders use it responsibly with waste from their plots only and with all metal, glass etc removed before placing it in the area. There is a possibility of hiring a skip but this has been abused in the past with people dumping other rubbish. Skips are very costly and if we hired one it would be for allotment rubbish only.

The possibility of purchasing a strimmer was also discussed. There is one for sale and Andy volunteered to check it out.

One plot has become infested with Mares Tail. It was proposed to mow it and use it for parking spaces.

We need a 1000 litre water butt for the toilet block at COR. This water would be used for flushing the toilets. Water conservation will be a major issue in the coming months and years as the Council devolve many of the management tasks to the individual Allotment Committees. The BDAC have set up a sub-committee to look through the new proposed Management Agreement.

ii) Secretary

See report attached

Essential points

a) Rain Water Harvesting. Water conservation will be essential as the Council proposes that Allotment Committees pay water and sewage costs for their sites. They will contribute an amount but if we go over budget the Committee will have to pay. Having water butts to collect water from shed roofs will help and all plot holders with sheds are encouraged to put up guttering to fill their water butt.

b) Members and helpers needed

More committee members are needed if we are to create a thriving allotment community.

iii) Treasurer

See attached report

Finances are slightly down on the previous year as we purchased a scythe cutter and the poor weather affected the shop sales.

It was suggested that we stocked more items on the shop such as watering can, nails, felt and paint for the sheds. Items such as guttering could be shown in a display and ordered as required. Also open the shop on another day in the week. This would be dependent on more helpers volunteering for shop duty.

John McQuay has done a price comparison of multipurpose composts and found that the bags we sell are value for money, both in size and quality.

5. Resolution the amend the Constitution

i) Amend 6.1 to read " four officers, Chairperson, Treasurer, Association Secretary and Safety Officer".

ii) Amend 9.1 to include "gThe Safety Officer shall be responsible for Maintaining appropriate health and safety records and documentation" h. Both amendments were passed unanimously. Andrew to update the change on the website.

6. Election of Officers

i) Ian Wilson was re-elected as Chairperson.

ii) Andrew Large was re-elected as Secretary

- iii) John McQuay was re-elected as Treasurer
- iv) Marian Stanley was elected as Minutes Secretary
- v) Alison Lawson was appointed as Auditor
- vi) Site Secretaries
 - a. Stuart Guest, Dave Watkins were elected as Site Secretaries for Tennial Lane
 - b. Andrew Large and Andrew Moseley were elected as Site Secretaries for Court Oak Road
- vii) Andrew Moseley was elected as Safety Officer - dependent on being given an outline of the duties required.

All appointments were unanimously passed

viii) Election of Committee Members: All current serving committee members were re-elected; Andrew Moseley and Stuart Guest were formally elected as serving members.

7. Open Discussion: Suggestions and Improvements

A notice is needed at Tennial Lane requesting the ceasing of dumping pigeon and chicken waste. This is a major health hazard.

Council vans come on to the Tennial Lane site where the drivers fill up their water tanks and wash their vehicles. This has to stop. Stuart said he would take photos of this and the licence plate numbers to report them to the Council Allotment Office.

As Birmingham still collect green waste we need to let plot holders know when this will happen so they can bag it and have it ready to be put out.

8. AOB

It was suggested that we make links with other allotment sites so we could buy in bulk and further reduce our costs.

We may need to replace the small shed - used for storage and bagging up - as the floor is unsafe and the shed is in a bad state. It was suggested that we look at purchasing a metal container which would be more secure.

9. Date, Time and Venue of next Committee Meeting.

11th June 2013, 7.30pm at Quinborne Community Centre

Court Oak Road and Tennial Lane Allotments Association

AGM 23rd April 2013 - Secretary's Report

2012 was a challenging year, the wettest for a century. The City Council had increased the rents massively. These two factors have led to a massive drop-out rate across the City but we have fared well although we now have a number of vacancies at Court Oak Road, about ten to twelve plots and just a couple at Tennial Lane.

I would like to thank the Chair, Ian Wilson, for his work during the year and Treasurer John McQuay for looking after our finances. I would like to particularly thank Marian Stanley for taking the minutes at the meetings. The shop is looking better and our range expanding – John McQuay, Andrew Moseley and Stuart Guest have put in a great effort here. I must also thank John Bland, Bob Lintern, Andrew Moseley and Stuart Guest for the help with site maintenance at their respective sites.

The best result of the year is receiving a small Community Chest grant for 30 metres of road repair at Tennial Lane. The road has become dangerous but at least a small stretch has bright new kerbstones. Now we will have to apply to get more money as this represents only 15% of the total road edging – the Big Lottery Fund looks favourite.

Horticultural maintenance has been a big problem – last year the Allotments Office introduced monthly monitoring where we report whether the work has been done and its quality. It rapidly became clear that much of the work is not being done and that this has been the case for years. The quality of the work has frequently been poor, for example the weed-killer being sprayed on the paths is ineffective. We have an assurance that things will be tightened up this year.

Next year (2014) we face big changes. The City Council is reducing the administrative support for allotments and it looks very likely that the voluntary Associations will have to pick up much of the work. We are being asked to take responsibility for the water charges, cess-pit service and maintenance budgets. Although we will receive the money any overspend will have to be met locally. The Council hasn't said how they will protect Association officers from personal liability for any debt and until this is in place we cannot consider taking on these duties.

