

Osney, St Thomas & New Botley Allotments Association

Minutes of Committee meeting 23 February 2017

Present: Nick (Chair), Pierre, Sally, Verity, Jude (minutes), Nia

Apologies: Sid, Gus, Anne, Sue

1. **Minutes** from 12 January agreed as correct.

2. **Matters arising** not covered elsewhere in the agenda:

- **CCTV camera** installation on £20 Meadow: The camera has been purchased, a site agreed and will be installed when the weather is fine & signage is in place. **Action:** Sue and Nick. The camera can be moved and used in other sites if needed – for example, against fly tipping on BM. Bonfires will be discussed at the AGM, asking members if they have views on how the issue should be managed in future.
- The **adjacent field at BM:** Nick has informed the Council of interest in taking on the site for additional plots, should a need arise to expand BM.
- **Website management:** Pierre is in discussion with the current webmaster, Sid, about gaining access and making changes. Pierre proposes using WordPress software, which will allow all relevant people to add and change information on the site. He hopes to have an example site ready for the AGM to show members what is proposed.

3. **Agreements on managing £20 Meadow (TPM):**

The meeting in January of TPM tenants on the committee resulted in 10 actions, including a suggestion box; a monthly after-shop Sunday morning coffee and general 'walk-around' of the site to identify issues; a committee-based walk around every month to monitor plot use and cultivation, with a report for July on the need to tell tenants about issues that do not match rule requirements; a revived website; a shared reaction to TPM issues that come up, so that only the most serious or general queries need to pass to the Association Secretary; and a link to the Bee Friendly event to run an Open Day.

The TPM committee sub-group now needs to meet again and finalise responsibilities and actions. **Action:** Anne to reconvene the group for final agreements. **Action:** Sally to organise the first 'Sunday Walkabout' – date to be agreed.

4. **Publicity for West Oxford allotments:**

Verity will send submissions to WOCA and Osney Residents' Association newsletters. These will be positive, report use of Community Payback efforts, announce available plots and half-plots, and note that volunteers are always welcome. Future submissions could offer 'what to plant this month' advice.

Nick shared the new general leaflet (it's lovely). He will print a few hundred and they will be placed in WOCA, the shop, and perhaps at Woodlands Pharmacy (check on stock in two months). **Action:** Nick. No further report on the progress with getting a story in the Oxford Mail.

4. **Changes to the rules:**

Nick has made suggested changes, circulated them to the committee and will now produce a version for circulation with the AGM papers, with a view to agreeing changes at the 2017 AGM. One idea was that work parties be made part of the rules - this was deferred until after a discussion at the AGM where members would be asked how they proposed dealing with on-going maintenance issues, given that we will not have external paid labour available and given that the Association can only do so much with unpaid Community Payback labour and/or volunteers from the current committee. Nick to present

options on work party involvement and ask members for ideas on making them sustainable, then take ideas on changing rules to the 2018 AGM.

A shortened version of the proposed rule changes to be posted on all notice boards, **Action:** Verity and Nia. Paper copies to be sent with AGM papers, either by post or hand-delivered. **Action:** Nick to create the documents, TPM committee members to organize distribution.

Action: Nick to ask members at the AGM about changing rent renewal dates.

5. Water project at Botley Meadow:

The work continues. A report of developments will be available for the whole committee by the mid-summer 2017 application cycle for a larger grant.

6. Plans for the AGM:

Date of AGM is 13 April. To meet the timetable for papers and voting arrangement deadlines. Actions still required:

- Prepare reports from the Chair and the Treasurer, get the accounts audited
 - Nomination papers out by 25 March to allow a 7-day announcement of any contested positions
 - Proposed changes to the rules out to all tenants
 - Organise postal and hand-delivery of papers
 - Publicity of the AGM on all notice boards by 25 March, with a 7:30 start on 13 April AGM.
- Nick and Jude to identify issues 'tabled' throughout the year for AGM consideration.

7. Review of the Community Payback contributions and activities:

The supervised work teams have been on both sites over many weeks, making noticeable improvements. Their involvement is likely for the foreseeable future and tasks have been identified - largely, returning unrented plots to being 'rentable' and clearing communal areas. On both sites, tenants and/or committee members have tried to be available and observant of 'Payback' work and this has generally worked well. There has been a small amount of damage or loss of equipment and the committee stated this needs to be managed by the committee in recognition of the unpaid work / benefits involved.

8. Date for the next meeting: AGM 13 April 2017

Next committee meeting 7 May 2017, 12-1:00 pm in the shop on TPM.