

# Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Hollin Lane Allotment Association 2016

Date: 25/10/2016 7.30pm Venue: Meanwood Institute.

1. Apologies for Absence: L. Gibbs, G North, C Evans, L Allen, P Richardson

2. Minutes of the Previous Meeting: The minutes of the previous meeting were accepted as an accurate record.

3. Matters Arising

Leaves: **ACTION:** Angie to follow up with Lynne Rogers at the Council about the offer of swept up leaves.

4. Chair's Report

The Chair summarised events of the previous year.

Committee Meetings: Six committee meetings were held last year (usually after plot inspections).

Bring and Buy Sales: We concentrated efforts on 1 B&B sale this year, held on 5 June 2016, which was very successful.

Annual Show: Held on 4 September 2016, judged by John Maiden. £566 raised from B&B sale and show, of which £25 donated to Wheatfields Hospice.

EGM: An extraordinary general meeting was held on 3 August 2016 to add a Dissolution clause to our Rules of Association.

Work parties: all work at the Hollin Lane Allotments is done by volunteers. Essential jobs such as grass cutting, bramble control and bonfires are done by Peter Blakey, Peter Copeland and Joe Foster, so thanks go to them for this. This year, Rosie Hall coordinated several productive work parties, focussing on the coppice area, the hut (sanding down and painting) and work on individual plots, helping to dig up a large tree and clearing & covering vacant plots. Thanks to Rosie for driving these work parties along. Any contributions towards helping maintain and improve the site are always welcome!

Project grants: This year, the site has applied for and been awarded three grants (see later).

Starter and senior plots: We have started to create these on two vacant quarter plots, to help tackle the waiting list and to supply a downsizing option for current senior members who don't want to/can no longer manage a whole plot, but who want to remain a member of the allotments.

Rent rises: despite being found illegal by judicial review in 2014, the Council have reinstated these rises anyway, so rents have gone up and will go up again next year too.

Committee member leaving: Gillian North, a long serving committee member and great gardener, is now retiring from the Committee. Many thanks to Gillian for her time spent on the Committee.

Thanks: to committee members and volunteers/work party members for their hard work this year.

5. Trustees' Report

The Trustees are the legal representatives of the allotment site and their names are on our lease. Their role is to make sure the allotments are being cultivated and are safe. This is achieved by regular site inspections, usually 3 times a year (1<sup>st</sup> March, 1<sup>st</sup> June, 1<sup>st</sup> September) along with follow-up inspections, 6 weeks later.

Inspections: As a result, 1 plotholder has been evicted & several plotholders have made improvements.

Security: There have been several break-ins, which we think is down to people climbing over the fence or coming through the gate. There has been a fair amount of produce theft. All plotholders should be vigilant and report any

concerns to the Committee. Please remember to scramble the code on the gate lock every time you come in/go out.

Paths: Many paths are overgrown or too narrow, having been whittled away by over-enthusiastic digging. Many paths have a large drop to the plot below. Please bear in mind that all paths should be at least 80cm wide and do what you can to maintain or repair the paths around your plot, for the sake of all members' safety.

#### 6. Treasurer's Report

The Treasurer presented the accounts for 2015-16, which have been audited and are an official record. We have purchased more manure this year, with plotters paying £1 per barrow load, which allows us to break even for this great service. Money has been raised from the plant and refreshment sales. The Council are reclaiming a larger proportion of the rent each year. Our share stays the same, so we don't make more money on the increased rents.

Reminder about RENTS: Can all members remember to pay their Rents by the end of October. If you decide not to renew your lease, please let the Committee know asap (email [Committee@hollinlaneallotments.org](mailto:Committee@hollinlaneallotments.org) or phone Rosie on **2745699**).

#### 7. Secretary's Report

The Committee has applied for and been awarded three grants this year

- £1000 from Leeds City Council, towards the composting toilet (will be spent on concrete base).
- £8000 (minimum) from Tesco's Bags of Help award, towards a composting toilet in a secure cabin and a communal tool shed, plus other small improvements around the site. This was as a result of the online survey of members conducted last year. We hope to lay the concrete base for the toilet and tool shed cabins soon or more likely after the winter and have the toilet and shed erected soon afterwards.
- £1500 from St Chads, towards the development of the Senior's Plot – to create 4-5 individual, sleeper edged beds, surrounded by safe paths, with bench, storage area and composting bins etc.

#### 8. Report from Rosie (Lettings secretary/committee member)

Rosie was involved in the **city-wide allotment competition**, being trained as a judge and acting as secretary to this group. They judged 37 individual plots and 13 sites, according to criteria set out by the Federation. Rosie encouraged anyone with an interest to get involved in this activity as it was very enjoyable.

