

Harborne Hill Allotments Committee 15 September 2019

Present were ; - A.Garbutt (Acting Chair and Sec.), T.Beach {Treas.}, G.Adams, A.Chebil, R Clarke, B.Coles, S.Coote, D.Dennick, and S. Visser. Apologies were received from A.Thomson and N.Amos

Minutes of last meeting – there were no queries and the Minutes were approved. Proposer S.Visser, Seconder S.Coote

Secretary's Report – the visit of a party Year 8s to work on the site for 4 days at the end of July was a big success, a lot of painting was completed, and the base of trees trimmed. We were turned down for a grant from the Flo Pickering fund for renewing the fence along Nursery Road, we have been told that they thought we were seeking a higher fence to keep out intruders, it beggars belief there was an email plus photographs sent to both the then Allotment Secretary and Clive Birch of BDAC explaining that as the fence was rotten at the bottom of the railings and that we feared the passing school children were at risk of falling through. The party that came to visit the site were invited in to inspect the base of the fence from inside the site, but the offer was turned down. My disgust has been expressed to Clive Birch, Tom has emailed Councillor O'Shea and Councillor Matt Bennett, no reply from O'Shea but Matt Bennett has been down to check the fence. Tom will pursue This matter. There is a problem with the Allotment Secretary, the problem is not her but the limited hours she has to do her job, she no doubt concentrates on the most important issues like the Rent Roll but other queries are answered eventually. She appears to lack back up at the office in Kings Heath Park, it took 3 weeks for us to receive the last Water Bill which had arrived at her office whilst she was on holiday. Fortunately, the BDAC Secretary responds very quickly to emails. The hedge along Kingscote Road was trimmed on the outside but not the top, we have had this problem before, so after we had complained the top of the hedge was trimmed. The damaged fence on Yateley Road at the rear of Plot 7A, it was reported to the Allotment Office and plastic barriers have been placed there, no more is known. 6 new gate locks have been bought for the gates; chains need to be attached to them. A man from the Parks Dept. came down and did an inspection for hazards, heard nothing further. The fire extinguishers have been checked. The Rent Roll we are told will be in the post this coming week, the Allotment Subscription will be £7 as agreed at last year's AGM. We have a number of people who have been down to visit the site interested in taking a plot, the hindrance is now tenants who cannot make up their minds whether they are coming or going. Two plots that were vacated last month had new Tenants within 24 hours. It noted that we are operating without a Management Agreement with the Council, the current one expired 5 months ago.

The funeral for Bill Edwards will be at 1200hrs on Friday 20th September at 1200hrs at St Marys

This report was accepted, Proposer G.Adams, Seconder A.Chebil

Treasurer's report – the bank balance is healthy as in attached report, the major expenses were paint used by our work party and new doors for tool lockers. The Treasurer now has a Debit Card to ease transactions, receipts are kept with the audit of the accounts in mind.

This report was accepted, proposer B.Coles, Seconder G.Adams

Secretary's Position - the Secretary as from the end of this month will no longer be a tenant, so according to the Constitution will be no longer be eligible to be on the Committee unless he is co-

opted. He was unanimously co-opted, but he did repeat that he wishes to give up the position at the next AGM.

Water Bills - as things were with Severn Trent we received an allowance for water that is not returned through the sewers, this has not been continued with Water Plus though many sites have filled in the correct form with no success. The National Allotment Society have made it known that they will support us in any dealings we have with Water Plus even though we are not members. The bills received so far have been estimated readings, we are using more than the estimate but not much more.

Management of Plots – we will have a number of vacancies, and we have had a number of enquiries and visits from prospective tenants. Two plots were let in the last few weeks. Black sheeting is used sometimes to cover vacant plots, it works but we should buy thicker sheeting.

Shop – Japanese onions are in stock; we await the potato information from Singletons.

Website – it was reported that the site continues to get many visits, we are due two bills to do with the website, Dave was thanked for keeping the website up to date, and the website does help us to get new Tenants

Improvements – John Cherrington was thanked for smartening up some of the tool lockers and there is a new supply of doors, the side of the road by plot 48 has collapsed, we may get in help to dig it out, and then use Postcrete to repair it. Shaun will cut the inside of the hedge along Kingscote Road, we have used Shaun before, and he does a good job.

AOB - it was noted that the Management Agreement we have with the Council expired in May and there is no sign of a new one.

Next meeting Sunday 17th November 2019 at 1030hrs