Rowhedge Allotments Committee Meeting

Tuesday 31st January 2023

Upstairs at The Albion

Attendees: Penny Sturt (Chair), Paul Warner, Sarah Sprackling (minutes), Caroline Bates, Wendy Fransella, Zoe Gibson-Hart, Martin Chapman, Debbie Antoniou, Christian Langlois, Clyve Tanner.

Apologies: Anne Jones, Barbara Chaplin

**1. Update on security cameras** – Paul fedback that the pole had been fitted today and the camera will be going up next week. The pole and camera is sited in the triangular plot at the top and the camera has a 30m range. The camera will cover the container, carpark and gate. There will be the function to download images to mobiles. We will need to decide how many people download the app. Matt is setting this up and will be maintaining the camera. He is fairly local – based Ardleigh/ Capel St Mary.

There was a discussion about additional wildlife cameras being set up in sheds, as we had originally discussed. There is £500 left from the original grant and £1300 to come from the other grant. The grant money needs to be spent on security. Caroline will confirm the exact balance left from the grants. A data sim has been purchased, 2GB at 35 a month. May need greater GB, to be reviewed.

**Action**- Caroline to review overall expense on security so far, including maintenance and sim and consider balance for providing additional wildlife trail cameras in sheds.

**2. Update on 2023 fees paid** –

Caroline gave an update on fees paid so far. There are 10 to 12 allotment fees outstanding for 2023. Today is the cut off for reduced rates. Review of who has paid is complicated by the issue of people not putting their names or plot number as reference.

There was a discussion about the map containing plot numbers and names. It was agreed that we should have a plot map with just numbers for display on the noticeboard but should also have one containing names for distribution to all allotment holders.

**Actions:**

Clyve will print and laminate a copy of the plot map with just numbers for display on the notice board.

Christian will give distribute a plot map with names of holders to all allotment holders.

Zoe will update the map on any changes to holders.

**3. Allocation of surrendered plots and policy on dividing plots** – There has been a period recently when only half plots have been allocated to new members. On reviewing past minutes, it was agreed that where a full plot is surrendered, it would be allocated as a full plot. Otherwise, surrendered half plots are allocated as half plots. To this end, a surrendered full plot has been allocated to a new applicant requiring a full lot.

* There are currently 3 people on the waiting list for plots. None are Rowhedge residents. There is a prioritisation system in place with priority I being someone in Rowhedge, priority 2 someone in the wider East Donyland parish and priority 3 someone outside this area. It was agreed that a full plot would not be offered to someone in priority 3 area.

There are no vacant plots at present but it is expected that there may be at least one half plot surrendered in the near future. It was agreed that we should advertise in Rowhedge (village noticeboard and GP surgery) for any local interest in a plot.

**Actions:**

Clyve will make and laminate a poster advertising plots and referring interested applicants to the Row-Lots website.

The committee will consider an open day event at the allotments.

These minutes to be uploaded to the allotment website, recording the decision that applicants in priority 3 areas will only be offered half plots.

**4. AOB**

a) There was discussion about the triangular plot at the top of the allotments where the fruit trees are. It was agreed that it would be positive to make this a communal area with a focus on having it as a wildlife area. A path needs to be reinstated for mower access and the trees need pruning. The person taking the adjacent plot is a gardener.

**Actions:**

Zoe to ask new plotholder about reinstating path to maintain access, and whether they would be able and willing to prune the trees.

The committee to arrange removal of any waste left on the plot.

Zoe has full discretion in her current role to allocate plots as they become vacant.

b) Debbie asked whether there is an update on the future of the plot and the plan for EDPC to purchase the land from Cadmans.

**Actions:**

Penny to visit Beth at the Crow’s Nest to ask for an update.

7.2.23: Request for update has been made to EDPC and we await a response.