**MINUTES OF KATA 2018 AGM held on Thursday 18th October 2018**

**at the Abbey Club Kenilworth at 7.30pm**

**Present:** 23 members including committee

**Apologies:** Trudy Hayes, Glen Walker, Di Wilson, Jan Othen, Bill Hodgkinson

**Minutes of last meeting:** Approved proposed Peter Jones, 2nd Nigel Buckler

**Matters arising:**

* None

**CHAIRMAN’S ANNUAL REPORT:**

The last 12 months have been challenging for gardening, with extremes of cold and hot weather experienced. Record rainfall saw the allotments flooded seven times and a long hot dry summer made growing vegetables difficult.

I am pleased to report your association made good progress this year in meeting its objectives. Your committee has met six times this year. It’s members are experienced and well-motivated, so that the association’s activities all run smoothly. I’d like to take this opportunity to thank them for their hard work and time given. Robin Ashby has sadly decided to step down from the committee, after many years. His wealth of experience has been a huge benefit to the committee and hopefully he can still be called upon as he and Sue are keeping their allotment. Robin and Sue were the second shop managers, before passing the baton onto Trudy and Pete. I’d like to thank them for their contribution to the association. I would like to welcome Ann Barry to the committee. Ann and Rob have had their plot for a number of years, they volunteer for the shed rota and help with our events. Ann now has a little more time available and has agreed to join the committee. I know Ann will complement the present committee members and make a valuable contribution.

Open day was a huge success, with 330 adults plus children, from the local community enjoying a perfect summer’s afternoon. Plots looked good and there were many scarecrows. I would like to thank Pete for mowing and strimming to make the site look its best and a thank you to volunteers who helped set up, take down and man the stalls. Thank you also to plot holders who donated produce and cakes. A donation of £200 will be made to a local charity. Kenilworth open gardens at Beehive saw 200 people admire the skill and hard work of plot holders. By adding the allotments to the other open gardens it made the day more interesting and we contributed to making it a success. The Lions show raised funds for the association and for the Lions’ charities and I would like to thank those that helped out on the day and who donated plants and produce.

On the 01st October sixty school children from Thornes visited the allotments. Thanks to Caroline Rowe, Paula Hallham, Madeleine Sexton and Judith Walmsley who escorted the children on a question and answer walk about. The scouts visited earlier in the summer to clear the river and I’d like to thank Nick Schofield for organising this. I would like to thank everyone who entered the competitions and encourage others to take part. Thanks to Sue Ashby, who provided the short-list for Sarah Ridgeway to judge. Standards were once again high, and judging took six hours in hot sunshine, compared to last year when it rained all day. There were 55 pumpkin plants sold and a good turnout for the weigh-in. I’d like to thank Andy at the Engine Inn for providing hospitality and sponsoring the event.

On maintenance, all three sites are maintained to a high standard, all entrance gates and posts have been replaced over the last few years. The hedges receive their annual cut in October. The willows along the river are pollarded annually, with alternate trees done each year to the benefit of wildlife, at the same time keeping shading of plots to a minimum. The dangerous sycamore on plot 63 was successfully removed at a cost of £400. The grass cutting has been easier this year because of the dry weather. I’d like to thank, Beehive site rep. Dave Hoy and plot holders who volunteer to keep the site looking tidy. I’d like to thank plot holders at Odibourne who mow their own and neighbour’s grass and Pete Hayes, who does the rest. I have some good news: I can report that after two years waiting the Environment Agency has now given permission to build our proposed footbridge. Work will start when time and good weather are available.

The trading shed goes from strength to strength, with over £5000-worth of sales this year. Thank you to the volunteers who open it for 4 hours every weekend, come rain or shine, particularly those volunteers who endured the beast from the east at the start of the season. The shed’s success is not just measured by turnover – it provides a focal point for plot holders and a place where they can socialise. The association has purchased a good quality apple press and this has been a huge success, using the many surplus apples that we have on site. It would seem unimaginable to not have the shed any more, such are the benefits that it brings. The association is planning to acquire another smaller shed to securely store the association’s assets and to free-up space in the trading shed. Many of you will have seen the raised beds next to the shop, this is our new accessible plot. Wheelchair user Ronny has taken the tenancy and I am sure he will get huge benefit from joining our community. This concludes my annual report and I wish everyone a successful allotment year.

**TREASURER’S REPORT:**  This year the Association is once again in a strong financial position - there was a net excess of income over expenditure of £1415. The balance sheet has seen the net assets increase by £1415. Total assets of £27000 demonstrate sound financial management of the association over the years. These funds will be used for planned future projects and to hold a contingency reserve. Core activities, that is expenditure that cannot be avoided such as rent, water, maintenance, NSALG fees and insurance continue to show a small deficit. This demonstrates the importance of the fund raising activities to provide funds for projects. The shop has had another successful year with a net profit of nearly £800. The Chairman asked if there were any questions for the treasurer. A member questioned the size of the electricity bill, Mr. Hayes responded that this was being investigated and noted there was a fridge & freezer in the shop and cctv monitor on 24/7.

The Chairman asked for a proposer: to approve the financial report Harvey Brown came forward seconded by Catherine Nyman.

**RENT INCREASE**

The Chairman said you will be pleased to hear there were no plans to increase the rent this year.

**THE ELECTION OF COMMITTEE:**

The Chairman said the committee was willing to stand again and asked for a proposer: Robin Ashby came forward, seconded by Richard Palmer.

**MOTIONS:**

* The Chairman said the committee wished to propose that the meeting adopt a new constitution. The association had managed for 35 years without one but he felt it was best practice to have one. The National Association of allotment and leisure gardeners had a model constitution that has been adapted to regularise KATA present operation. Several members felt they could not adopt something they had not seen and it was decided that the draft would be circulated to members for consultation prior to proposing it to the next AGM.
* The Committee wished to propose a change in the rules so that dogs are kept on short leads. The Chairman said the association had always had a rule, dogs on a lead at all times, but modern retractable leads allowed dogs to stay onto other plots and several complaints have been received. The committee did not want to ban dogs and it felt a short lead a good compromise. A member asked for a lead size as “short” was too vague, so 2 metres was agreed. Motion proposed by Nigel Buckler seconded by Paula Halam

**ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

* A member reported that another plot holder had cut down a willow tree just prior to open day. Mr. Hayes responded that the committee was aware of this individual’s actions and reminded members the allotments are in a conservation area and to speak to the committee if they have an issue with any trees on site.
* A member asked the committee to consider actively encouraging plot holders to garden organically. The Chairman responded that at present plot holders are allowed to garden as they see fit. However, many pesticides are being phased out and new plot holders generally wish to garden without the use of pesticides. A plot holder with experience of this subject said true organic gardening was a complex multi level method. The Chairman said the committee will give this some consideration.
* A member from Beehive site raised the issue of the difficulty unlocking the padlock on the gate. The Chairman responded that the design of shielding the padlock from vandalism does make it difficult to open but Beehive plot holders are aware of the circumstances for the gate being installed. Mr Hoy added that the padlock had been replaced and the dropping of the bollard was an improvement. WDC will be approached for a solution.

**MEETING CLOSED AT: 8:22PM**