

**WALMLEY ASH ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION
COMMITTEE MEETING
SITE HUT – SATURDAY 27TH APRIL 2019 AT 11:30AM**

Present: - AS (Acting Chair & Fundraising), BC (Secretary), LB, LC, GC and SP

In attendance: - J&PH

Apologies: - CC (Treasurer), JG and RT

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 16th March 2019

The minutes of the Committee meeting held on 16th March 2019 were agreed as an accurate record of the meeting.

2. Matters arising not covered on the Agenda

Matters to be discussed were all covered on the agenda.

3. Updates

i. Vacant plots/new plot holders

AS reported that only 3 half plots were available to rent. New plot holders were actively tending their plots, which had led to an improvement in the appearance of the site. Plot holders had responded well to the request to clearly display their plot numbers.

ii. Area of brambles by the spinney gate

AS reported that GC had undertaken some clearing of brambles by the gate but that further work was still needed. AS and GC volunteered to carry out more of this work – AS and GC to agree a mutually convenient time. It was suggested that wood chippings could be spread to suppress further growth particularly by the new perimeter fencing. It was also suggested that scattering some wild flower seeds would make the area more attractive.

iii. National Citizen Scheme

BC gave an update on progress in relation to the National Citizen Scheme. Suggested activities to be carried out were: clearing space for the erection of a poly tunnel, organising an ‘Open Day’ for plot holders, clearing overgrown areas, creating compost bays adjacent to JN’s plot, assisting with establishing a beehive (assuming the relevant plot holder was properly qualified to look after bees) and preparation of an accurate site/plot diagram after measuring the plots. The young people involved would select the activity or activities from the list provided or perhaps have some suggestions of their own. It was anticipated they would visit the site on 2nd August, visit again on 4th August, if necessary, and then carry out their chosen tasks on 11th August.

iv. Visit by Beaver group on 2nd May 2019

AS reported that, as the 21st Sutton Coldfield Beaver group visit scheduled for 4th April had to be cancelled, they would visit WAAA site from 6:00-7:00pm on the 2nd May instead. It was likely that the Beaver group would visit again later in the year.

v. Visit by Walmley Infant School on 10th April 2019

AS reported that 90 pupils (3 groups of 30) from Walmley Infant School visited the WAAA site on 10th April and were very enthusiastic about the visit. Further visits from the school were expected to take place later in the year. It was noted that the Deanery and Shrubbery schools may also wish to bring groups of children to the site.

4. Future projects and funding

(Project 1 – Sutton Town Council funding if successful)

i. Purchase of a poly tunnel

After receiving positive feedback from plot holders about the usefulness of a communal poly tunnel, this was incorporated in the National Citizen Scheme activity list.

ii. Schools Community Project and gazebo

AS had obtained quotes for the purchase and installation of a communal gazebo on Plot 8. This would include the base materials, crushed limestone surrounds, extension to the car parking area, a gazebo with closed back and side with an open front, a pitched roof and with 3 growing beds. The bid for funding would be approximately £12,000.

(Project 2 – Sutton Municipal Charities funding if successful)

ii. Extension to site hut

The bid for funding for the extension to the site hut, including extending the base and internal furnishing would be approximately £17,000 (in addition, see iii and iv below). Work on the base would be carried out ‘In House’.

iii. Installation of electricity and water supply for the site hut

Costs for these were incorporated into the overall funding bid to Sutton Municipal Charities. AS to check with Staffs Water and Western Power to ensure feasibility.

iv Refurbishment of the toilets

Costs for this were incorporated into the overall funding bid to Sutton Municipal Charities.

5. Any other business

i. Chairman

- a). AS presented a copy of the WAAA Health and Safety Guidelines for discussion. This would be checked and updated as appropriate every year at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).
- b). AS presented a copy of a detailed Risk Assessment for discussion and as a template to inform further assessments.
- c). Guidance on cultivation standards was available on the WAAA website.
- d). AS agreed to remove the vandalised filing cabinet from the site.

ii. Secretary

- a). BC queried whether it may be advantageous to offer wood chippings free of charge to plot holders and issue guidelines on how best to use them. It was agreed to investigate past income from wood chippings to ascertain if any financial gain was worth the effort involved in collecting, recording and banking of monies received.
- b). BC suggested replacing the rotten noticeboard by Plot 8 with a new noticeboard for plot holders to use themselves for advertisements they may want to share with other plot holders.
- c). Having identified the rail bridge as a possible access route for vandals to enter the allotment site, BC suggested checking with neighbours near the rail bridge to see if they had encountered any issues that could be raised with the rail company following a negative response from them to the request for assistance to secure the area.
- d). While there was currently uncertainty regarding BCC carrying out grounds maintenance on the site, BC asked whether the company delivering wood chippings may be willing to cut back hedges.
- e). Further information on competition entries and site improvements should be made available at the Area 6 meeting taking place in June 2019.

iii. Treasurer (some information withheld as not for public viewing)

Discussion took place regarding Schedule 7, submission to BCC and when WAAA would receive its devolved budget, which would normally be due during May. Discussion also took place regarding the grounds maintenance schedule as work was not being carried out. BC agreed to follow up on both matters.

iv. Committee members

- a). GC asked if the repair of the boundary fence on AG's plot could be carried out by WAAA. The fence had been broken for a long time but inspection indicated it wouldn't require many resources to repair it. Whilst it was unclear from previous enquiries who was responsible for the fence, it was agreed it was in the best interests of the site to have the fence repaired. AS said a letter should be sent to the neighbours to inform them about the repair. AG would also need to be informed that access to repair the fence would be required. After repair, a gap should be left between the fence and any structures on the plot.
- b). The soakaway pit by Plot 40B was in need of attention. GC suggested the purchase of stones to fill the hole and for it to be finished with top soil to ground level.
- c). SP reported that the lawnmower had been repaired.
- d). Preliminary discussion took place regarding the 2019 AGM – this was to be discussed further at a forthcoming Committee meeting.

Date, time and venue of next Committee meeting

The Committee agreed to meet on Saturday 1st June 2019 at 11:00am in the site hut.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 12:15