This makes certain matters priorities. Rain-water harvesting is now essential – if you bought a shiny new water butt and have a shed you really should be saving water and not filling it from the tap. If there is a demand the Association will buy another load of butts to sell and we must collect the rainwater from the site buildings as this both saves using the tap and prevents heavy rain filling the cess-pit tanks. This is already the case at Tennial Lane. It is a harsh fact that if we overspend on water after this year it will be cut off – we have this year to prepare and ensure that this never happens.

More committee members and helpers are always needed. There is an ever-increasing burden on the volunteers and it takes a team of people to make the allotments work. I would urge anyone with a few hours to spare to help out on site – whether in the shop, site maintenance or preparing plots for new tenants.

Andrew Large, April 2013.

COURT OAK ROAD AND TENNAL LANE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Financial Report Committee Meeting Tuesday 23 April 2013

CORTLAA second year accounts April 2011-April 2012 were examined by Dr Alison Lawson (plot holder COR) and were approved.

I have examined the above Accounts. I have not conducted a full audit, and consequently I do not express an audit opinion on the view given by the accounts. However no matter has come to my attention which causes me to believe that proper records have not been kept, or to which attention should be drawn in order to enable a proper understanding of the accounts to be reached. On the basis of my examination I am satisfied that the financial records provide a true and fair view of the activities undertaken during the first financial period 05 April 2011 - to 06 April 2012 Alison Lawson

CORTLAA (Profit & Loss)

Income Year Three

As shown the total income for 2012/2013 was £3,080.54, £210 less than last year. Shop income was £490 less than last year, principally the impact of appalling weather. We sold 42 Water Butts (£336) and made a marginal profit after using 3 for CORTLAA use. Subscriptions were also down by £38, we have only enrolled 5 Associates during year three; last year we enrolled 32. (the weather !!) Rent Commission is 8% of rents collected by CORTLAA, we anticipate that based on the £5,088 collected 2012/2013 we will receive £407 + £60 toilet cleaning =£467; this will be £180 more than last year.

It is essential that we economise on water usage and we anticipate buying more water butts. **Clearly collecting water to fill water butts will help to avoid exceeding the devolved budgets.** Filling water butts from taps does not create an economy and using a hose to water is punishable death. (well close)

Expenditure Year Three

As shown total expenditure for 2012/2013 was £3786.53, year two expenditure was £2,844 (exc the Presidents Garden). The following are the principal reasons why year three expenditure is £942 different than last year.

- Purchase of a Scythe Cutter to clear plots, a manual mower for the Presidents Garden and a Hay Rack to clear grass after scything total £842. **adverse**

Water Butts £306 (offset by Income) **adverse**

Decrease in Cost of Goods Sold £197.02 **favourable**

Total £950.98, thereafter, the difference in year three and year two routine expenditure is only £18.

ie routine expenditure. Total routine expenditure for year three was £616.89

As shown year three expenditure exceeded income by (£706). A poor Shop trading

year and the acquisition of essential equipment which will last many years.

Balance Sheet

Cash at bank (no unrepresented cheques or lodgments) £ **2,433.08**

Petty Cash £**1.06**

Cash in Hand Shop £ **87.92**

Total Cash Year Three £2,522.06 No Debtors or Creditors

A full stock take was undertaken on 11/04/2013 and various minor items were prudently written down to nil: the stock NBV (cost plus Vat) was £981. April 2012 the NBV was £1,515. It has been our policy to reduce stock over the long winter to maximize cash. We have recently made a substantial year four purchase from Singletons.

Key Fund Deposits treated as Balance Sheet "Contingent Liability" is listed as £807, since very few people bother to return their keys, and the records go back to the "dark ages", I have reduced the "hypothetical" liability to a £74.7

Therefore free funds are calculated to be £2,522 less £747 = £1,775.

BCC financial situation is dire and a devolved water budget is all that we will receive. We will receive no further free "rubbish removal as organized by the Secretary. Skips are very expensive (£168.) We need to shred waste to make chippings/compost. Un-shredded waste will fill a skip leaving large voids. We are investigating the cost of a heavy duty petrol strimmer say 2" material.

WATER BUTTS

We have sold 42 of 45 water butts, 3 water butts have been used for CORTLAA toilets/sheds. Small profit £ 30.00, good result. We are grateful to Stuart Guest and his son Lee for their assistance in acquiring the second batch. As stated above need more water butts capturing water from guttering.

SHOP/STOCK

Opening Stock April 2012 £1,515.34 +Cost of Purchases £1,486.97- less Closing Stock (inventory 11/04/2013 £981.), therefore, cost of sales £2,021.1. A Shop Profit £172.96 (8.56% margin cost of sales-far too low). With the help of Andrew Mosley and Stuart Guest we have visited many Suppliers and examined the prices of many retailers. We have established new suppliers and conclude that the COTRLAA Shop is undoubtedly huge value for money. We have reorganized the Shop and with the commercial experience of Andrew Moseley and Stuart Guest we are expanding the range of product **Q WHAT ADDITIONAL GOODS COULD WE USEFULLY STOCK AND MAKE A PROFIT??**

J Mc Quay Hon Treasurer