**EWAA Committee Meeting Agenda**

**8 March 2018, 7.30pm**

1. Apologies : Nicola Jones, Jon Willis, Peter Corcutt, Jane Nimmo-Smith, Pat Mansfield, Louise Evans, Josie Procter, Jane Millar, Jane NS, Dan Thorpe

Present: Clare Ferguson, Jevon Lancaster, Stewart Young, Mike Yeadon, Tony Flett, Chris Clifford, Simon Bazley, plus Alice Hemming of the Children’s Allotment

1. Minutes of last meeting and matters arising:

* Minutes not available on the night, please see website
* Community payback have gone quiet, not responsive to Jevon’s enquiries re site work.

Site matters:

1. The Children’s Allotment and neighbours agreement

The City Council have offered The Children’s Allotment a tenancy for 10 years, on a peppercorn rent with the expectation that they’ll bring it back into use. The final details of the lease are still to be agreed, but when the team are ready there will be a planning application for a change of use. They now have a 10 person organising group and are planning out the work that needs doing.

The council have agreed that they will put in a pedestrian gate at their expense, but it’s only a verbal agreement at this stage, still to be officially committed to. They also agreed to pay for the surrounding fencing, but this also needs to be confirmed in writing.

The group’s intention is to have 3 clearing sessions, 25th March (between 1pm and 4.30pm), 8th April, 22nd April. The intention of the first session would be to clear the space behind the shop so that there is room for a skip to be placed in time for the 8th April clearing.

Alice confirmed that there is about 6 grand in the bank, which should cover the immediate costs of equipment and skips, and there are other grant applications pending.

The plan is for the Tree Surgeon to come and clear out all the trees bordering the outside fence, some time in mid April. This will then allow for a gate to be put into the fence.

Alice confirmed that water and power have been cut off, so is expecting to have to reconnect them, and would expect to do so, independently of EWAA. Regarding the sewage, it’s unclear what the current arrangement is, but Stuart believes there is an inadequate connection to a cess pit outside the shop. Alice said it is their intention to build a composting toilet. Some discussion followed re the disposal of water from sinks.

Jevon asked about plans for opening dates. Alice confirmed that the expectation is that the clear-up will take a year. However, the funding requires that they spend certain pots by certain dates, so the hope is that the work will be completed by the end of the summer. Alice explained that there will be an interim period when access will be required via EWAA main gate, before the site is ready for the work to be done to open an access way from the other side.

Alice explained that she’s currently working full time, but will be changing to part time, and working 3 days a week on the project from April.

Stuart asked about the cost of childcare that’s expected. Alice confirmed it is intended to be a full time outdoor nursery, Ofsted registered, with fulltime nursery staff, but with parents supplementing the hours in a co-op type model. Hence with parents adding support, the costs can be kept down, for those prepared to help. The intention is to use grant funding to get set up, but not rely on that in the long term. Mike asked how it was to be advertised, Alice said that there is a demand for this, and the expectation is that with the co-op model, encouraging support from parents it’ll be self selecting. There is also an anticipation that there will be other drop-in activities with slightly older kids advertised at local primary schools.

Chris mentioned an Easement. Alice explained that normally that is to agree between 2 separate sites, whereas in this case that’s not the case because both lands are owned by the same owner, and so an easement wouldn’t be valid. Chris explained that the easement is between EWAA and the council, on the lease, and his expectation would be that our lease would need to be changed to include an easement to cover utilities for the Whitehouse (accepting that there is already easement covering access, but not utilities as there aren’t any currently). Simon suggested that if at all possible Whitehouse would want to get utilities from the other side, rather than through our site.

Alice confirms she will send Clare a heads of terms document, that she’s had with the council.

Clare mentioned access to the back of the shop, as the boundary is currently aligned with the building. Alice confirmed that she would add terms to agree access for maintenance purposes to the agreement.

Stewart raised the concern about vandals accessing the site. Alice said it was her belief that if the site is active and in use, she doesn’t think it’ll be a problem.

1. OUWG boundary

Chris summed up, by saying in essence lots has been promised and not delivered. A small amount of the work promised has been done, but not much. There has been a bit of a mess left there, Chris has asked for an email saying when the work is done, so that allotment holders can be notified and go collect wood produced from OUWG. There is a question as to when nesting will prevent more work. It seems they’re currently working on it, even though in the past 1st March was used as a cut-off date when they didn’t want to do any more work.

Clare invited members to join OUWG but pointed out a lack of interest in running it. It was suggested we could take on managing a border region, so we remove the encroachment and shading on our boundary and that area could be managed by coppicing. It was agreed to once again notify the council now of the ongoing problem, in order to create a record, and tooutline the options we’re proposing for 3 years time at the renewal of both our leases.

1. Water pipes update

40m of waterpipes has been laid in the road closest to Howard St. Stuart asked that the water be able to be turned on, by the time the clocks come forward, which is the 25th March.

Spring workparty/ litterpick woodchip car park

There is litter in both carparks. Woodchip car park is not in the EWAA lease, and both bordering properties have a right of access. Chris Clifford confirmed he would do a land registry search to find out what rights the 2 properties have. In the past the council have proposed to charge us business rates if it were to be included in our lease. As long as it is not, we are not in a position to spend money installing gates or on other improvements.

**Work party to be held on the 7th April 10-12, with a view to litter pick the car park, and cut down some of the brambles.**

1. Treasurer report

Regarding the query on the water bill, we paid the bill, then they subsequently agreed that we’d been over billed, so we are now in credit with them.

1. Shop report

Questions were raised re ordering more manure and thicker fleece.

The advancing age of our scales was noted, agree 2 new sets should be bought for the shop via ebay

1. Membership report

The next plot inspection is proposed for May. The policy, as to what needs to have been done before a possible eviction was restated.

1. Machinery report

Tony has fired up all the kit, and everything seems to work, but the battery start needs charging.

1. Wolvercote naturefest?

No-one is interested in running a stall there

1. Any Other Business

It was noted that muntjac tracks have been seen in various parts of the site again and noted that there is a gap under the OUWG fence, that needs filling.

Shop report

- potato order from WCF Horticulture - 15% less than last year, given the wastage - £230 spent compared to £270 last year.

- seed order from Kings - fewer packets ordered this year, more loose seeds, which are cheaper, and allow more flexibility for purchasing

- all 6 loads of manure have now been barrowed away. I’m not sure whether we made or lost money on it, but seemed popular.

- WG Loach gave me a discount on the water butts because they’d been rather squashed on delivery (though they seemed to have recovered somewhat) so I’ve reduced the price on them to £21.

Irrigation Project Update and planning   
  
40m 25mm dia waterpipe laid in Top Road from existing standpipe at plot 58 to plot 62 where new standpipe and waterbutt to be installed.   
Filled trench allowed to settle and tamped down, and stones and other hard debris to be removed from soil.   
Trench bed to be prepared for the replacement of turves along its length, and made good.   
Installation of new standpipe support posts, and installation of pipework fittings and connection to existing supply, and fitting of new bib-taps.   
Siting and installation of new waterbutt at plot 62.   
Overview: Works are progressing slowly, though successfully. but have also been hampered by the winter weather. The remaining phases should proceed as planned in due course: All materials and fittings have been sourced in readiness for this. The Maintenance Team have worked coherently and proceeded with consideration to health and safety, and ewaa members.