




Rowhedge Allotment Association Annual General Meeting 2024
Sunday 23rd June 3pm to 5pm
Rowhedge Village Hall

Item	Details	Action
<p>1. Welcome and apologies</p> <p>Apologies:</p> <p>Ceinwen Nokes Jonathan Nokes Alan Page Carol Blackaby Anne Jones Wendy Fransella Christian Langlois Paul Warner Barbara Chaplin</p>	<p>In attendance:</p> <p>Dave Myers Katrina Myers Zoe Meakin Guy Kiely Clyve Tanner Debbie Antoniou Martin Chapman Janet Livingstone Cllr Bob Dodson (EDPC) Carole Heddle Jim Ward Marketa Ottova Kenneth Bates Zoe Hart Penny Sturt Caroline Bates Sarah Sprackling</p> <p>Introduction of Penny as Acting Chair for this meeting due to resignation of Chair. Penny was previous Chair.</p> <p>Initially we were not quorate (16 members minimum needed) so it was agreed that agenda order would be varied with voting delayed until sufficient members in attendance.</p>	<p>Voting on new Committee delayed until later in meeting.</p>
<p>2. Chair report</p>	<p>Chair's Report for Rowhedge Allotments Association AGM</p> <p>This year has been one of significant change for Rowhedge Allotments Association, with several longstanding committee members retiring. Their hard work over many years has been invaluable, and we extend our heartfelt thanks to them. Despite their departure, they leave us in a strong position, especially following the purchase of the field from Cadman's by EDPC. This acquisition secures the future of our allotments for many years to come and will enable us to increase the number of plots over the next year.</p>	<p>Action: Committee to prepare report on new land for EDPC</p> <p>Committee members to attend EDPC meeting to discuss report, funding and future use.</p>

	<p>In response to the damage sustained in 2022, the committee installed CCTV cameras and signage in April 2023 to deter vandals. I am pleased to report that no serious damage has occurred this year.</p> <p>In January, we conducted a survey to gather members' opinions on the use of the newly extended land. The survey results will be presented to EDPC, and we aim to implement, with the approval of the parish council, several of the suggested ideas. These include creating a communal orchard area with fruit trees, a wild nature area, a pond, a composting toilet, additional secure storage (a second container), and an area for bee hives.</p> <p>Rowhedge Allotments is a membership association, and the committee acts on your behalf. Later in the meeting, we will discuss a few matters of importance to all members. We are eager to hear your views on how the committee should address these issues.</p>	
<p>3. Membership secretary report</p>	<p>Zoe, Membership secretary, updated on new plot allocations and plot waiting list. Three plots have been reallocated this season and one further plot is due for reallocation.</p> <p>Zoe and Guy, Lucie and Jo and Sally were welcomed as new allotment holders. There are currently 16 applicants on the waiting list.</p> <p>4 of these are Colchester residents. 12 of these are Rowhedge residents. The 4 Colchester residents want full plots along with 8 of the Rowhedge applicants, with 4 wanting half plots. One half plot is currently ready to re-allocate.</p> <p>Due to the priority system (Rowhedge residents receiving priority) there is the possibility that Colchester residents do not get plots allocated to them. There will be a further 8 full/ 16 half plots available with the development of the new land.</p>	<p> Plot%20Diagram%20June%202024.xlsx</p>
<p>4. Treasurer report</p>	<p>Caroline, Treasurer updated on accounts.</p>	<p>Action: Committee to present plan to EDPC</p>

	<p>We currently have approximately £5k in the bank and are in a good financial situation. We have 61 members of NSALG (£3 each member paid).</p>	<p>and request additional funding for development.</p>  <p>RAA%20Accounts%202023-2024.xlsx</p>				
<p>5. Site report</p>	<p>a) Martin updated on plot maintenance and new plot development. New land has been ploughed and rotavated. There were discussions around Wood pile – fire risk and items put there that are not wood (wire etc) Skip Noticeboard Need for turning circle Communication of maintenance and security issues.</p> <p>b) Janet updated on plot inspection carried out on 1st June.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="534 1608 1066 2045"> <tr> <td data-bbox="534 1608 799 1720">Results of inspection 1st June</td> <td data-bbox="799 1608 1066 2045"></td> </tr> <tr> <td data-bbox="534 1720 799 2045">Number of plots 100% uncultivated</td> <td data-bbox="799 1720 1066 2045">6 half plots and 1 whole plot. 1 of these half plots is being surrendered. 2 half plots have contacted committee about issues restricting</td> </tr> </table>	Results of inspection 1 st June		Number of plots 100% uncultivated	6 half plots and 1 whole plot. 1 of these half plots is being surrendered. 2 half plots have contacted committee about issues restricting	<p>Actions: Sarah to email all members requesting that they do not put waste from outside the allotments on the woodpile.</p> <p>Skip to be ordered.</p> <p>Martin will remove some of the wood to reduce fire risk.</p> <p>Safety of seating to be reviewed.</p> <p>A turning circle will be factored into the new plot area.</p> <p>Noticeboard to be revamped - a new weatherproof closed board to be priced for placement by gate. Notices to be placed on water containers.</p> <p>Actions: Committee to draft graduated letters of concern about lack of cultivation of plots. Three stages.</p> <p>Committee to write a protocol for managing</p>
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Number of plots 100% uncultivated	6 half plots and 1 whole plot. 1 of these half plots is being surrendered. 2 half plots have contacted committee about issues restricting					

