

# DRAFT EWAA Committee Meeting Minutes & Actions

Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Chair: George Murray

Attendees:

Bridget Henderson, Chris Clifford, Mike McNaboe, Jon Willis, Meryl Wilford, Simon Bazley,

## Apologies:

- Jane Millar, Daniel Thorpe, Tony Flett

## 1. Minutes of February 2024 meeting and matters arising:

- SB reported that no work is going to be undertaken on the guttering of the shop at present because of the asbestos roof.
- The EGM (to discuss draft constitution, amendments, and licence proposals) was a very positive and well-attended meeting. All proposals passed unanimously (32 plot-holders) with 1 abstention.
- Exact location of boundaries with OUWG needs further work.
- Vote of thanks to Howard for packing the skip.
- Minutes approved.

## 2. Membership report

- Plot inspection was carried out on April 1st with rigorous criteria resulting in 5 warning letters. Most people give up plots with good grace and hand in keys.
- two long-standing members have left and others have resigned or reduced the size of their plots.
- 7 new plots have been let and another allocation meeting is taking place on Saturday 11th May with 4 possible new lets.
- 29 people are currently on the waiting list.
- Despite the miserable weather, plots are generally in a good condition.
- The date of next inspection in May will not be publicised in advance.
- Unfortunately there has been some rude and anti-social behaviour by plot-holders or their guests.
- There have been 2 further requests for use of hosepipes.

**ACTION:** helpers for GM?

## 3. Treasurer's report

- Bank balance is stable.

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- Regarding the insurance paid via ODFAA, there is a discrepancy between 2023 and 2024 amounts ( £84 for 2024, “120 for 2023) because of the way plot-holders/ members were counted.
- SB will make a proposal at next ODFAA meeting that the insurance fee for different allotment sites should be calculated on overall size of site and not on the number of members.
- Only 26 keys remain, so new key purchase is needed.

**ACTION:** SB and GM to discuss?

## **4. Shop report (sent by email)**

- As anticipated, the Shop was particularly busy in February and March, once the seed potatoes had arrived. These have all gone now, with zero waste, despite the slightly larger order this year. Some members have been disappointed, especially those who missed out on the main crop, so it would be worth ordering more of these for 2025.
- Sales of Muck & Mulch, and all types of compost have been significant, particularly since the heavy rains began to ease. Woven ground-cover and crop protection materials are selling steadily too. The site has a number of enthusiastic new members who need to improve the condition of their plots, so I anticipate that non-perishables will continue be in demand for the rest of the season, and before the end of this month I may need to place new orders with M&M and with KG Loach.
- Many thanks to all the volunteers on the rota. Bridget Henderson has re-joined the team, which is a great help now that Mike Yeadon has left. Sarah Pollard is also able to provide cover, and several people have been very flexible and stepped in at the last minute to ensure that no-one has had to do their turn on their own.

## **5. Access to water via hosepipes**

- Discussion about how to deal with these requests.
- CC pointed out the statutory responsibility of organisations to make “reasonable adjustments” to help people with medical disabilities.
- Reiteration of previous discussions about whether to encourage use of IBCs for storage.
- Discussion about what constitutes “reasonable adjustment” and sometimes unrealistic expectations by members that the committee must provide solutions rather than finding alternative solutions themselves eg. carrying water containers in wheel barrow.
- Problems have arisen in the past when ploholders see people using hosepipes and then start using them too.
- Suggestion that hosepipes should only be used at certain times of low water usage ( to fill tanks) otherwise the overall water pressure in the site is too low to fill general water butts . Suggested time limit is no hoses between 8am and 10am, or 5pm and 7pm.
- Medical evidence needs to be provided if people argue they need a hosepipe on medical grounds.

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- Suggestion to allow anyone to fill up water butts / containers with a hosepipe, but not water plants directly, and there will be no extra charge for it.
- Suggestion that the committee could help by arranging to sell water butts / hosepipes in the shop.
- suggestion that water harvesting should be actively encouraged for everyone and that growing less water hungry plants is also to be encouraged esp. in changing climate.
- All agree water policy should be easy to administer and monitor.

## ACTIONS:

- GM: George will draft a proposal that will follow four principles
    - low cost
    - equitable
    - practical
    - consistent
- GM will circulate to MikeM/ SB/ JW / MW for comments

## 6. Site matters

- **Boundary issue:** Deer fencing seems to be necessary. This could be proposal for a joint project with OUWG.
- Suggestion that perhaps the landlord should be responsible for deer-proof outer perimeter fencing. Something for lease negotiations?

## 7. Governance

- **Postponement:** Proposal that there is NO online meeting to make a decision on the most appropriate form of incorporation for the EWAA because lease negotiations have gone quiet . By postponing we may also be able to benefit from the experiences of other sites who have incorporated.

## 8. Any Other Business

- **Conflict resolution.** It is clear from the Constitution (Pt 62) that the whole committee is responsible and that this should not fall on the Membership Sec alone. At least 3 people should be involved in the decisions taken .
- **Children's Allotment.** Alice is no longer involved and it does not seem to be running as a Children's nursery project or part of home schooling. Do we need to find out who is running this part of the site?

## Actions:

- **GM to clarify process for conflict resolution**

Date of next meeting – Thursday 11th July 2024