**9th September 7.30pm, EWAA Shop**

**Chair:** Meryl Wilford

**Minutes:** MW/ JM

**Present:** Jane Millar, Chris Clifford, Jon Willis, Dan Thorpe, Mike Yeadon,

Tony Flett, Mike McNaboe, George Murray, Simon Bazley.

1. **Apologies** Pat Mansfield
2. **Minutes of last meeting**
3. **Chair report**

Update on the new lease:

The ALM - Allotment Liaison Meeting- between Oxford City council representatives; ODFAA; and, representatives from allotments across Oxford took place via Zoom on 28th July. MW, JW and JM attended.

New representatives from the council were introduced.

* Lubna Arshad is the councillor now responsible for Parks & Waste Reduction, who had taken on allotments from Cllr. Louise Upton
* Caroline Chanides is the OCC officer responsible for Green Spaces & Allotments (within Community Services)
* Emma Cubbins works in the legal team which is drawing up the new lease and rules on behalf of OCC
* Isabel Richardson is the Senior Estates Surveyor at OCC, whose responsibilities include all the allotment sites

They said that they are still aiming for the end of September for the final draft lease. Explained that each lease will be site specific and slightly different for each to reflect different circumstances. Said that rents would remain the same.

The Q and A included questions about whether the ODFAA/ OCC ALM meetings would resume. They plan to have 3 meetings/year live at the Town Hall. Next ALM in Oct/Nov.

Questions about the OCC tree policy in new lease which seems to state that the council will maintain the large trees on site.

No new grants are available.

The meeting was constructive and OCC reps and ODFAA were thanked for all the work they had put into the lease negotiations.

Incorporation:

There seemed to be an assumption from ODFAA that most associations would incorporate but several have decided not to at the moment.

(Some concern about third party liability for Trustees in unincorporated associations)

JW explained that Zettle and other organizations won’t work with organizations which are not either sole traders or Ltd companies and asked whether we need to reconsider the decision to put incorporation on hold.

Chris Clifford volunteered to be named as sole trader on behalf of EWAA and his details will be used for Zettle, Agree to keep the final decision on incorporation under review but not to be taken before the lease is signed.

 **Action Point:** CC and JW to set up

 Filming by Oxford Natural History Museum:

Camera crew spent the afternoon of 22nd July onsite filming aspects of insect life and interviewing members in preparation for a permanent exhibition opening in July 2022 at the museum.

1. **Membership report**

Only 2 x half plots are available

52 people are on the waiting list.

Plot inspection arranged for 2nd-3rd October to be carried out by MY and GM.

Notification of the inspection should also remind members that the terms of the lease with the council state that 75% of each plot should be cultivated –the draft rules make this explicit.

**Action Point:** Notification of plot inspection to be posted and sent to members. JM

Plots which are very overgrown become difficult to let. Plot 130A needs to be strimmed and covered to help suppress weeds.

**Action Point:** DT and MW to strim and cover (possibly with mypex from OUWG)

1. **Treasurer report**

Discussion about whether the rent should be paid exclusively online or whether there should be face-to-face payments. Decision taken that all rent should be paid by bank transfer by 24th October.

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| **Rent due by 24 October.**(Query for JW -Possibility to pay in shop if people unable to make transfer?) |

 **Action Point:** Reminder to be sent to membership that rent due.

Discussion about whether there should be a rent rise. Agreement not to increase rent this year. Rents fixed at: £12.50 half plot £25 full plot

Proposal for discussion at AGM: Possible rent rise next year to include a levy to pay for basic maintenance. The recurring difficulty of having enough volunteers to carry out site maintenance means that it may be necessary to pay for a grounds person to carry out work for a regular fee. This could be financed from a slight rent rise in future.

Alternatively, proposal to involve voluntary organizations e.g. the Good Gymn volunteers, on a regular basis.

In the meantime, we will try to organize work parties as before and will take a decision about need for grounds person based on the response for workparty volunteers.

Suggestion to begin to compile a list of tasks needed for site upkeep which could be used either for work parties of for ad hoc volunteers.

Suggestion to keep a list of maintenance jobs in the shop and possibly on website as visual reminder of the kinds of tasks EWAA needs help with.

**Action Point**: Dan and Tony to survey and compile to-do list.

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| **Next work party set for 16th and 17th October**Saturday 16th October 10-1.00, 2.00-4.00 & **Apple pressing 2.00-4.00**Sunday 17th October 10-12.00 & **AGM 12.00-1.00** |

Proposal to change bank from Barclays to Lloyds because of the very poor service we currently receive.

Action Point: JW to arrange change of banks.

1. **Shop report**

 (To follow from Simon)

Request that there be clear communication about what the shop has in stock and is ordering so that members know what is available.

1. **Preparations for the AGM**

The last AGM was held on November 29th 2020

Suggestion that we hold the meeting on the same day as the workparty.

**AGM set for Sunday 17th October 12.00-1.00**

The meeting can take place outside the shop using the gazebo and inside the shop if it is raining.

1. **Site matters**

Gate security – gates continue to be left open. Decision taken that padlocks need to be replaced. Decision to replace all the padlocks with key padlocks (not number combination locks). New keys will need to be distributed to all plotholders before locks change. JW to contact BMA Varsity locksmiths.

Drug users and the two car parks: everyone is reminded that any incidents should be reported to the police.

1. **Children’s Allotment**

New fencing will be put up along the line of the boundary with EWAA.

1. **Any Other Business**

Reminder that only unleaded 95 petrol must be put into machinery. re fuel for mowers, please make sure that it is super unleaded 97-99 Ron not the new E10 fuel. Many thanks Tony

**Date of next meeting – Thursday 11th November**