

**ASHFORD ALLOTMENT COMMITTEE MEETING
WEDNESDAY 26 SEPTEMBER 2018 COMMITTEE ROOM 2 CIVIC CENTRE**

Present:- Penny Winston-Chairman and Bybrook Cemetery
Tony Fagg- Cryol Road Brenda Raggett- Westrees,
Christine Green-Henwood, Colin Barling- William Road
Brian Stamp- Treasurer Stefan Heathfield- Gas House Fields
Jonathan Goodwin -Website Manager
Carol Ridings- Secretary Lesley Bonarius- Orion Way
Geraldine Gorrings- Environmental Contracts

1. Chairman's Opening Remarks

This has been an extraordinary year for allotment growing with the severe and late 'beast from the East' followed by the long exceptionally hot summer.

Many crops have really suffered with runner beans particularly affected and a general feeling that potato yields are down.

However as the autumn days approach many are taking advantage of the fine weather to get ahead with digging over plots or covering them up as a weed control strategy.

It is that time of year when you can spend happy hours planning for next year and ordering seeds. We have the Kings catalogues at the trading store for collection. They need to be returned with payment by 9th November.

Summer Show: Was held on August 11th at our new venue of The Towers School. Thanks to all who came along and found some produce to show. The number of entries were down due to the weather but we had a successful day and congratulations to Melvin Head who was awarded Best in Show for the outstanding peas. Thanks to our judge Janine Doulton and to all who helped and gave their time to support us.

Hospice Summer Fair: August 4th Thankyou to all the generous donations that helped us to raise £170 for this worthwhile charity that we support annually.

Plot Judging: Congratulations to all who were awarded certificates for the excellent plots which were so well maintained despite the weather this year.

Pumpkin Show: October 27th from 10 30 am at Westrees. Please come along and bring any pumpkins you have for display and to show. We have various categories including the heaviest and children's entries.

2. Apologies

Emma Dew and Alison Tickle

3. Minutes of the last Meeting

Minutes Agreed

4. Bulk Buying Manager's Report

There was an early order for potatoes this year. The trading store will open on 27 October and 10 November. It will then open once in January then every Saturday in February, the opening times being 10 – 12.

5. Show Secretary's Report

There is still a vacancy for this post.

The Chairman said that the venue at Towers school, Kennington had good parking and the hall was large, however the number of entries this year were down, probably due to the weather. Next year the show could be on 10th August. There was however a question over whether the show should be earlier next year and again at Towers. Perhaps 20 July?

Tony felt that July was too early as some crops were just starting off.

Brian will find out the availability of the hall before a final decision is taken in January.

6. Website Manager's Report

On the web site a separate section will be provided for the summer show and each year this will be archived so that it is easier to search.

The Domain is coming up for renewal, this will be £10.

The Chairman gave thanks for the work on the web site.

7. Publicity Officer's Report

Thanks were given to Emma Dew for promoting Facebook and Twitter and for obtaining the prizes for the Summer show. Unfortunately Emma has resigned from her post.

8. Report of the Allotment Officer

Alison Tickle has been trying to get ½ the funding this year and ½ for next year from the Section 106 monies due. She will e mail Site Reps to explain what the monies will be spent on.

Invoices are going out at the moment.

At the working group, it was agreed that all Site Reps could have a master key for all the sites in case a rep was on holiday/ ill etc. and someone needed to be shown around a site. It would also give Reps the opportunity to look round other sites.

9. Treasure's report

Account 1 bank balance	£3375.75.
holding cash	£272.71
Account 2 bank balance	£2911.42
cash float	£26.73

£600 is being held from monies from the Henwood site.

Figures are not yet in from the summer show as money has not yet been finalised from The Council.

10. Site representatives report

Cryol Road- 2 non cultivation reports. There have been no more issues from a nearby resident. The bushes in front of the gates need cutting back.

Gas House Fields:- Stefan wanted to know about the Direct Labour force coming into clear the plots and trees. Aspire have only been in 3 times this year to cut the grass.

There was a question over whether a plot is being cultivated. Geraldine has repossessed a plot, though the tenant is questioning this.

Westrees- The notice boards needs renewing and the plot numbers have still not been provided. Geraldine is waiting for Aspire to do this work.

Trees are growing over the access road, an elder in particular, so it is difficult for the lorry to gain access to the seed shed. There is a problem with someone tipping cuttings on the site. Aspire are not cutting the paths. Brenda is waiting for an e mail re non cultivation letters.

Orion Way- The notice board needs renewing and the plot numbers have still not been provided. The hedge and brambles in the top left corner of the site need cutting back.

Geraldine will check on the progress of the repossession of plots.

William Road – 4 plots are vacant and another 2 will become vacant.

Geraldine said that she will go and do a site inspection of the vacant plots to see if they are in a good condition.

Colin said that you don't want the vacant plots to become used for fly tipping. The gate needs replacing and there has been a need for pest control to go on the site because of the rats.

Alison is due to have a meeting with Aspire with regard to maintenance of the hedges and paths on all sites

and she will then e mail all site reps with the result of these discussions.

2 plots have been used by refugees one of which has not been cultivated. Geraldine said that a decision will be reached in October over the future of this plot.

Colin explained that some people get non cultivation letters each year. For example 1 plot holder's site floods so the plants go in later than usual. Colin therefore feels that a site inspection should take place in September when all plots should be cultivated.

Geraldine explained that all sites should be inspected 4 times a year, looking at for example health and safety issues, not just looking at the non cultivation of plots. Another site inspection is due November/December, then one in the Easter break. There will be feed back on this issue in January.

Henwood- The new tenant of plot 18 didn't necessarily want this plot, however 3b is becoming vacant which will be far more suitable for their needs, but they may only want ½ of it.

There is a problem for 1 plot holder as the adjacent tenant grows very tall beans shading out the plot. The wheelbarrow and cold frame have been removed. Other plots are being given up.

Bybrook- 6a and 2a have given up there plots. Geraldine will check. Problems with notice boards, hedging and grass cutting.

There was a question of skips. People are proactive in clearing sites but they need the Council to provide help and skips.

Musgrove- Brian gave an update. The 4 double bunk beds have been removed. There is 1 other overgrown plot and all vacant plots are under offer.

The Chairman asked that for the January meeting a list is provided of numbers on the waiting list, vacant plots etc.

AOB

The water will go off in October.

Lesley asked if there had been any progress on signs in different languages, they are needed in Nepalese and Polish in particular and relating to hosepipe and water usage.

There is still a problem with the use of hosepipes. Stefan feels that the taps should be altered so hosepipes cannot be used.

Marestail has been a problem at William Road, brought in from outside by a contractor. This is illegal.

Date of the next Meeting -Wednesday 30 January 2019 Committee Room 2 Civic Centre 6.30pm This will be the open AGM meeting followed by the Committee meeting.