

Harborne Hill Allotment Association – Minutes from a Committee Meeting, held on 3/3/24

Present: Tom Beach (Chair), Dave Dennick (Treasurer), Neville Amos, Miriam Gatti, Archie Garbutt, Atanas Kozarev, Sue Coote, Pat Lennox, Tim Wright (Secretary)

Apologies: Non received

Minutes of the previous meeting

These were agreed as a correct record aside from two names spelt incorrectly and a few other amendments.

Matters arising

- **Rubbish collection** – To be considered by Committee during summer 2024
- **Working parties** – No further dates issued due to winter and low numbers. A number of individuals eg George Taylor, Steve, Pete B. & Ben M. have been doing cutting and clearing work around the site.
- **Health & safety** – First draft produced, circulated and on agenda.
- **Drains** – Only one other old raised drain cover so far identified on plot 72. No reports of a smell. Tim to continue to investigate.
- **Water leak plot 96** – Difficult to tell whether this continues in light of the amount of rainfall. To maintain a watching brief.
- **Chad Brook maintenance** – Bernie emailed on 7/10/23 about concern that maintenance work not being undertaken in line with Bill of Quantities. No response received. Follow up mail sent 8/2/24 together with phone call/voice message. No response to either.
- **BDAC survey** – Mailed out electronically with paper copies available. Response rate less than 10% and deadline date extended to mid-January.
- **Crime prevention** – A paper has been drafted, circulated and is on the current agenda.
- **Allotment fee** – Will be included as an agenda item for 2024 AGM.
- **Co-opting to Committee** – Both Miriam and Atanas will be in attendance due to Ann Chebil's resignation. One vacancy still remains.

Treasurer's report

Dave outlined the latest report for the period January – February 2024. A small loss was recorded for the period.

Sue Maslen, the auditor, has audited the accounts and signed them off.

Budget setting 2024/25

Dave presented an overview of the income and expenditure broken down by items for 2023/24 with some suggested amounts against the various headings. Tim suggested we consider allocated at least £350 for a further rubbish collection as well as an amount for the tool locker door repair work. In addition, he questioned whether we should be allocating any funding to rodent control when only two plot holders use the poison and one of them doesn't believe it is effective.

Secretary's report

- **Plots & waiting list** – There are currently six free plots, 9a, 49a, 50, 59, 101b and 121. Three were freed due to non-payment of rent. Further Letters of Concern were sent to plot holders on plots 8, 11b, 25b, 57a, 105 & 117 informing them they need to show evidence they were preparing their plot for cultivation in the Spring and prior to the next site plot inspection scheduled for April. 55 people are currently on the waiting list and waiting time remains between 2.5 and 3 years.
- **Trees** – Mrs. Murphy, 5 Kingscote Road, approached the Secretary the day before she was having trees in her garden 'pruned'. Contractors asked for access which was granted. However, it was soon clear that their approach was 'gung ho' when large branches started falling onto the site and damage was caused to a cherry tree in the car park and on plot 95 where an apple tree was uprooted and mess created. The contractors were asked to recognize the damage they'd done and offer compensation. This was refused so further access was not granted. Unfortunately, they disappeared leaving us with their waste. This is slowly being cleared. Plot 16 reported a fallen branch and this was recorded to BCC's Trees Service. A visit by Keir, the contractor, found the tree to be sound although they didn't request to examine it from the allotments.
- **Plot boundaries** - Plot 7 queried the boundary with her neighbour but this was settled amicably following a review to which the plot holder agreed.
- **Dead badger** - Reported by plot holder 117. BCC approached and informed there was a service to dispose of the animal but this would cost (no prices given) or it could be buried. The plot holder utilized the latter option.
- **Grounds maintenance** - This is a cause for concern. A Bill of Quantities outlines how often and what will be done on site to the grassed area, hedges, roadway and brook. Each Association is meant to receive a quarterly report. It appears that the level of service has reduced over the years but there has been no communication to this effect. Bernie was emailed on 7/10/23 and again on 8/2/24 and asked to clarify a number of points. No response has been received.
- **Perimeter fencing** – The Yateley Road gate continues to give cause for concern. Latterly one of the gate posts became very loose and the gate failed to close. Other sections of fencing on both Yateley and Harborne Road are either loose, broken or badly aligned after being smashed. This was pointed out to Calthorpe Estates on their site visit during the summer but nothing has happened. Bernie was emailed on 9/12/23 about this issue and again on 8/2/24. No response has yet been received.
- **Calthorpe lease** – This is due for renewal this year. Bernie was emailed for an update. Her response was that she'd passed it to Property Services, BCC who liaise with Legal Services for agreement or other wises. She will follow this up but it appears BCC will sign the lease.
- **Meeting other allotment associations locally** – Meetings continue quarterly. Invitations have recently been sent to Harborne Lane, Meadow Road, Court Oak. From finding out what other sites are doing, how issues are

addressed waiting lists discussion began to focus on how we may co-operate on projects.

Risk assessment

Agenda item deferred due to a lack of time

Crime prevention proposal

Agenda item deferred due to a lack of time.

AGM arrangements

This will take place on Saturday April 6th, 2024, 12.15-13.15 at Harborne Academy. Plot holders will be notified by email and/or letter at least one month beforehand.

Affiliation to BVSC & BOSF

Agenda item deferred due to a lack of time.

BDAC issues

Agenda item deferred due to a lack of time.

Any other business

Not addressed.

Date & time of next meetings

6/4/24, 12.15 – 13.15, AGM, Harborne Academy

5/5/24, 12.00 – 13.00

7/7/24, 12.00 = 13.00

1 or 8/9/24, 12.00 - 13.00

3/11/24, 12.00 – 13.00