

WILDMOOR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS' ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 22nd November 2022
Abingdon United Football Club, Northcourt Road, 7.30 pm

APOLOGIES –

Alastair Lee, Xante Cummings, Mike and Gillian Hemsley, Joanna Saunders, John Clack, Paul Hogben, Ruth Hibbert, Alan Dalziel.

MINUTES from Extraordinary AGM May 2022 –

Minutes have been circulated by email to members and were accepted unanimously as a true record.

Short Talk and Demonstration from Permaculturist Brigid Sundaram entitled “Simple and Cheap Ways to Save Water”

Brigid (Plot 74A) gave an excellent and very useful talk which included demonstrations of devices which can be used to retain water – she will put some of the information onto the Wildmoor Facebook page.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT (Tim Hunt) -

- You might recall that I did not stand as chairman at last years AGM and that Rob Harrower accepted the role then. During the year Rob had to step down and I felt that the least worst outcome would be for me to take over until this meeting tonight. The committee unfortunately agreed so here I am!
- I thank the committee, who are all volunteers, for their support throughout the year, in particular Julie and Oli, and thanks to Liz Mercer for a very smooth handover of treasurer.
- Thanks also to the groundsmen who help keep the site up together, notably Bob, Digger, and Vic. I know that their work goes largely unnoticed but believe me, you'd soon notice if they stopped!
- The hedge laying is going well - initiated by Ian Cade and being done by volunteers from the Earth Trust, notably Mike Towndrow and Paul Hartley to whom we are very grateful. This project will have a beneficial effect on the ecology and biodiversity on the site and given a couple of years will be a robust windbreak or catch net, depending on which way the wind is blowing.
- If you have time and / or talent to bring to the committee it would be welcomed. The amount of work is not huge but with more hands to share it, the commitment reduces.
- My big takeaway from this season has been the weather which has been a huge challenge this year, and the water use very large. So far we can absorb the increased costs but that cannot be guaranteed and members should be at least thinking about water storage, application and use. Arguably those who have coped best with the adverse conditions will end up winning the prizes for best plots!

This year the winners were:

- Best full plot Melvin Nash
- Runner up full plot Martin Walsh
- Best half plot Samantha Egerton
- Runner up half plot Julie Edge

SECRETARY'S REPORT (Julie Edge) -

- We have held 3 committee meetings since the last EAGM in May 2022 – for transparency we would like to put the minutes up on a new notice board which the committee has agreed to, so that will go up sometime over the winter.
- Plot – to Plate which I mentioned at the May AGM took place and was very successful. Huge thanks to Bob Jones for taking a lot of produce and his expertise on the question time panel. We were lacking a banner to advertise the allotments, and so hence the Logo designs.
- Risk assessment – thanks to plot member Ray Doran who was able to help with this and so we have had an updated RA approved by the council.
- Plot numbers – have now much improved after the plea to plotholders so thanks – the Mayor will be happy to judge numbered plots!
- BBQ - We had a lovely day at the BBQ on August 29th (Bank Holiday Monday) and the weather was great. Thanks to all those who helped who were listed at the meeting.
- Ditch and bank still an issue – ongoing communication with Highways England about clearing that – and should happen this winter but may not be before it floods! We could do with having a working party to clear out the far ditch to the right of the track opposite the hedge
- Constant stream (pun intended) of emails about taps being left on and gates being left open. A plotholder also mentioned speeding.
- Moles – been a bigger problem this year. Committee felt that there is nothing that can be done generally but individual plotholders are free to take whatever action they like on their own plots.
- It was agreed that we would come back to the Football Club for next year's AGM.
- Thanks to all plotholders who have expressed their support over this year.

TREASURER'S REPORT (Oli Harker-Faraon)-

The association has £10,308.39 in hand, £2,406.68 of this is held as deposits £1,817.48 has yet to be deducted to pay the annual water bill, and a further £250 is earmarked for fencing supplies.

- This gives the association £5,834.77 as its current working balance.

A further update will be provided to the committee once this year's rents have been processed.

Outgoings - 439 - NSLAG membership
381.05 - equipment purchases
490.17 - site rent
57.6 - bbq shortfall
51 - web domain
total 1,418.82

Including upcoming expenses this total is £3,486.30

The water bill this year was approx £300 more than last year.

This year our outgoings have been slightly more than our income (£191.30) – We have not yet claimed a payment from Abingdon Town Council this year.

The Association is in good health financially. We might consider longer term projects to utilise council funding, as well as external sources. Please could all try to reduce our reliance on water (as this continues to be our largest expense).

SEED SECRETARY'S REPORT (John Hardie) -

In 2022 72 plotholders (roughly half of the membership) submitted orders worth £3283.65. Because of the discount we then claim off Kings Seeds this generated a profit of £586.99 for our accounts - very similar to last year.

Fruit plants and bushes are being dispatched this week. I believe they will all be sent to me but, if you receive them directly can you please let me know. I will contact you by e-mail when they come. Potato orders will be sent to me at the end of January and I will let you know when they arrive.

I have calculated the total cost of the water used each year based on the price of water at Thames Water for our house.

