**Rowhedge Allotment Association Committee Meeting Minutes**

**2nd March 2014, 6.30pm**

**The Old Albion, Rowhedge**

**Attendance (committee members) Non committee members Apologies**

Ann Jones (Treasurer) Paddy Adams Maria Jackson

Sally Jowers (Secretary) Lorraine Stalley Jake Murrells

Andy Randall Dave Palmer

Sharon Sainty

Martin Sainty

Rob Walton

Paul Warner

Yvette Wetton (Chair)

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1. **Matters arising from the previous committee minutes**
   1. ***Donyland Lodge:*** Reported that Donyland Lodge are no longer involved in Martin Chapman’s plot and he has taken the whole plot back and has adopted the shed that was constructed on it. ***No Further Action.***
   2. ***I metre Perimeter:*** SJ reported that she had contacted plot holders via email and several people had responded. After a lengthy discussion the committee agreed that:

* The metre on the fence side will be maintained by the Rowhedge Allotment Members by strimming. However, for this to be effective the area must be kept clear of sheds, compost bins, rubbish etc. If this is not done then plot holders must expect items to be removed during site inspections or when strimming is taking place.
* Please note: that individual plot holders can take responsibility for their 1 metre if they wish. For instance, if plot holders wish to keep the area free from weeds themselves this is acceptable, however if it becomes apparent that this is not happening, then this will be reported via the Site Inspections and action will be taken.
* In addition, if any maintenance needs to be done to the perimeter fence and this cannot be done from the other side then plot holders must be aware that any plants growing in this area may need to be removed to enable maintenance to occur.

***Action: SJ will add this to the terms and conditions and cultivation policy and send to all plot holders.***

* 1. **Recipes:** YW reported that recipes can now be uploaded onto the website.

***No further action.***

* 1. **Thistlethwayte’s Cup/Produce Show:** YW reported that Friends of St Lawrence are happy to take this cup donated by theThistlethwayte’s and use it for ‘Best in Show’ at their annual Produce Show.

***Action: AR to inform the Thistlethwayte’s.***

* 1. **Metal Locker for the Strimmer:** Check with JM that we can still have the locker, if not attach a chain and lock in the office area of the Lock-up.

***Action: SJ to email JM to see if the locker can be delivered to the lock up and report back to PW in case a chain and lock need to be attached.***

* 1. **Eligibility Policy/All Policies:** SJ reported that she is updating all the policies and these will be sent via email to the plot holders and uploaded on to the new website.

***Action: SJ to complete updates, upload to website and send link to plot holders.***

* 1. The previous minutes (24 November 2013) were agreed by the committee.

1. **Finance**
   1. **Current Financial Position – Update:** AJ reported there had been no unusual expenditure. Presently have £2,818.71 in the bank, which is still to be reconciled once the on-line banking is sorted out. AJ confirmed that rent to EDPC was paid in January 2014 (£1000) and the 6 monthly water bill for £74 was paid in December 2013; Public Liability Insurance (£160) and NSALG membership (£120) was also paid out. We ran a payment session and the majority of membership and plot rentals have been paid in January/February 2014, except 2 which are now being chased up. AJ and MJ are to meet to reconcile all payments and receipts will be issued at that time if they weren’t issued at the payment session. Re-allocation of plots that have been made vacant will take place in the near future. YW thanked AJ for a comprehensive Financial Report.

***Action: AJ and MJ to meet and reconcile payments and issue receipts. Allocation of vacant plots will take place and waiting list to be reported at the next committee meeting.***

**2.2** **Signatories**: AJ is in the process of organising new signatories & arrangements were made for other committee members to give appropriate information to complete this process. YW thanked AJ for her continued work in this.

***Action: AJ to complete the process this week***

* 1. **Water Update:** AJ reported our historical usage of water:

**Year 1:** spent £187 (we were connected late in the year)

**Year 2:** £213

**Year 3:** £311 (a very dry summer)

1. **Site Maintenance**

**3.1 Update from Site Inspection Group:** There was a Site Inspection in January 2014 and it was noted that there is lots of ‘tidying up’ to do on many sites due to the high winds that we have been experiencing. There was a general comment that some plots are ‘spilling out’ so it was noted that all plot holders should be made aware of this and asked to do a general ‘tidy up’ and we begin to return to the site.

***Action: SJ to send an email with copies of updated Policies to remind plot holders of our terms and conditions.***

* 1. **Water Update:** PW reported there have been no further water leaks and all is well.

YW thanked PW for keeping a close eye on the water meter.

***Action: PW to continue to review the water meter & report to the committee***

* 1. **Chippings:** PA reported that there were three different sources that were delivering

chippings to the site and he confirmed that they had all been contacted and asked to not deliver further chippings until the current piles have been used. There was concern from the Site Inspection Group as chippings can generate heat and therefore a safety issue.

***Action: SJ to email plot holders to remind them to use the chippings on site.***

* 1. **Field Mowing:** PW confirmed that he will request that the field be mown prior to

May, before the field has grown too much. ***Action: PW to organise.***

1. **Officers Standing Down:** It was reported that two of the Committee’s Officers (Yvette Wetton and Maria Jackson) will be standing down at the next AGM as they are both moving from the village and will no longer be plot holders. Those interested to apply for Chair and Membership Secretary to contact the Secretary (Sally Jowers) in writing prior to the AGM. AGM was set for Sunday 27th April 2014 at 6.30.

***Action: AJ to book The Olde Albion for the AGM; SJ to email all members and display posters on the village notice boards. SJ to email all members requesting that a written application prior to the AGM to be made if interested in vacant officer posts.*** 

1. **Any other business:**
   1. **Website:** YW expressed thanks to Christian for the website which is looking really

excellent. [www.rowlots.org.uk](http://www.rowlots.org.uk) ***Action: SJ to email plot holders to view the website.***

* 1. **Tree Planting:** SJ confirmed that trees received from Essex County Council’s ‘free

tree’ scheme had been planted within gaps on the road side. ***No further action.***

* 1. **Waiting List:** There is a suggestion that the Waiting List for Plots needs to be publicised

with more transparency and it was agreed that this will be investigated prior to the AGM.

***Action: Officers to meet to discuss the Membership Policy and Waiting List to present at the AGM.***

* 1. **Key’s:** AJ requested a list of key holders from PA.
  2. **High Winds:** YW thanked Sharon and Martin Sainty for their help when reporting damage

that the high winds have caused at the Allotment Site.

* 1. **Thefts:** Unfortunately plot holders will be aware that thefts took place earlier this year. The

Committee strongly advise that any items of value should either not be kept at the site or can be kept in the lock up and keys are available for a cost of £15.

***Action: SJ to email plot holders to inform them of this recommendation.***

* 1. **Fly Tipping:** YW reported that any instances of fly tipping either on the Allotment Site or

locally can be reported to Colchester Borough Council [www.colchester.gov.uk](http://www.colchester.gov.uk)

***No Further Action.***

1. **Date and Times of Meetings**

Next Meeting (AGM) was arranged for Sunday 27th April 2014 at 6.30pm

The meeting closed at 7.38pm