

ASHFORD ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting 22 September 2014 Committee Room 1 Civic Centre

Present: - Mrs P Winston-Chairman and Bybrook Cemetery
Mr T Fagg- Cryol Road Ms C Green-Henwood
Mr M Chandler- Burton Field Mr R Taylor-Orion Way
Ms G Puckett- Publicity Officer
Ms V Lawson- Christchurch, Jemmett, William Road, Musgrove new
Carol Ridings- Secretary Eileen Law –Allotment Officer
3 tenants

1. Apologies
Ms B Raggett, Mr B Shrubsole, Mr G Button, Julie Rogers
2. Chairman's Opening Remarks

'Welcome to this autumn meeting which comes after a long mild, wet winter and spring, with a long sunny summer giving perfect growing conditions for many crops.
The battle for improving plots on all sites continues with some further plots being split to allow a smaller sized plot to be more effectively worked to a higher standard. Thanks to Eileen who continues to send non cultivation letters/repossessing plots and providing site reps with new tenants from the waiting list.

We have enjoyed a successful day at the Pilgrims Hospice fete and as usual thanks to all those who provided produce/jams and jellies. We helped the fundraising with the best total yet of nearly £90.00.

Our summer show was also our best yet- more details from Tony, but thanks to Gilda for the publicity and amazing prizes and raffle donations from a wide range of local organisations.

We aim to be even bigger and better next year! And are looking for a bigger venue.

Otherwise, wishing you all and your tenants an autumn and winter which allows the essential preparations for next years sowing and plantings.

The trip to Wisley is now proposed for spring 2015'

Ms Puckett suggested that the Wisley trip be in early March.

3. Minutes
Agreed

4. Bulk Buying Managers Report

The balance at the bank in September 2013 was £1331, Sales were £5521-00 and the balance is now £2292, with the value of the stock in hand being £2810.

Sales for this year increased by £2443.55 on the previous year.

The Chairman has put this down to the hard work by Mr Button and Mr Fagg and also the information provided on the new web site produced by Ms Puckett.

Ms Puckett said that the number of people who have volunteered to help at the shed has helped sales.

5. Treasurer's Report

There was a Treasurer for 5 months but he has now moved on. 3 potential volunteers attended the meeting after seeing the e mail sent round by the publicity officer.

Stevie Boutell:-Has lived in the area for 15 years and has recently taken on a ¼ plot. She has taken on a similar role for a handicap club. She has worked with figures all her life, working for the civil service.

Brian Stamp: - Has a plot at Musgrove. He took early retirement after working for the NHS as

taken on a similar role for a handicap club. She has worked with figures all her life, working for the civil service.

Brian Stamp: - Has a plot at Musgrove. He took early retirement after working for the NHS as an electrician. He also works at Willesborough Windmill and Norton Knatchbull

Penny Carey: - Her husband has an allotment. She has not been a treasurer before but was an accounting technician. She works at Barrett's as a payroll manager.

6. Show Secretaries Report

Mr Fagg said that it had been a very successful show and gave thanks to The Chairman, Ms Puckett and Ms Lawson.

There were 30 entrants with 211 entries.

The book stall made £54, Tease £85, entry fees £51, Raffle £70, with donation of £5, expenses were £50. A profit of £217 was made.

The Chairman suggested that the timing of the show be significantly earlier in 2015- in July and she has been looking for a larger venue at a good price. She suggested Kennington junior school where there is sufficient parking, but there is a need to have the show during school term time.

Ms Puckett said that the show at Stone is always well attended in July.

It was pointed out that produce is always weather dependant and during term time many people are not on holiday, and school children may take part.

Ms Puckett has produced a draft schedule for the show.

A vote was taken for moving the date of the show to July

Proposed Mr Chandler, Seconded Mr Taylor. Vote carried unanimously.

Mr Fagg said that if we were unable to get the School hall, the Baptist church was still a possibility and it may be possible to have the whole hall or even the church.

Ms Puckett said that the hall that was used was jam packed and all the tables were used.

The pumpkin show on November 1st is open to everyone at the trading store. Pumpkins need to arrive by 12 and prizes will be given at 3.30. There will also be a vintage / 2nd hand book stall and nearly new tools.