Year	Volume	Cost	(price per cubic meter up by 50% this year)
2022	893	£1376	
2021	unknown (faulty meter last year – stopped working in June)		
2020	682	£927	
2019	525	£713	
2018	669	£856	

LETTINGS SECRETARY (Andrew James and Ian Manthey) -

From November 2021, there have been 22 new lettings this year, which is on a par with previous years. There are currently 156 plots – 57 full plots and 99 half plots. There are now 16 on the waiting list, and the maximum amount of time they are waiting is around 6 months (compared to 42 in 2020 during COVID).

If anyone is in need of a tap key please let Andrew know (wildmoorlettings@gmail.com) as he has the stock. A reminder was given not to use anything else on the taps.

AGENDA ITEMS -

1. Allotment Constitution for approval –

Following the amendment made since the May EAGM, and subsequently approved by the Town Council, a vote was held and the Constitution was approved unanimously. The document had been circulated before the meeting and there were no questions.

2. Service Level Agreement –

This was signed in April 2021 with the Town Council by the committee. It was brought to the membership for the first time and was approved unanimously. The document had been circulated before the meeting and there were no questions.

3. Updated Data Protection Policy –

This was needed because of changes to the way that data are stored, largely on Google documents. It was approved unanimously. The document had been circulated before the meeting and there were no questions.

4. Plot Cultivation and Dismissal Process -

This was updated during COVID and has been in use but not yet agreed formally as a change. There was some discussion about how the committee goes about plot inspections and who decides on areas of wild flowers etc. We stressed that most of the problems with plots not being tended were because of illness or other things resulting in plotholders not being able to maintain their plot and not because of differences of approach. The rules still say that 2/3 of the plot has to be in a state of cultivation. As plot inspections are carried out by multiple committee members it is never a decision of one member. Following discussion, the process was approved unanimously and will be put on the website.

5. Proposed amendments to the Rules –

a) Dog rule – a proposal had been circulated to amend Rule 10 to allow dogs on the allotments. This generated a lot of discussion and there were many concerns about how a rule would be policed. Tim felt it would be better to vote initially as to whether to amend the rule at all, and then go on to the detail. The first vote –

To leave the rule as at present (no dogs) – 46 votes

To amend the rule to allow dogs under certain circumstances – 10 votes.

Therefore the current rule will stand and dogs are not allowed on the allotments.

b) Fire rule – A proposal was made to allow fires at a weekend after 2pm during October (before the clocks go back, as the day length is already getting short and this is only time people who work can burn waste). There was a lengthy discussion about which day this should be allowed. In the end a vote was unanimous that an exception to the general fire rules should state –

In October ONLY a fire will be allowed at weekends from 2pm.

This will be added to the rules on the website.

6. Allotment Logo – it was felt this would be useful for a banner for any events we attend, for example the Plot to Plate. Ian's daughter has put together three possible logos. These were voted on during the meeting and some further suggestions were made to improve them. These will be carried forward by the committee.

7. Trees – A tree audit was carried out at the start of November by the committee.

There were 46 trees over 3 meters tall on 27 plots and on the entrance track. The list will be circulated to members with the notice that they can either reduce the height themselves or we will ask a tree surgeon to deal with them at the appropriate time, when we are getting the waste from the hedge laying chipped. Further information will be sent at the time. There was some discussion about how to limit the height of trees and that it might damage them to prune.

8. Hedge laying – as mentioned this is progressing well. It is very sparse at present, and there is a discussion ongoing in the committee as to whether to add further saplings over and above those growing around the area. Ian Cade gave an explanation to the meeting for using only those saplings at present. Digger asked if they could be removed from the ditch in order to clear it out before the winter rains, to reduce flooding. Ian agreed to do that.

ELECTION OF COMMITTEE MEMBERS -

Chair – Tim Hunt put forward a suggestion that he and Rob Harrower become joint Chair. This would help with all activities which could be shared and meant there would always be one or the other at meetings. It would also help if a chair decided to stand down, and there would still be continuity which has been a problem over the past few years. This was approved after some discussion.

Office			Approved by membership
Holders -			
Joint Chair	Tim Hunt and Rob Harrower	willing to stand	Yes
Secretary	Julie Edge	willing to continue	Yes
Treasurer	Oliver Harker-Faraon	willing to continue	Yes
Lettings	Andrew James and	willing to continue	Yes
Secretary	Ian Manthey	willing to continue	
Seed	John Hardie	willing to continue	Yes
Secretary			

Committee members willing to continue and approved by the membership – Bernard Fletcher, Andy Lovegrove, Tony Hammond, Lynn Barrand, Ian Cade.

Groundsmen – an appeal was put out for groundsmen to help Bob as Digger is unable to continue for the present. **Ellis Mead and Ken Wood** kindly offered to help Bob with the work. They will be contacted. Bob asked for a new mower which will be discussed in the committee. Rob thanked Bob for his hard work.

Members stayed for a social evening, paid rents and picked up seeds.

The meeting was closed at 9.00pm and a date for the next AGM will be in the third week of November 2023.