Results: Roz Dunlevey won a gold certificate, coming 6<sup>th</sup> in the city. Malcolm Slade & Jayne Harnett were awarded a Bronze.

Rosie was also involved in developing show gardens for the Harrogate show and these both won Primary Gold Certificates.

Finally in the photo competition, Roz Dunlevey had 2 photos selected for the calendar.

#### 9. Election of Officers

All officers stood down and were re-elected/elected as follows:

Chair: Joe Foster; Treasurer: Ness Clarke; Lettings: Rosie Hall; Secretary: Angie Willshaw

Committee: Louise Allen, Jenny Ward, Claire Evans, Jenny Tennant-Jackson (in their absence); Donald Hood; Mary Davies, John Balfour (elected), Sue Stones (elected).

#### 10. Prizegiving

John Maiden judged the plots and was very impressed. The Chair presented prizes as follows. Many thanks to Mary Davies for sourcing the prizes from local, supportive businesses (including the Three Horseshoes, Glendors, Secret Café).

Best Plot	1st prize	Roz Dunlevey
	2nd prize	Joe Foster
	3rd prize	Malcolm Slade
Best Newcomer		Steve Monether
Overall winner annual show	most points	Rosie Hall
Best Exhibit in Show		Rosie Hall

## 11. General issues - Manure, wood chips, netting. Weed suppressant

Manure: Cobble Hall Farm in Roundhay now supplies manure to the site and this has gone well. We have aimed to have a constant supply. Please give £1 for each barrow load to committee members (see hut for plot numbers).

Netting: the hut has some 2m wide netting, which is good for keeping pigeons away from crops and also butterflies. There are blue hoops that you can use to set up the netting over your crops.

Weed suppressant fabric: we now stock this and urge all members to cover up areas of their plot that aren't currently being cultivated. This suppresses weed growth and helps maintain nutrients in the soil.

Hut: Donald has stocks of chemical fertilisers such as Growmore, but also potash and superphosphate and chicken pellets. If you have any requests for items you would like stocked in the hut, please DO ask.

Woodchips: usually delivered to area outside main gate by a few companies who are working in the area. We are trying to keep asking for a regular supply, as it is useful for making paths and suppressing weeds.

Mushroom compost: often purchased, with payment made up-front for each order. We have just had an order but hopefully this will be offered again. The advantage of mushroom compost is that it can be added immediately to the soil.

Making Compost: Plots that grow good vegetables always have a good compost heap. It can take several years to reap the benefits but it's well worth the effort. This also means that all the organic material is retained on your plot and not lost. It is our duty to our site and also to future ploholders to keep a compost heap on each plot and to keep plots productive.

## 12. Projects and grants

Coppice wood on 46T: Much progress has now been made, with the area being cleared, dug and saplings planted. More work is needed as regular intervals to level off the area and keep control of weeds/bindweed. The bulbs are still to be ordered and planted. On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> November, Morgans City Living are sending 21 volunteers to help us from 10am till 4pm. We will be concentrating on the coppice, but also hope to build composting bins for people who need one on their plot. Please get in touch if you would like one! Come along during those hours and help out if you can! We can get a lot done together.

Composting Toilet and communal tool shed: see above – coming soon! Each cabin will have a keypad code for access.

Senior and starter plots: see above. Contact Rosie if you are interested in swapping your plot for a large bed (4m x 1m) on the senior plot.

Mentors: Louise Gibbs suggested that we try to make the most of the wealth of gardening knowledge on the site by asking for mentors to advise newcomers to the site. This is a great idea, but as usual needs volunteers. Please contact the committee if you are interested in being a mentor/general advisor to new people.

### 13. Any Other Business

1. Donald reminded those present about getting their Seed Catalogue order in.

2. Rosie mentioned the Northern Fruit Group and whether there would be general interest in a pruning workshop. There was good interest. **ACTION:** Rosie/Joe to contact to make arrangements for this.

3. Waitrose have a coffee grinds bin by the door that you can help yourself to. It is recommended that this goes onto the compost heap, but some people like to use this to help acidify their soil. Coffee grinds prevent germination.

4. The senior bed idea is an experiment at this stage, so it depends what response we get. It is NOT a disabled access plot, but merely a plot with small beds in a flat area of the site, where members can garden together more easily and communally.

5. Jonty mentioned that some paths at the top end of the site are slippy and need improvement. There are many metres of paths on the site and we do need to bear in mind that we ALL need to help maintain these and keep them as safe as possible. Any ideas about what we can do to make improvements are welcome. It was suggested that paving stones be obtained (eg from the relocation of Red Hall) and laid, but this is a major undertaking.

Angie Willshaw 28/10/2016