



Scruton Allotments Association

Station Road, Scruton, Northallerton, DL7 0QN

www.scrutonallotments.org.uk

info@scrutonallotments.org.uk

Meeting Minutes Scruton Allotment AGM held at Scruton Village Hall 25th January 2024.

ATTENDANCE: ANDREW CARTER, IAN POWELL, JANICE POWELL, JOE LOFTHOUSE, RICHARD ZEALLEY, JOHN VICKERS, JOHN CHERRY, KEN ROSS, ANDREW VENUS, HAZEL PRATT, WILL PRATT, JACKIE RUSSELL, DAVID RUSSELL, ELIZABETH DAVIES, ANDREW HINSON, SUE BURNETT, JOHN COOK, GEMMA DOBSON

APOLOGIES: SYD NYE, JOANNA CRESWELL, SUSAN DOUGHTY, SUSAN ROGERS.

Welcome	Comments
Welcome & outline for the evening by Chairman.	The meeting was opened by John Vickers who thanked everyone for their attendance. As with the 2023 AGM, the committee had looked at several issues and events which would be covered later in the evening. The normal format for the AGM would follow the review and reports from the various officers.
Chairmans report	It had been an eventful year with the association being invited to attend various village events which helped increase the association bank balance. JV expressed his thanks to those who had given up their time to assist with the village feast and the fireworks evening along with the exciting and well attended food festival, which was a first for the group and provided an opportunity to develop this further. It was agreed via the committee to unfortunately postpone the GQT evening in 2023 given the proximity to other events we were involved with, hence the reason why for the coming year a calendar of events would be provided and it was hoped that it would encourage more association members to get involved.
Treasurers Report	The financial situation of the association continued to be stable as ground rents provided the main source of income. As was outlined in the 2023 report, ground rents would again be increased to help make up the short fall to the landlord given that there was no increase prior to 2023. An increase of £2.50 was agreed and passed. As a point of interest, the average rent for other associations not privately run was around the £75 to £80 mark. The income from the attendance at the village events along with the income from the food festival along with the ground rent had provided a balance of £1950.00. However, please be aware that plot rents and the payment to the landlord still has to be paid for 2024 out of this amount. The treasurer had also managed to source a suitable deposit account into which the monies ringfenced for the provision of a suitable memorial for our past chair had been placed.



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	<p>As with the previous AGM a further update as to the provision of data linked with data protection and H&S was outlined by the treasurer. A brief outline as to why and how contact details could be made available in line with requirements through the event of an unfortunate accident whilst on the plots was expressed to the meeting. Following a lengthy debate, the committee would take on board the suggestions and feedback the relevant outcome. A review of the existing plot holders' contracts will be undertaken to ensure we have full contact details.</p>
4. Secretary's Report	<p>Given that all the minutes are now regularly posted on to the association website the secretary outlined the main points from last years AGM and encouraged all members to visit the website to at least keep themselves up to date with any amendments and important events.</p>
5. Election of Officers	<p>Given that the chair would technically stand down at this point the secretary asked for nominations for the position of chair. John Vickers was proposed and seconded and passed.</p> <p>The chair asked for nominations for the position of vice-chairman. Joe Lofthouse was proposed and seconded, no other nominations were recorded therefore JL was accepted</p> <p>The chair then asked for nominations for the position of treasurer. Richard Zealley was proposed and seconded. No other nominations were submitted so RZ was accepted.</p> <p>The chair then asked for nominations for the position of secretary. Ian Powell was proposed and seconded, no other nominations were submitted. IP was accepted.</p> <p>The current committee was proposed and seconded on block: Elizabeth Davis & Andrew Venus + the current officials.</p> <p>This formally closed the business of the AGM.</p>
6. Members Forum	<p>JV now opened the forum to outline future developments and proposals.</p> <p>Flooding: An ongoing issue with the flooding from the cricket field is originating from the field adjacent to Ham Hall Lane and as such is having a knock-on effect. The committee are aware and have been in touch with all concerned.</p> <p>Manure: Given the ever-increasing cost of fertiliser, it is likely that the landlord may be using his manure rather than allowing a load to be available to the association. With this in mind, the committee are looking at alternative sources locally that hopefully will more than suffice the needs of the plot holders, Further information will be made available as and when confirmation is available.</p>



