

WILDMOOR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 12th November 2019
Abingdon United Football Club, Northcourt Road, 7.30 pm

APOLOGIES –

Jane Cadogan, Alan Tong, David Bartlett, Lynn Barrand, JW and A Naisby, Bernard Fletcher.

MINUTES from AGM 2018 –

One correction to the minutes of the AGM 2018 – In the section – Changes requested to Association Rules, Tuesday should be changed to Wednesday. This has now been corrected.

Minutes were otherwise accepted unanimously as a true record.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT -

Tim Hunt gave summary of activities of the year. Garden challenges have been meteorological – and such events will become more common. He has very much enjoyed being Chair but now feels his activities with Extinction Rebellion are taking a lot of time and energy and he is no longer able to focus on the role of Chair. He is also already juggling three part-time jobs. However he will continue with a plot and will also remain on the committee.

He encouraged all present to consider taking part in the committee and even take the role of chair. Any new members will find that their experience is just as valuable as others.

He gave thanks to all the committee for their hard work over this year.

SEED SECRETARY'S REPORT -

Through our membership of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG), Wildmoor Allotment Holders Association is sent catalogues from Kings Seeds. The seeds in the catalogues are at a 20% discount plus the Association receives a 15% discount on bulk orders.

This year, £2,287 was spent by members, providing the Association with £379. This is the highest number of participants in the past 6 or 7 years.

Fruit bushes will be sent out in the next few weeks.

TREASURER'S REPORT -

- Income has remained very stable and similar to last year at £3452.96.
- The BBQ this year made small loss of £8. The committee is considering increasing ticket costs to £3 next year.
- Water Charges – This is being charged in a new way and rather than carry over the estimated cost every year we will in future account for our water

bill in the current year even though it will be paying largely for the previous year's water.

- The grant from Abingdon Council for maintenance costs has almost entirely covered our expenditure including £1323.00 towards the cost of deer fencing. Some items remaining will be recoverable after April due to the Council's financial year.

We have an excess of income over expenditure of £1304.42 this year and our overall reserves are now £9086.52.

The members' deposits, held separately amount to £2200.50

Discussion points

Charity – this year, we had the Abingdon Food Bank as our charity of choice. Would people like to suggest other charities to benefit from any excess profit from the BBQ and any other donations?

This was put to the floor, and there were no further suggestions – a vote confirmed that we will continue to nominate the Food Bank.

LETTING SECRETARY -

We have a total of 146 plots, made up of 68 full plots and 78 half plots. At the moment we have no plots vacant, and 8 people on the waiting list. There have been 21 lettings over the year: one plot has been let three times! This is nearly 20% of our total plots.

- Please could plot-holders ensure that their plot number is clear and visible from the road.
- Plot inspections have been carried out monthly.

There was a discussion about whether we could divide some plots into even smaller units (1/4 plots?) to help new members decide whether or not allotmenting is for them. There are difficulties with doing this and at the moment we have no availability to do this, but the committee will consider how it might be done. Please email julieedge24@gmail.com with any ideas about this.

FIREs -

Proposal 1 - A proposal to amend Rule 6 on Fires was discussed at length. There have been complaints and incidents during this year where fires have been felt to be out of control and material from off-site has been burnt on the allotments. The suggestion was to add "no material of any kind from off-site can be burnt".

There was some heated discussion. Some felt it would be hard to define material from off-site. However the majority seemed to feel this could be done with common sense. The aim was to prevent large amounts of tree matter being burnt in large fires. Paper, kindling etc would be acceptable – context is important.

A vote was held. Two changes were proposed

1. To add the word “only” before carefully dried vegetable matter ...
2. To add the phrase given above
3. To do both of these.

Votes – 1 = 10 votes, 2 = 10 votes, 3 = 28 votes, leave as is = 0 votes.

Proposal 2 – A second proposal has been received to change the rules on timings of fires. Some have felt that there should be days when no fires can be allowed, or others that the timings should be brought forward in the winter and moved later in the summer.

Again some discussion ensued.

Should we have a day where fires are not allowed at the weekend?

Yes = 27 votes, No = 20 votes

Should this be Saturday = 0 votes, Sunday = 25 votes.

As this was not a large majority, the consensus in the end (as many people do not attend the AGM) was to leave the rule as it is.

Should the time be brought forward in the winter by 1 hour?

Yes = 16 votes, No = 29 votes. No majority.

Therefore Rule 6 will now state – *“Only carefully dried vegetable waste etc may be burned at any time on Wednesdays and on other days after 2pm. during the winter months and after 4pm during the summer months.*

“Summer” will be taken as the period between the start and end of British Summer Time. Fires must have died down, be under control and not left until they are in a safe condition (or preferably extinguished by the plotholder before he or she leaves the site). No material of any kind from off-site can be burnt.”

Much of the discussion was around the need to be considerate to other plotholders, so please bear this in mind when you have a fire

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS -

The committee thanked Tim Hunt for his work as Chair over the past two years.

			Proposed by	Seconded by
Chair	vacant			
Secretary	David Cooper	willing to continue	Julie Edge	Mike Hemsley
Treasurer	Liz Mercer	willing to	Andrew	Julie Edge

Lettings Secretary	Julie Edge	continue willing to continue	James Andrew James	Liz Franklin
Seed Secretary	John Hardie	willing to continue	Janet Hammond	Elizabeth Mercer

All were approved by general votes.

Committee members willing to continue –
Bernard Fletcher, Andy Lovegrove, Tony Hammond, Liz Franklin, Andrew James, Tim Hunt.

A plea for new members was made by Tony Hammond – Ian Cade has since expressed an interest and will join the committee.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

DEER FENCE – Alex Armstrong asked about progress on the deer fence. Posts have been bought with the council grant. Bids have been requested from contractors to complete the fence but are very expensive. More recently Tim and Elizabeth have been chasing quotes from other contractors for a galvanised angle-iron wire fence to keep deer out (a different proposition from the usual fence needed to keep deer in).

Discussion followed as to whether there would be enough support amongst members to do the fence ourselves. It was felt that contractors would be needed to put the posts in, and the rest could be done ourselves. Many people were willing and so a work party will be organised once the posts are in. Tim Hunt to pursue.

THEFTS – There have been several thefts of produce this year. Security is very important and **it is everyone's responsibility to ensure that the gate is securely locked**. Gates have been left open on many occasions this year. The membership would be very upset to find that any plotholder is taking produce, and this would result in dismissal.

Could we put a padlock round the farmer's gate to the field on the left of the drive? The Association would be liable financially for the removal of travellers if they were able to enter because of our lack of security. This will be followed up.

TREES – the large trees on the field boundary are going to be reduced in size. Only small trees on dwarf rootstock should be used on the plots.

The meeting was closed at 9.00pm and a date for the next AGM will be in the third week of November 2020.