**Thursday 9th March 2023, Zoom**

1. **Apologies:** Bridget Henderson, Nina Allen, Clare Ferguson
2. **Present:** Mike Yeadon, Mike McNaboe, Sarah Pollard, Pat Mansfield,Jon Willis, Jane Millar, George Murray, Meryl Wilford, Simon Bazley, Dan Thorpe
3. **Minutes of January and Extraordinary meeting and matters arising -** Approved
4. **Chair report**

The fire damage clearance has nearly been completed; just the last glasshouse structure needs to be removed with final scraping of the ground. BH spoke to Ciprian who was waiting to have the go ahead to rebuild his shed. MW has emailed Ciprian but he has not replied.

Action: MW / MY to speak with Ciprian about appropriate size of rebuild.

Action: JM To follow up with clearance contractor.

The damaged willow tree has finally been pollarded and branches removed (six months after storm damage). A large pile of wood chip was left on site for use by plotholders. Thanks to John Willis for liaising with contractors.

1. **Treasurer report**

There has been a significant amount of expenditure this year.

£123 - replacement lock for the gate which was damaged by the fire brigade

£1690 - purchasing shop stock

£388 - rent to council for 6 month period

£760 - extra keys (it was cheaper to buy 50 extra keys rather than a smaller purchase)

Plumber also paid for repair in toilet block - £84.17

There is a balance of about £8,000 in the savings account.

May need to consider rent rise again.

1. **Shop report**

The shop is now very well stocked and initial sales have been good. More promotion of the shop is needed to the membership – please spread the word.

A whole sack of Charlotte potatoes has already gone. Seemed to indicate that perhaps not such a wide variety of potatoes are needed.

Thanks to Jane for organising the shop and to all the volunteers.

1. **Membership**

Four new plots have been let: 3 x half plots and 1x quarter plot. There are five plots still available: 3x quarter plots and 2x half plots.

All the overgrown plots have been let and new members seem to be making progress.

It was useful to have the letter advising people about the plot inspection and the need for plot numbers and care of paths. Query about whether plotholders were responsible for path of one specific side – left or right. Agree that pragmatically best if plotholders take care of both the paths immediately adjacent to their plot.

Discussion about state of paths where some are undercut by adjoining plots with ground at different levels. Suggestion to help people shore up edges with bricks or wood.

Action: George and Mike to advise after plot inspection on March 25th.

1. **Lease, incorporation and cultivation guidelines**

Stalemate continues regarding the lease. There seems no point in working on plans for incorporation (including co-op status) until the lease with the council is finalised. Alice from the Children’s Allotment has offered to advise about forming a co-op but this seems premature in current circumstances.

Action: GM to look at the constitution and cultivation guidelines again and bring to the next meeting for further discussion.

1. **Policy on bonfires**

Agree that there should be a change in guidelines for bonfires.  Guidelines should state that fires can take place **after dusk** with no stipulation of time.  Proposal to only allow fires in the winter months, stopping when the clocks go forward and starting when the clocks go back. However this would mean that no fires could take place in the summer months when the weather is dry enough to burn but also dangerous because of that. Some members feel strongly that no bonfires should take place at all and that all organic matter should be composted or chipped. Perhaps we should look at costing the use of chipping. Difficult to gain consensus over rules concerning bonfires and fires in general especially when extra rules may be very difficult to enforce. Further discussion about whether burning should take place inside incinerator bins to reduce risk of fires spreading and whether to have communal fire burning area. Committee agrees to discuss again.

1. **Planning the work party**

Dan and Mike volunteer to co-ordinate the work party. Priorities include maintenance of car park areas and cutting back brambles. Possible times 10-12, 12.30 – 2.30. Volunteers to meet at the shop and bring tools.

Actions:

MW to make posters

JM announce via website/email.

1. **OUWG.**

The wildlife group have requested that we add a clause to the joint management agreement:

“The EWAA allotment plots 197b,198b and 199b, previously disused, will be maintained by OUWG for wildlife benefit as meadowland."

The new laid hedge near to the cycle path and proposed wildflower meadow is an asset for both organizations. Agreed unanimously.

1. **Site matters**

A skip is to be ordered for April or May -not to coincide with plot inspection. Mike will help pack skip if rubbish specific day designated for people to leave rubbish.

Action: ??

New key is needed for the machine shed; new lock needed.

Actions:

DT and MM to try to open the door on Sunday 12th.

SB: source new lock

Water to be turned on to fill water butts on Sunday 12th and then turned on from the 26th of March (weather permitting).

Action: DT to supervise.

Offer of new grass cutter. MY to consult with Tony who has final decision about whether to accept new cutter.

1. **Date of next meeting**

11th May 2023