

Capel St Mary Allotments Association
Minutes of General Committee Meeting
Monday 17 June 2024

Present: CH, DS, DA, AA, TS, GC, WR, MD, PH, RB, MR

Apologies: ML

ACTION

1. Matters Arising from General Committee Meeting – 4 March 2024

- TS/AKA still to talk with SW regarding sorting items in shed so we can use for storage. **TS/AA**
- ML still to talk with PC regarding possible additional toilet. **ML**
- ML still to action payment for benches from Nelson Potter through PC. **ML**
- MD confirmed new card reader is working well.
- It was confirmed that Malcolm Fenn is happy to continue as auditor.

2. Chairman's Report

- CH asked the Committee if they had any suggestions for the roles of Chairman and Hut Manager. **ALL**
- Confirmed we will not be entering the Scarecrow competition this year and asked all to think about ideas for 2025. **ALL**
- CH asked the Committee to think of ideas of how we could spend existing funds on the site eg improving wildlife area etc. **ALL**
- CH thanked ML for actioning the new notice board.

3. Treasurer and Membership Secretary

- Grand total cash £19,827.65 Total available cash £17,694.15
- Rotovator fund £1,165.97 Site Maintenance £227.32 (Budget-£2,241)
- Mower Fund £5,972.00 Site Capital fund £1504.77
- Membership
 - Membership Year started (Sept 2023) with 339 paying and 3 honorary members. New members to date are 40 and 15 resignations therefore current numbers are 364 paying members and 3 honorary.
 - Membership numbers have increased and this has mainly come from RB placing posts on Facebook to encourage new members.
- Hut sales to date £19,227 Hut Purchases £5,395

4. Rules of Membership/ Insurance Implications / Membership Fees

- TS confirmed that when a plot is allocated the Site Manager asks the plotholder if their partner / helper on the plot wishes to join as a member so to be covered by our insurance. TS to contact our insurance provider to ensure that all visitors to the site are covered by our Public Liability Insurance whether members or not. TS to place on agenda for next meeting. **TS**
- ML raised a question on the Membership Fees and whether these should remain at £5 as we no longer pay such a large fee to NAS. After discussion it was decided to keep the fee at £5 for all members.

5. Pest Control

- ML has contacted various pest controllers and has carried out a site visit with one. He was informed it was too late to use traps as food was plentiful on site currently and need further discussions as to what action can be taken. **ML**
- ML has also contacted the PC and is awaiting a reply. **ML**
- RB has a site map showing evidence of lost crops and rabbit sightings.
- TS suggested we email all plotholders and ask them to check their plots for evidence of rabbits and report back. MD to action. **MD**

- Could investigate the possibility of using feral cats which would help with all vermin on site.
- We need to ensure the gates are closed and ensure nothing can get in underneath. ML

6. Village Show

- WR issued signs for all to put up advertising the Show 2 weeks prior to the event.
- Jenny Hickley to contact Show judges and introduce herself.
- WR asked if all Committee Members were happy to continue to carry out their usual roles at the Show and all agreed to do so.
- AA confirmed prizes / sponsorship was starting to come in for the Draw and she will contact Upstix asap about printing of raffle tickets. AA
- WR to organise a new banner to place outside play area to advertise the Village Show. WR

7. Reports

• **Site Manager**

- Pest Control – see point 5
- Additional supplies of bark have been ordered.
- A new company has been sourced to empty the septic tank, Biomarsh.
- ML has made improvements to the wood store and this work is ongoing.
- Several ploholders have been contacted about the state of their plots and all have said they will action work on them and we await to see if they do.
- Several of our new ploholders have been very active which is great for the site.

• **Site Visits**

- MR carried out a risk assessment prior to the first of two booked visits and this was issued to the meeting for comment and all agreed to sign it off. This will now be reviewed annually and also placed on our website.
- MR has laminated some sheets showing wildlife that could be found on site, a scavenger hunt for children to do etc and has all his info in a file on site visits.
- The next visit is by the Brownies on 27 June, as there will be approx. 40 on site it was suggested other Committee members may like to be in attendance.
- We need to think as to whether we want to encourage other groups to visit and if so how many / often. It was agreed to list this in the next Capel Capers article. PH
- The wildlife area needs some tidying / work carried out and MR/DA/RB to meet to look at what needs doing and action accordingly. MR/DA/RB

• **IT**

- MD has actioned various mailing since the last meeting.
- Oasis is now ready for the Village Show.
- There is a new page on the website for wildlife visits.
- TS/RB requested access to the Facebook page so we can increase the number of postings to increase awareness. MD to action MD

• **Stores Manager / Hut**

- Hut sales are very goods with many stock lines having been replenished.
- A new order of compost will be made as all stock currently in the Hut.
- The new card reader has worked well.
- Hut Rota – one date (27 July) is the only one outstanding.
- Plants – few still to be sold and RB is putting together the final figures but looking at about £4,000 sales / £2,000 profit.
- RB will send out a report to all on the peat free trial. RB
- CH thanked RB for his work on plants and the sales.

• **Seed Scheme / Capel Capers**

- PH to contact Felixstowe Allotments about potato ordering for later this year. PH
- As we will have less catalogues this year we need to think about how we distribute.
- Capel Capers has been submitted for July and will include Wildlife area for August.

8. Picnic on the Plot

- DS to do a limited range of games.
- ML/DA to move the Scarecrow Tavern to face towards the main 'picnic' area.
- DA/AA to source beers / wines and AA to apply for license.
- TS to arrange he quiz.
- Timing – 4pm onwards.

**DS
ML/DA
DA/AA
TS**

9. Any Other Business

- DS said we need to place mouse traps in the polytunnel on an ongoing basis and RB has purchased a wildlife camera to monitor activity and possible losses.
- DS again mentioned various electrical items stored in the wood store that need to be removed.
- DS has carried out various repairs / improvements on site recently.
- DA mentioned we do not have any hedge cutters or a strimmer to be used for site maintenance. It was agreed that DA should source and purchase. He also said we need more people assisting with site jobs during the year and need to look at how we communicate easily with everyone – Whatsapp?
- AKA has been approached by the school again to assist with clearing their garden area and has a meeting on 28 June and will report back.
- It was felt that the toilet could do with a makeover again.
- Potato blight – PH asked if this was spotted on someone's plot should we remove tops. Agreed we should attempt to contact plotholder but if unsuccessful then yes we should.

AA

Meeting closed at 9.50 pm

Date of next meeting: 29 July 2024

Circulation: General Committee members, SB & notice board.

Signed.....