		their allotment work.	<p>non-cultivation of plots including staged approach.</p> <p>Caroline and Janet to draft paper and letters for review by committee.</p>
Number of plots less than 25% cultivated	8 half plots and 2 full plots		
Number of plots ok	8 full plots and 24 half plots All new allocations this year are in this segment – well done!		
<p>There was a detailed discussion around how to proceed with addressing uncultivated plots. There was agreement that there needs to be a graduated approach, there needs to be clear advice on what represents cultivation, there needs to be regular letters clearly stating concerns. A vote concluded that letters to be sent out at 2 monthly intervals following plot bi-monthly plot inspections, between April and September.</p> <p>c) Mowing rota – Janet updated on need for better communication about rota. More people are needed to be part of the rota and there needs to be better communication about who is next and when mowing is needed. Some people are borrowing the mower for their plot but are not participating on the rota. There was discussion about acquiring a sit-on mower, about training and health and safety risks including strimmer use. About storage and accessing the mower.</p>			<p>Actions:</p> <p>Clyve and Martin to explore the possibility of a ramp to access the container.</p> <p>Committee to find out cost of new and second hand sit on mowers, insurance and cost implications etc. to included in proposal to be presented to EDPC with request for funding.</p> <p>More members to be recruited to mowing rota. Janet will set up WhatsApp mowing group to improve communication.</p>

<p>6. Committee membership and election to positions.</p>	<p>Due to now being quorate with 16 members in attendance, an update was given on the resignation of several committee members, including longstanding members and the current Chair.</p> <p>Nominations, seconding and voting took place both for Committee positions. Caroline, Sarah and Zoe have agreed to stay on maximum 3 year term in current positions.</p> <p>We are pleased to announce the following Committee going forward:</p> <p>Janet Livingstone, Chair Penny Sturt, Vice Chair Caroline Bates, Treasurer Sarah Sprackling, Branch secretary Zoe Hart, Membership secretary</p> <p>Other Committee members Paul Warner – the amount of work Paul has contributed to the maintenance of the allotment site and the committee was acknowledged with thanks Carol Blackaby Debbie Antoniou Dave Myers Katrina Myers Zoe Meakin – Zoe kindly volunteered to take on a lead role for administering social media for the allotments.</p>	<p>Penny, Acting meeting Chair</p>
<p>7. Inclusivity and Disability access.</p>	<p>The Committee had received queries around the part of the constitution that prohibits the use of pumps and hoses from the water containers. This has been challenged as excluding people with a disability who cannot manage watering cans from the existing containers. A paper (attached) was presented on possible options and there was discussion around inclusivity and environmental and cost concerns. A vote was held and option 2 was carried by the majority, involving a deposit scheme and review of water costs. There was also agreement about positioning of further water containers and the need for a further standpipe at</p>	 <p>Water%20Pump%20Usage%20at%20Rowf</p> <p>Actions:</p> <p>Janet and Caroline to draft a protocol and changes to constitution regarding use of pumps including recommendations for using water wisely and tips using less water.</p>

	the far end of the plots.	<p>A deposit scheme for pump use will be arranged by the committee and allotment holders will be invited to apply. Pump ban remains until this is in place. Constitution will need updating.</p> <p>Standpipe to be included with additional water containers.</p>
8. Allotment communication	<p>There was discussion about the use of different forums for communicating with members. There is an email group for formal communication but some people do not appear to receive emails. There are WhatsApp and Facebook groups but confusion about who is administering these so new allotment holders are not being added.</p> <p>It was agreed that there needs to be different forms of communication but we need to ensure everyone receives communication.</p>	<p>Actions:</p> <p>Everyone receives communications and it is clear which are official messages from the Committee and which are social.</p> <p>Sarah to continue to sent out formal communications via email.</p> <p>Committee to have better oversight of email list and administration of social media groups.</p> <p>Zoe has agreed to take a lead on social media allotment groups to promote communication.</p> <p>Website to be updated.</p>
9. Close	Katrina raised the possibility of willow workshops at the allotment site.	