

Court Oak Road and Tennial Lane Allotments Association

Honorary President Alan Harbour

**Committee Meeting Tuesday 11th June 2013
7.30pm at Court Oak Road Allotment Shop**

Attendance. John McQuay COR Treasurer, Andrew Large COR & TL Secretary, Andrew Moseley COR, John McCarty COR, Glenys Nicklin COR & TL, Jo Stubbs COR, Roger Copley COR, Stuart Guest TL, Marian Stanley COR.

1. Apologies

Ian Wilson (John McQuay to stand in as Chair)

2. Acceptance of the minutes for Meeting 5/2/2013

Unanimously accepted

3. Matters Arising

one

4. Officers' Reports

(i) Chairman's Report

We are meeting at the shop to save money. The cost of hiring the room at the community centre has increased.

It is no longer permitted to sell the weed killer Roundup as we have been. It has to be sold, by law, in its original container. It is a poisonous substance and it should not be put into a different container. It was suggested that we buy a supply of litre bottles that could be sold with a deposit so plot holders could return them for a refill.

We have the dates for the council green waste collections. The next one is on the 21st June. Plot holders are requested to place green waste only in the green waste bags and place them by the gate. No rubble or other waste matter please. A list of subsequent dates will be put on the notice boards at the two sites.

It has been suggested that we purchase a picnic bench as a family amenity. John McQuay has been researching the costs. Discussions took place on the necessity of spending the money as we need to use the funds for allotment amenities as a whole. An offer of a free picnic bench was made, it needs to be collected from the donor. We could see how this was used and if it was a popular amenity we could see about purchasing another one. It was felt that we need to cater for younger plot holders and their families. There is also a strimmer for sale from one of the plot holders. This needs to be followed up.

A plot holder who has been problematical for some time has finally been officially evicted but the plot is full of rubbish which needs to be cleared. He has been asked to clear the site by Sunday 17th. If not we are requesting volunteers to help clean up the plot. There have been big problems with Horse tail (Mares tail) on this plot and over the site generally. Poor practise in using weed killer has caused the weed to flourish. It is best to cut it down and keep it under control that way and it will gradually die off. Where it has taken over on a plot it is best to keep using the scythe cutter to cut it down and let the land lie fallow.

Again we need to keep vacant plots clear and ready for new comers. COR has a few vacant plots. When prospective plot holders visit the site they are put off by the amount of work needed to make the plots productive. We know it is hard work but we also know the rich rewards that come from 'growing your own'.

(ii) Treasurer's Report (see attachment for the full Report)

This year we have more Associate Members, which means that our neighbours are

using the shop which is a great thing. It was felt that we need to move to a rolling membership as many people sign up in the spring and summer. In the past memberships were renewed at the same time as paying the rent, in September, but it is felt that we could be more flexible especially as the fee has increased. We will date stamp the cards and the list so we can record when the next fee would be due.

The income, from April this year £1355.68 (see attached break down of figures). Expenditure £1076.74. Surplus £278.94.

We have purchased significant amounts of stock and the shop is encouraging new customer especially because of the new look and presentation of goods.

(iii) Secretary's Report.

Two letters of concern have been sent to plot holders who have neglected their plots at COR.

One problem causing concern at TL has been dealt with. Another plot holder at TL has been having BBQ's on his plot. This is will be dealt with by the Secretary.

The new Management Agreements proposed by the Council are a cause for concern for all Birmingham Allotment Committees. Our Secretary has been given definitive advice by the local Councillor who has advised that we add clauses to our Constitution limiting the liability to the committees to no more than the fees of the annual memberships. We will have to do this at the next AGM or if necessary hold a EGM later this year.

5. Feedback from Plot Holders

(i) Court Oak Road

A question was raised about the keys to the passageway gate at the rear of the site next to Norman Road. There have been a couple of burglaries in the road and it is thought that the houses were accessed by someone who had keys to that gate. We have never had keys to that passage way gate, it is nothing to do with the Allotment site. It is the responsibility of the homeowners and the Council. If people have been getting over the fences and breaking them down it is the Council who should make the repairs.

We need to buy more water butts as they have been very useful for plot holders to purchase.

(ii) Tennal Lane

Two tenants have complained that their path is being blocked by a neighbouring plot holder. They have asked the Committee to intervene and send a letter. Also on one of the plots the water butt is overflowing onto a neighbours plot. The Secretary will deal with these two matters.

A query was raised about a plot at TL that has been overrun with Horse tail (Mares tail. Could it be used as a burning place in November. This was discussed but is not advisable.

6. Any Other Business

Volunteers needed for the Shop on Sunday mornings as it gets very busy at times. We need a list of dates.

We need to devise a timetable for the collection of rents in October at the next meeting.

We need to produce an order sheet for next years' seeds and seed potatoes and any other items useful for plot holders.

7.. Date, time and venue of the next Committee Meeting

Tuesday 3rd September 2013 7pm (**note earlier time**) at the Court Oak Road Shop.