

# WOBURN SANDS & DISTRICT ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

## Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on 30/03/17 at 7.30pm at the Ellen Pettit Memorial Hall, Woburn Sands

**Present:** 43 Shareholders and 9 Tenants attended

### 1) Welcome and Apologies for Absence

a) Colin Smith opened the Meeting and welcomed everyone for attending.

b) Apologies received from the following: J Roberts, S Connelly, R Lanyon-Hogg, F Maskell, V Kelsey, P Hamer, M Lea, B Austin, M & T Templeman, G Robinson, L Geddes & D Biles.

### 2) Minutes of last AGM Meeting

These were read and following updates provided by Chairman:

7b) Request withdrawn

7c) Society has now bought a Portaloo and it is sited at bottom end of the field. A call out contract with Home Counties Toilet Hire to maintain it has been arranged.

7d) Apple Pressing Day was held last October, next one will be on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> October 2017 at Edgewick Farm. Minutes were approved.

**Proposed: R Forrester      Seconded: G Youngman**

### 3) Chairman's Report

Chairman started by stating the last year had been a difficult one with many members reporting problems with slugs, blight and other pests but he was pleased to see everyone back again for another go. Chairman outlined what the grant and society money has been spent on to date, including increasing the number of Water Troughs, resurfacing the Car Park and Woodland Way, purchasing and installing two benches in memory of Peter Leadbeater, purchasing and installing new notice boards, purchasing a "Port-a-Loo" Toilet and advertising to attract new members.

We had a fair but not great turnout for the working parties held over the last year to clear a shed, cut and cleared the wildflower areas and laid sleepers around the car park. Thanks go to those people who turned up. Additional thanks to Alan Price from Edgewick Farm for his assistance in cutting down the wildflower areas.

Additional outlay has gone on cutting back hedges and keeping the tracks mowed. Chairman asked for support from the membership to assist in recruiting new members as maintaining vacant plots can amount to a large outlay against the Society funds that will not be sustainable in future years if the number of vacant plots can't be reduced. This may mean an increase in pole charges in future years but not in the short term.

There was an incident of fly-tipping in Woodland Way which a couple of the committee members cleared up, please remain vigilant. There have also been reports of dumping from our field over the fence to Woburn Estates field and this must stop – please be considerate neighbours.

The committee received a request to keep bees on our field. The committee have decided not to allow bee hives to be situated on the allotment field as we are very well serviced by neighbouring hives along Bow Brickhill Road and at Edgewick Farm. However, we would encourage you to plant flowers and plants that encourage pollinating insects and bees.

### 4) Treasurer's Report

The annual accounts are available on the Website.

Phil reported as of today's date 30<sup>th</sup> March 2017 the balance stood at £10.1k in Bank which includes £2.1k in grant account. The accounts were approved.

**Proposed: R Hansard      Seconded: D Cox**

### 5) Matters raised by Members

A Malleon raised 2 points, 1) asked if notices on the gates can be kept to a minimum and removed asap as they can look unsightly, 2) whether the committee can give more notice for working parties and events. Chairman agreed to review. B Byrne asked if all grant money had now been received. Answer is that it's not yet clear if we will receive more, and the £2k we do have has to be spent by next April.

### 6) Election of Officers and other Management Committee Members

**Chairman - Colin Smith** stood for re-election.

**Vice Chairman – Jeff Wiemer** stood for re-election.

**Secretary – Helen Forrester** stood for re-election.

**Treasurer - Phil Rutt** stood for re-election.

**4** other Members stood for re-election – **Trevor Templeman, Roger Hansard, Graham Amphlett and Dave Cockerill**

It was proposed to vote en-masse for the re-election of the whole committee and this was approved.

**Proposed: A Malleson                      Seconded: G Youngman**

**Bob Forrester** stood down and there were no other nominations.

The Chairman thanked **Bob Forrester** for his commitment whilst serving on the Committee.

#### **7) Any Other Business**

**a) Secure Storage Container** – the issues and merits of having one on site was debated. The main issue being we can't assure its security and it would very likely be targeted. L Cowell agreed to review how it could be managed if we were to have one. Chairman agreed to review the size of the problem (how many members have no storage facilities at home for mechanical implements such as rotovators or mowers) and then whether there are any practical alternatives.

**b) Shooting of pests on field** – the committee have very recently received a request for permission to shoot pests on a members plot. In light of this the Chairman advised that the committee had started to look into a policy on this and the possibility of running a permit scheme to allow air rifles to be used. Restrictions would certainly apply on gun size and time of day. Members raised a number of issues including but not limited to the Society's legal liability, whether being a society affects our position as a private landlord, insurance cover, BASC membership, clean removal of any carcasses, whether it would turn some members or potential members away and whether other allotments allow this. The Chairman agreed the committee will review further and update the membership.

**c) Plot inspections** – B Kirby asked how often plot inspections are carried out and what pressure is applied where plants are seeding and causing a nuisance to other plot holders. J Weiner replied these are carried out twice a year where plots are uncultivated, but also asked members to let the committee know if they do have a problem with neighbouring plots.

**d) The Chairman** thanked Carol Gale and Alison Amphlett for serving refreshments.

**e) Reminder** to members that Barnwell visit is next Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> April at 6pm

#### **8) Date and Time of next AGM Meeting**

Will likely be March 22<sup>nd</sup> 2018 (depending on availability of the hall)

**Meeting closed at 8.55 p.m.**