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	<p>Compost Bins: As plot holders will be aware the compost bins were erected last year and we have asked them not to be used till now. The committee have decided that an additional area will be allocated for grass clippings mown from the communal and paths to save any contamination from mares tail, and to also refrain from disposing of the clippings into the grass area along side the hedge to the tennis courts. It is also proposed to allocate a designated area for the burning of any items.</p> <p>Additional bins will also be erected.</p> <p>Security: As the fence alongside the tennis courts is starting to deteriorate a new field gate will be erected in its place, this will allow access closer to the compost bins. The existing gate will replace the one in the entrance to the plots.</p> <p>Working Parties: 2024 will see the need to replace and repair items around the perimeter of the plots, fence posts, gate posts etc. As such, items such as the grass cutting rota and dates throughout the season on a weekend will be designated to undertake general maintenance, the idea being that breaking these down into smaller more manageable projects will be easier than trying to fit all repairs into the end of season clean up.</p> <p><i>All plot holders will be encouraged to join in and help even if it is only an hour in the week leading up to the date allocated.</i></p> <p>A programme will be displayed on the web site as well as the notice board which is to be relocated nearer the plots.</p> <p>The forum also looked at the opportunity to use social media in the form of 'WhatsApp' to help promote and inform members of any development, meetings, work parties. RZ to investigate further.</p> <p>Chris Snell Memorial: The committee are still looking into an appropriate way to commemorate Chris. One suggestion is to place a name plate on the entrance to the plots naming the area the Chris Snell Allotments.</p> <p>Water Storage: the communal bowser to the rear of the shed needs a new tap and possibly a new plastic container.</p> <p>Health & Safety: This is still a major concern and through the committee it has been agreed, which was open for debate, the need for an accident book along with appropriate contact details of committee members along with the contact details of local emergency services to be displayed either inside or outside the communal shed.</p> <p>The use of machinery on plots is also a concern. Plot holders using their own power tools do so at their own risk. However, if plot holders are to</p>
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	<p>use the associations power tools then proper instruction needs to be undertaken. It is proposed that during one of the aforementioned work party sessions, 10 minutes is taken to run through one or more of the equipment, and then each person present would be asked to sign a register to say they have attended. All risk assessments and instruction manuals on each power tool are to be placed in the communal shed. Without trying to impose too much on each plot holder, partaking in the instruction sessions is more to do with the insurance and our cover for you. Please respect the wishes of the committee on this matter as it is in your interest.</p>
	<p>Programme of events for 2024:</p> <p>Given the success last year of various events that the association was involved with, it was felt that by advance planning of intended events it would hopefully get more plot holders to attend and support as well as offering help on the day.</p> <p>Gardeners Question Time, scheduled for the 18th April in the village hall. Two speakers from the RHS have already been confirmed a third is awaiting confirmation.</p> <p>Village Feast: the association has again been asked to run the BBQ on the 22nd June, therefore please remember many hands make light work. It is a long day but an enjoyable one.</p> <p>To coincide with the Chris Snell Potato competition results we are proposing to hold an allotment-only BBQ. This was something we did many years ago, but the committee felt that it was an opportunity to bring plot holders together at a very informal social. The date for this is still to be confirmed but it will be at the village hall at the end of August beginning of September.</p> <p>Finally, on the back of the very entertaining and informative day, we are again going to hold a Food Festival, with the guidance from Gilly Robinson, who hosted the event in 2023. We are considering options to extend the event to a full day with other leading chefs. The event is to be scheduled for October. Exact date to be confirmed.</p> <p>Support for any or all these events brings in additional funding to provide upkeep of equipment along with keeping expenditure to a minimum.</p>
	<p>At the conclusion of the meeting a thank you to all attending was given by the chair and the proceedings closed at 9.30pm.</p>