**EWWA Committee Meeting Minutes**

**9th July 2020**

**Chair:**Chris Clifford

**Minutes:**Charlotte Attlee

**Attending:**Antoine Flett, Sarah Pollard, Meryl Wilford, Louise Evans, Dan Thorpe, Clare Ferguson, Mike Yeadon, Pat Mansfield, Mo

**1.  Apologies:**Renata Rettalak, Zara Skitt, Grzesiek Gorski, Simon Bazeley, Josie

**2.  Verbal report from Chair on OUWG**

Chris met with the 2 new co chairs of OUWG, Helen Edwards and Candy March on 6/07/20 to discuss plans for next year as the lease ends in October 2021. They expressed a wish to do things differently, except to possibly increase entries to the site through the allotment area. Chris said we would need maps and permission from the allotment committee. He was assured that the public would not be able to come in ad hoc, but we need to watch this space.

OUWG is waiting for a quote from  OCC re reversal for repair work on leaky water pipes at the allotment end.

If by October 2020 no firm plan is forthcoming, there will be a need to negotiate.

**3.  The Children's Allotment plans**

 Summary: The building on the site is an asbestos concern and will need to be demolished. The polytunnel area is planned to be used in place of the building. Alice has had water from the allotment on a grace and favour basis since their arrival, but now there will need to be a bill for them presented every 6 months. This will be one third of the standing charge, the other parts to be shared with allotments and OUWG. The Children's Allotments will probably use more water than the Whitehouse Project did as they are operating sprinklers.

Alice has sent a copy of the lease to OCC.

On seeing the details of this lease, Chris noted the lease runs for another 10 years with added responsibilities than is in the allotment lease.

Chris proposes to enter into correspondence with OCC to point out the leases dont accord.

Chris made a land registration search with the number they supplied, which showed the land is on the same register as the allotment land, not separate designated areas.

Oxford Federation of Allotments don't think we have a lease, but a license. We want a lease to be registered at the land registry. This is for OCC to sort out.

**Q:** What is expected from us in their lease apart from access via the gate?

**A:** Only the deliveries that are dealt with through the existing access gate.

**Q:** What are the implications of demolishing the building?

**A:** They would have the right in the terms of their lease to connect the septic tank with waste pipes. This would need clarification from OCC.

**Q:**If they have an existing lease, do they have an obligation to renew it?

**A:**No, there are rights that have been given to The Children's Allotments that are not within the lease. This needs clarification, and as the new lease has not been signed, we have the time and opportunity to iron out anomalies.

**4. Lease update**

   Chris has been in touch with ODFA for training to be set up to see if the allotments can become a cooperative or a limited company.

He hasn't heard back from them as yet.

Alice Hemming has offered advice.

**5. Water troughs and supplies**

Maintenance:

i)The soap dispenser in the toilet block needs replacing.

**Action:**

A stainless steel one costing £40 has been ordered.

ii)Water troughs:

The top road taps were running low on water/pressure when it was very hot and there was high water usage.

Simon Bazely  says the cheap solution would be to put reducers on the 25ml pipes. There are no such problems on the shop road.

iii)There is a  plot holder who's brother is using the new connection in the toilet block to fill their water butt with a hose.

**Action:**

Chris will get in touch to say there is free water from the large tanks and hose locks can be attached there.

iv)Taps are often being left on.

**Action:**

A strict email to be sent out reminding plot holders it's metered water and they need to be turned off  after the containers are filled.

**6. Treasures Report**

    Jon sent the spreadsheet out and all looks OK.

Jon has said the spreadsheet could be used to send out emails to plot holders to ask for rent.

Rent collection could be an opportunity to collect data on plot holders as a starting point for becoming a cooperative.

The data to be collected would be name, email, address and plot number.

Chris has spoken to a digital inputter who has agreed in principle to take on digital communication and to hold it safe in compliance with GDPR.

The form could be mounted on the website with the notification of the AGM,  to be filled in and returned online.

It was expressed by some present, that face to face contact on rent day is important for communication.

There was concern expressed about unnamed people who come on to the site who are not covered by insurance. There is a duty of care to plot holders, and they need to be named and identified. It was noted the allotments have always attracted unnamed helpers and family members and is considered permissible.

This discussion could be continued by email.

**7. The Shop**

As Simon wasn't present it was not discussed, other than Simon has expressed a desire to open the shop soon.

**8. Plot Inspections**

    Mike Yeadon: It's very late this year due to Covid 19. It was thought there needs to be a month's warning for plot inspections.

**Action:**

August/first week of September for inspection, with notice  to go out ASAP.

In the message, there needs to be consideration given to those who have and still are shielding. Dan has offered to help Mike with this task.

**9. Covid Regulations**

    There have been no updates since March. It's time to put a notice on the website giving general advice.

**Action:**

An email or short notice e.g "please adhere to government guidelines in accordance with Covid regulations...."

It is not anticipated that there will be large gatherings and it was agreed that dogs not owned by plot holders are not permitted on the site.

**10. Trees**

      There has been a recent formal complaint from a Howard Street resident about a large ash tree on the allotment backing onto a property. This is the 2nd complaint by this person about the tree.

There are cultivation guidelines on the lease that state that trees should not exceed growth of 12ft.

On the boundaries, trees and hedges need to be no higher than 12ft and properly maintained so they don't become a general nuisance to the neighbourhood.

**Action:**

Dan, Meryl, Louise and Mike have offered to inspect the borders on the Howard Street side and map the trees.

An email will go to the resident saying the allotment is carrying out a survey and any offending trees will be cut during the winter.

It is plot holders responsibility to keep the boundary hedges and trees in check.

**Proposal from Mo on harvesting water**

There are ongoing financial and practical drawbacks with getting water on to the plot.

Mo proposes a pilot scheme on the Howard Street lane that could be extended to the other paths on the site.

He has sent 3 documents that need to be studied.

A micro scheme with boreholes and a solar powered pump would cost in the region of £400.

The vision would be to make an initial pilot scheme so that if it's successful all 4 lanes could go ahead with it in the future.

Re concerns that the water table could go down as a result of borehole use, there could be an investigation of documents of the site that show historic borehole use.

At Aristotle Lane the boreholes go down 5 metres. They don't need planning permission.

A pilot scheme could be funded by fundraising to trial the Howard Street lane from the Childrens Play area down towards OUWG end.

**Action:**Chris to send out the documents to the committee for another discussion in September.