

EWAA Committee Meeting Minutes

Thursday 9th November 2023

George Murray agreed to chair the meeting.

Present: Tony Flett, Sarah Pollard, Mike McNaboe, Bridget Henderson, Chris Clifford, Dan Thorpe, Simon Bazley, Jane Millar, George Murray

1. **Apologies:** Meryl Wilford, Jon Willis, Charlotte Attlee, Clare Ferguson, Mike Yeadon

2. **Minutes of September meeting and matters arising**

Approved

3. **Chair – governance matters**

- Lease negotiations

JM reported that ODFAA and OCC had made promising progress at a recent meeting, and agreed a compromise that will deliver a new lease to all OCC-owned sites. However, they are still awaiting confirmation of the final wording, which must be reviewed and approved by the OCC legal team.

- Revised Constitution

Janita Good has revised the document presented at the September AGM, so include a deed of trust which transfers the trustees' interest to the association. Deed of trust - transfer of trustees' interest to the association.

The issue of trustees being personally liable would be removed if the association incorporated.

ACTION: CC – check through the new version and circulate the document to the committee within the next ten days, i.e. by **19th November 2023**.

- Committee Work

There was discussion of a proposal to divide the various tasks of the committee into four subcommittees, by function: Finance & Governance, Community & Social, Membership, Site management.

The meeting agreed for the need to share the burden so that the Chair does not spend so much time as site manager, having to resolve a constant flow of issues.

ACTION: BH & GM

Look at the current committee structure, and develop an organigram with the proposed responsibilities for each role, and some concrete examples as illustration.

Deadline: circulate by the end of December for discussion at the January meeting.

- EGM Planning

If no Chair or Deputy Chair can be found, Josie Procter has offered to chair meetings for the remainder of the EWAA year, but these would need to be via Zoom.

Someone also needs to monitor the CHAIR mailbox and flag important correspondence. Agreement to postpone the EGM, which the AGM had scheduled for 19th November, so that membership and the committee have time to prepare and consider.

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Timeline:

Email to membership before the end of 2023 to explain matters – i.e. EGM required in order to agree the new constitution and to fill committee vacancies.

Hold EGM in March

ACTION: All – discuss the committee vacancies with allotment neighbours and friends to see if anyone is interested in becoming involved.

4. Membership report

- Plot occupancy report ([full report](#))

Numbers in flux due to payment year-end, so some members are giving up their plots.

Vacancies: 4 starter plots and 7 half or quarter plots

Waiting list: 40

New names: 11 added since September meeting

Allocation sessions: 3 scheduled in November

GM also noted that an encouraging new trend as most leavers now return their key to us. The new keys are individually numbered so can be post into the mailbox on the gate whenever convenient.

- Eviction – procedural challenges

Update on the recent eviction, and the plotholder's reluctance to quit the site. General discussion to hear views from all the committee members present.

GM reported that he was updating the documentation for dealing with breaches of the rules that constitute gross misconduct, and therefore lead to immediate eviction.

ACTION: GM & BH – to liaise over follow-up letter to evicted plotholder, re-stating the situation, to be sent within the coming two weeks.

5. Treasurer report

- Rent collection

119 paid

44 as yet unpaid

3 responded that they are giving up

10 need to have a conversation with GM

6. Shop report

- Sales & stocks

Fewer customers during November, but they did respond to the announcement about green manures.

Groundcover, winter netting, compost selling steadily.

Garlic sold out, but onion set sales disappointing. Need to discount the red variety as they are beginning to sprout.

Volunteer force working well; they are increasingly confident with the set-up and the technology.

ACTION: JM – post a reminder that the shop will be closed during December, January, and the first half of February.

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- Potatoes

ACTION: JM – post a query for feedback on this year’s seed potatoes, in advance of placing the order during November for delivery mid-February.

7. Site matters

- Tree foliage in Shop car park

ACTION: JM – ask Chris Gamblin to take back more; lowest branch of the oak and shrubbery along the side where the cars park.

- Plumbing

ACTION: DT – draw up a list of the various jobs needed, and any tank taps that need attention; ask Weston for an estimate; plan for replacement of the broken stopcock tap and improved access to the valve that controls water supply to the tanks.

- Work parties

ACTION: DT – proposal for the number of people and time needed to dig down to the tank water supply valve in early spring 2024, so that Weston can complete the work.

- Votes of thanks to volunteers who took on jobs recently:

- Managing and loading rubbish left for the skip – Howard Noble
- Bolt put on the second cubicle in the toilet block – Paul de Villiers
- Basin in the toilet block: cleaned and drip mended – Mike McNaboe & Dan Thorpe

- Water supply to tanks

ACTION: DT – switch off during w/e November 18th-19th

JM – post announcement to membership

8. AOB

Suggestion: display a small whiteboard in the Shop Window with requests of what everyone/anyone could do to help out.

Standing Water in Woodchip Car Park: Building work at no. 66 Cricket Road may have affected drainage. Committee needs to keep an eye on the level.

Concessionary rent rates: Everyone to encourage any plotholder who might need it to write in confidence to the Membership Secretary.

Date of next meeting – Thursday 11th January 2024