

KENILWORTH ALLOTMENT TENANTS' ASSOCIATION

MINUTES OF THE 2020 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, HELD ON THURSDAY 1 JULY 2021 AT 7.00PM

The 2020 AGM had been delayed due to the coronavirus disease, COVID-19, and the restrictions in place to limit the spread of the disease. The 2020 AGM on 1 July 2021 was held outdoors on the allotment site at Odibourne with the necessary social distancing and sanitising precautions in place.

Present

19 members including committee members, 18 eligible to vote.

The quorum of six members in addition to committee members was met. Voting rights - one per tenancy.

1. Apologies received from Phil Jordan – Treasurer.
2. The Minutes of the 2019 AGM were accepted as a true record. Proposed by Barbara Platten and seconded by Peter Jones.
3. Matters Arising - none.
4. Chairman's Annual Report
Chris Coton gave the following verbal report to the meeting:

"I am pleased to report your association has made good progress in meeting its objectives despite the challenges of Covid 19. Our year started normally with the 2019 AGM held at the Abbey club. Presentation evening saw a record turnout at the new bigger venue the sports and social club, town Mayor Alison Firth had a refreshing approach to presenting the cups and certificates an enjoyable evening had by all.

Our first and only indoor committee meeting of 2020 in February saw us planning a busy year of events and competitions sadly three weeks later the UK went into lockdown. Communications carried on by email until outdoor meetings under rule of 6 were possible and we met outside the shop for the rest of the year.

With people told to stay at home except for food shopping and exercise it was a huge relief that working your allotment was permitted thanks in part by quick lobbying to the cabinet office by the National Allotment Society. Plot holders found they had more time to devote to the plot as other activities were stopped, the good weather in the spring helped, therefore our allotments looked their best for many years. The big take home from Covid 19 and lockdowns is how important outdoor green space, exercise and connecting with the natural world are for a person's wellbeing and allotments can play a big part in that. The sale of veg seeds increased with the interest in growing your own food booming, our annual seed order to Kings doubled to £3700. Our waiting list increased by 36 to 85 over the year despite welcoming 18 new plot holders.

As restrictions were lifted we were able to hold a very successful open day, extending the opening hours and implementing a one way route and with separate entrance and exit, we were able to allow 500 people to enjoy the allotments safely. We were one of only a few allotments associations who held open days in 2020 gaining some press coverage in the national association magazine. This is testament to the can do approach of the committee.

With garden centres closed and plot holders desperate for supplies, Pete with help from Nick Wood introduced online ordering to the website. Pete and Phil then introduced payments by card, so our humble trading store became click collect or click and deliver. Rent taking was also modernised with card payments enabling contactless payment. Shop turnover increased to over £13000 and produced a gross profit of £3528. I would like to thank Pete, Trudy and Paula for all their hard work keeping the shed running and well stocked through a very challenging period.

During the year your association gained a presence on the internet with its own website enabling members to have quick access to news and information both up to date and archived. The website also allows us to reach out to the wider community to be kept up to date with what we do, who we are and the history our

sites. A film of the highlights of open day was produced and added to the website and an edited version submitted to Gardeners World.

Your secretary Lily was able to continue her role with her usual diligence whilst socially distanced and having Colin shielding at home. I would like to thank her for her hard work through the year.

Your treasurer Phil kept the committee informed with regular financial reports through the year he embraced the introduction of card payments as this significantly reduced cash handling. I asked Dave Harwood an ex plot holder and committee member to carry out an audit of the associations 2020 accounts. He did so and reported that the accounts give a true record of the association's financial position. He commented that Phil should be commended on his excellent book keeping.

On behalf of the association I would like to thank Phil and the rest of the committee for their time and energy they have given the association over what has been a difficult year. "

5. Treasurer's Report for the Year End 30 September 2020

The annual accounts had been distributed with the papers for the meeting. In his absence Phil Jordan (Treasurer) had submitted his report which was read out by the Chairman, as follows:

"I am pleased to report that the Association remains in a strong financial position.

We have returned a £2616.13 excess of income over expenditure this year, against last year of £2268.12 an increase of £348.01

The core costs report shows a deficit of £1894.52 this is due to the exceptional water charges of £2771.00. The transfer of water billing from Severn Trent water to Water Plus resulted in the Association not being billed for water from 5th May 2017 to the 15th August 2019. The amount of £ 2771 therefore represents a catching up of our water charges.

With normal water billing our core income would cover core expenditure, the shop and open events enable us to return a healthy surplus which is transferred to our projects reserve.

The shop continues to make an important contribution to the association with a net profit this year of £3528.55.

Open day raised £812 net of expenses and from this a donation of £200 was made to the mayor's chosen charities.

The Balance sheet confirms the financial strength of the association.

Reserves in total are £32,269.45, cash on deposit and in our current account total £34,720.69

Creditors of £1470 are made up of rent to the council for this year not yet invoiced."

It was proposed by Paula Hallam and Seconded by Trudy Hayes, all others were in agreement, that the accounts be approved.

6. Election of Committee

Committee members willing to continue as follows: Ann Barry, Lily Brownjohn, Chris Coton, Paula Hallam Pete Hayes, David Hoy, Peter Jones, Philip Jordan.

Proposed by Caroline Wells and Seconded by Barbara Platten that the Committee be elected en bloc, all in agreement.

7. Motions – No Motions had been received.

8. Any other business

8.1 Strimming along the brook. A member reported that strimming had taken place alongside the brook on the Lower Ladyes Hill side of Odibourne cutting back all vegetation including wild flowers, to the detriment of frogs, toads etc regularly seen in that area. The vegetation had been thrown into the

- brook. This appeared to contradict the agreement at the last AGM that an environmental and ecologically friendly approach to gardening would be encouraged. A committee member had intercepted the work being undertaken to clear the area near the stepping stones by a member. The member had also treated and removed some giant hogweed growing in that area. Another member reported a case of giant hogweed on her plot. Going forward, there will be an opportunity to plant wildflowers around the area of the new footbridge when this has been installed later in the year.
- 8.2 Queries to the Committee – a member asked whether there was a channel for raising queries. The usual route for raising queries is to the nearest committee member on the allotment site. If that committee member is unable to answer a specific question, then they will be able to refer it on.
- 8.3 Are new plot holders supported? An information pack is given to all new plot holders. If a new plot holder appears to be struggling then support and advice is offered, together with mentoring on occasion. A member offered to buddy any new plot holder. A notice would be displayed on the noticeboards asking for other potential buddies/mentors.
- 8.4 Is the water on site metered? Yes, the water is charged on meter readings and this is another reason why members are asked to catch rainwater from sheds etc. The chairman advised that each watering can costs approx. 1.5 pence per can.

The Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and the meeting closed at 7.30pm.

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