**EWAA Committee Meeting Minutes**

**Thursday 11th May 2023**

1. **Apologies:** Mike McNaboe, Clare Ferguson, Bridget Henderson, Tony Flett, Sarah Pollard
2. **Present:** Meryl Wilford, Simon Bazley, Mike Yeadon, Pat Mansfield, Jon Willis, George Murray, Dan Thorpe, Renata/Nina Allen, Jane Millar.
3. **Minutes of March meeting and matters arising** – approved.
4. **Chair report**:

Work Party: Turn out consisted of committee members and 2 other allotment holders. Very bad weather may have been reason for poor turn out so it was agreed that in future a work party should be postponed if forecast is bad. However, turn out is often poor except for committee members and suggestion was made we should make a push/ a plea for more help. Another suggestion made was that rents should be higher and then work needed on site could be paid for. Those who do help, could maybe have their rents reduced. Dan and Tony have power tools: the meeting supported the suggestion that they work separately and someone else should be in charge of volunteers on a work party day.

Building Condition Survey: The Council carried out a city-wide survey in 2020, visiting each site unannounced, and ODFAAA has distributed the individual reports to each member site. We need to send comments/queries to the Council.

As OCC is the landlords it is not EWAA’s responsibility to deal with the problem of asbestos that may be present in the roof, guttering, etc. A wastepipe from our Shop building guttering appears to have been removed already, but there is still the possibility of asbestos being present in the roof, which OCC was unable to inspect.

Action: **JM** will write a draft letter, for review by **MW** & **SB**, to sent to the Mark Gibbons, the OCC contact.

1. **Membership Report:**

MY reported 4 new plot holders this month and waiting list reduced by 12

2 plot holders evicted after the inspection

7 half plots currently available

Waiting list now stands at 71

An email has been sent to Chris Rumble offering him the greenhouse on plot 138b as his was destroyed in the recent fire. The new plot holders of 138b understand the situation.

In anticipation of the proposed resignation of **MY** in September and periods over the summer when he will be away, it was agreed that **GM** will step in temporarily as Membership Sec and that **DT** will help him. A new officer can then be appointed at the AGM in September. It was felt that this position needs 2 people ideally and that a clear policy about a process for eviction and other rules about conduct on the site should be expressed in the new constitution. Many thanks to MY for his diligent work as Membership secretary.

1. **Treasurer report:**

A number of unexpected expenses since the start of the year, notably £1,200 spent of clearance of the fire debris.

1. **Shop report:**

Shop will now be open for just one hour every Sunday as demand has dropped off, but the turnover has been good and more items have been ordered.

Many thanks to JM for organising everything and to members for manning the shop.

Straw Bales: The idea of ordering straw was appreciated but felt to be a fire hazard and not practical, so **JM** to liaise with **Mike M**, and post an online announcement with contact details for ordering.

1. **OCC lease update:**

There is still no decisive news – through ODFAA we have learnt that OCC would like the Allotment Associations to be responsible for fencing around their site and want AAs to incorporate as legal identities.

[JM: because this file will be posted on a public platform, we need to be circumspect about what information we share!]

Due to the lack of clarity regarding the new lease, the EWAA committee agreed to prioritise the work of running the site, and to return to consideration of the lease once the Oxford-wide template is agreed.

1. **Constitution proposals:**

The EWAA constitution needs updating, and having waited for over two and a half years for the Council to confirm the details of the new lease, we will now proceed to create a new constitution that satisfies our site-specific requirements.

Action: GM will send a draft constitution with proposed rule changes to the committee by the end of May. Committee members to provide feedback via GoogleDocs, in the Word file. The details will be discussed at the next meeting in July. Having finalised our views on this, the new constitution will be proposed to the membership for ratification at the AGM in September.

1. **Muntjac prevention:**

A licence to trap muntjac is only possible for research purposes. Although we are concerned about the Public Health issue of muntjac bringing tics to the site, especially as one plot holder contracted mime disease, it was agreed that it is impossible to do anything about the problem on a collective basis. It’s an intractable problem and causes much damage to plots but is a problem that must be dealt with by individuals fencing off their plots, using netting and posts.

1. **Plant swap instead of Restore plant sale:**

This will take place on Sunday 14th May and information has been sent to all members by e-mail and posted on site. Committee are not otherwise involved.

1. **Site matters**:

**Skip**: will be ordered for the Autumn.

**Woodchip**: **JM** will send message to explain that there will be more in due course but that it is a seasonal resource that is not available over the summer in the same way as it is in spring and winter. When it is available, it is sometimes taken too greedily by individual plot holders and maybe there should be sign up to suggest what is a reasonable amount to take so the woodchip can be better shared.

**Compost**: The Council will make a free delivery of a limited amount of compost on May 23rd.

**Security:** The shop entrance gate has frequently been found open early in the mornings.

**JW** to investigate possible reasons for this.

**AOB:**

**JW** will look into possibility of hiring a pasteuriser/ apple presser and booking a date for late September.

**Date of next meeting - July 13th.**