7. Publicity Officers Report

Ms Puckett is still expanding the list of email addresses and this was evidenced by the number of people who turned up to volunteer to be Treasurer. Everything going by email is also on the web.

The day the Kentish Express was produced after the show there were 800 hits on the web.

All the local newspapers had photos and articles about the show, but we are dependant on other news happening that week. She expressed thanks to Eileen who had been very helpful.

A few weeks ago the Bowls club had lots of well rotted grass cuttings and there was well rotted bark at Westrees- this could be suitable for paths. This could be dumped also at Bybrook and Orion Way.

Mr Fagg suggested that rather than going on other sites, it be picked up at Westrees.

Ms Puckett agreed and said that people would then see that the store was open and the collection can be monitored from the store and she will publish this information on the web.

Eileen will find out what happens to the bark and chippings produced by Landscape services.

8. Site Representatives Report

Orion Way- Plot holders are not cutting the grass between the plots. Mr Taylor wondered when the hedges would be cut

Ms Puckett will put a reminder on the web site about grass cutting.

Eileen said that the hedge should be cut once a year, and grass approx once a month.

Henwood- New posts are need for all the water points. The communal mower has broken so the grass is not good at the moment.

Hellwood- New posts are need for all the water points. The communal mower has broken so the grass is not good at the moment.

Burton Farm-Its been a good growing season, everything is fine, no break ins though there has been a water leak.

Cryol Road- 1 plot has had a non cultivation letter. All the site is occupied, the grass near the gate needs cutting.

William, Christchurch etc-The drainage ditch has been dug this year hopefully stopping the flooding on the allotments. There has been a problem with people taking up plots and not doing anything. People do not realise what needs to be done.

Ms Puckett has put some information on the web site.

Bybrook –There has been a lot of storm damage, though the fence has been repaired and trees removed. 1 shed was completely removed during the night. There are ½ plots for the first time on this site.

9 Allotments Officers Report

The waiting list is down to 206 from 272 people at the last meeting

If someone cannot be contacted then their name is removed from the list.

Eileen produced a spread sheet of current vacancies on all sites.

The French drain at Musgrove has been completed. There is a water leak at Christchurch and a quote has been asked for a new length of pipe from the stop cock.

The water on all sites will be turned off from early October.

Judging of the plots is now becoming time consuming, there are many different awards and a change is suggested to- best plot per site, overall winner also 2nd and 3rd, overall best new comer.

It is also proposed that Jemmett and Christchurch will also be classed as one site. With Musgrove new and William classed as 1 site because of the size of the sites.

The Chairman asked for ideas

Ms Puckett said that best newcomer is to encourage plot holders and it was agreed to have a 1st, 2nd and 3rd prize.

Eileen said that due to damage from storms and stand pipe repairs there has been a drain on finances. There will be a review of allotments probably next year. The Council is thinking of charging up front rather than a year in arrears. This may stop people taking on allotments who do not intend to carry on.

Ms Green said that charging up front had always been the case until recently.

Mr Fagg said that it changed as we were told that for legal reasons it had to be charged in arrears.

He has 2 plots which are not charged and would be happy to pay for the 2nd plot.

Eileen said that the review would look into people on benefits and free plots.

The Chairman asked to be on the review panel rather than it being a fait accompli. She also gave thanks to Eileen for all her hard work.

10. AOB

A date needs to be arranged for the AGM. It was suggested that there be a 1 off AGM in November or combine it with the next meeting in January.

Mr Fagg said that in the past a 1 off meeting had been better attended.

However it was agreed to have a combined meeting at the end of January.

Mr Fagg asked about bee keeping on the allotments. The person in question does have insurance. Eileen will look into this.

Ms Puckett wondered about an awning or gazebo for the trading store- especially if it rains for the pumpkin show. Eileen will look to see if the Council has anything suitable and suggested that a caravan awning may be suitable.

Eileen said that any posters need to go out with the invoices and newsletter and schedules in March.

Eileen said that any posters need to go out with the invoices and newsletter and schedules in March.

DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING- 6.30 WEDNESDAY 25 January

Committee Room 2