

MINUTES OF EWAA COMMITTEE MEETING
12th September 2024, 7.30 pm
Shop Building

Attendees: Mike McNaboe, Jon Willis, Meryl Wilford, Jane Millar, Daniel Thorpe, Chris Clifford, Tony Flett, Sarah Pollard

1. Apologies: Bridget Henderson, Clare Ferguson, George Murray, Simon Bazley

2. Approval of 11th July Minutes and matters arising.

- At the next AGM, Clare Ferguson is standing down as Trustee and Simon Bazley standing down as Treasurer.

3. Membership Report – GM (sent by email)

- Since the last Committee we have welcomed 7 new members to EWAA. Three of the plots that have been let were previously abandoned and needed to be cleared. It requires a very enthusiastic new member to take on a completely abandoned plot and there have been a number of derelict plots that have been repeatedly turned down as the challenge was deemed too great by prospective growers.
- There have been 2 resignations and one reduction in plot size. In addition, 3 plot members have indicated that they wish to give up or reduce the size of their plot at the next rent day.
- There are a small number of people who have recognised that their plot, as it currently stands, does not meet the cultivation guidelines and have been given until the next rent day to get it up the correct standard.
- The overall quality of cultivation has been high and the Howard Street and Middle Road have only one vacancy each and are, generally, in very good condition. The Shop Road has a number of abandoned plots and the general level of cultivation is not of the same standard as the other two.
- The waiting list stands at 24 people with February 2024 as the oldest name on the list. There will be one more plot allocation meeting before rent day.
- The next plot inspection will take place at the end of September before the next rent day and those people who have received weed warnings in the past will be evicted if there has not been sufficient progress.
- We have 8 vacant plots that are all in a very bad state.

4. Financial Report – SB (Sent by email)

- Last year, our low water mark, was around the 3rd October, where following the payment of our KG Loach bill, our account stood at £964.
- The highwater mark, came on December 18th, when most people had paid rent, and following our shop takings for that week, the balance stood at £6122. Our current balance, as of 11th Sept is £2691. Last year at this time we were at about £1700 so things are going in the right direction.
- I'm intending to step down as Treasurer and from the committee at the AGM, although I hope to be able to help the incoming treasurer through Rent 'day' if they would like the help.
- JW: N.B. the figures only refer to current account.

MINUTES OF EWAA COMMITTEE MEETING
12th September 2024, 7.30 pm
Shop Building

5. Shop Report – JM

- The shop reopened in September and the rota is being finalized.
- Feedback from members has been very positive: the shop is a valued facility.
- Promotion through the website has helped boost sales by advertising what is currently in stock.
- Nearly out of compost, so a new order will be made shortly. There has also been some restocking e.g. alliums arriving shortly.

6. Rent Increase

- Discussion about the suggestion for a rent rise at next AGM. Reasons in support of rent rise are that the reserves in savings account are gradually declining and the Association need to build up a funds to deal with contingencies. (In the past money was needed to deal with unexpected costs from Covid and the fire cleanup).
- Reserves in the bank are needed for various reasons including:
 - possible costs that may arise after the new lease, e.g. the issue of who is responsible for mending palisade fencing.
 - Lack of Council grants. In the past some projects were funded from Council grants, but these are no longer available.
 - Bills and cost are increasing
 - Current rents are very modest in comparison with other sites.
- Discussion about size of proposed rent increase. Agreement that the proposal at AGM should be a rise of £8.00 pro-rata per year.

7. New water policy

- Discussion of suggested changes to the water policy specifically in relation to use of hosepipes. Agreement to make a proposal to put to the vote at the next AGM. Amendment to Section C, Plot Maintenance Requirements, Point 9

- Agreed wording for AGM:

Proposal On Use of Hosepipes

Amendment to EWAA Rules and Cultivation Requirements

Section C, Plot Maintenance Requirements, point 9

Current wording:

Not use hosepipes attached to the EWAA mains water supply without written permission from the committee.

Proposed rewording:

Members may locate a personal water butt no larger than 250 litres within the boundaries of a single plot and may fill this between the hours of 8 pm and 6 am from a hosepipe connected to the nearest tap, giving due consideration to other ploholders. Hoses must NEVER be left on lanes or paths. Anyone wanting to use a storage container larger than 250 litres will need to request permission from the Committee.

MINUTES OF EWAA COMMITTEE MEETING
12th September 2024, 7.30 pm
Shop Building

8. Update on incorporation (GM) – Timeline

- The subgroup has made good progress exploring alternative structures for incorporation. Very grateful to Janita for her help in navigating types of incorporation.
- Hopefully alternatives will be brought to the November Committee meeting and a decision will then be taken about which form of incorporation will be proposed by the Committee at the EGM and voted on. Tentative date for EGM is March 2025.

9. Plot Inspection - see email sent to all members on 5/9/24 re cultivation requirements

- Some plots are not really being cultivated intensively. Suggestion that a clearer message needs to be sent to plotheolders about the ethos of allotments.

10. Site Matters

- ODS need to be reminded where to put woodchip.
- The Children's Allotment handyman, Stig, has tackled the elder that was blocking the Shop window, but more work is needed as the growth is extremely vigorous and spreading to toward the other window. JM to follow up.
- Car parks are both very overgrown and need to be cut back. Tony has cut back vegetation significantly but more work needed. Discussion about the need to perhaps pay to have this work done by someone with power tools.
- Dan and Tony to lead work on cutting back vegetation with power tools in morning of 9th November. A work party in the afternoon could then clear away debris to designated burn piles.
- Tool update: the Hayterette needs to go back for service as it is not running smoothly.
- The donated mower will go to Mr Bark to assess whether it is worth mending of not.

11. Preparation for AGM

- The AGM can't take place on 22nd September because of the notification period required by the new Constitution.
- Date for AGM set for Sunday 13th October 2024. 12.00 at shop.
- All the papers calling for nominations for Committee and Officers and Trustees need to be published by 22nd September. JM to organize.

End of meeting

Date of next Committee meeting: 14th November 2024