

Minutes of the TGAA Committee meeting held at 10.30 am on Friday 26th February 2016 at 23 Chalfont Road, Oxford.

Present: Tony Hollander (chairman); Virginia Wallis (secretary); Bob Crabtree (treasurer); Carol Jarvis (lettings secretary); Jonathan Clark (website and machinery); Tim Halliday (shop); Michael Wheale (compost); Vibeke Mannion.

Apologies: Neil MacLennan (deputy chairman); Pete Jarvis (pest control).

1 Fees

Revenue from plot and membership fees is down on last year, but largely because of the £1,100 compensation we received from Scottish and Southern Electricity (SEE) and about £500 more than last year from the plant sale, we have a very healthy £8,000 in the bank. Although it was suggested that fees should be reduced, it was agreed to leave them as they are. It was suggested that rather than reduce the full fee (of £15 membership and £15 per half plot) to which they were increased in 2011, we could give a bigger discount - £5 rather than £3 – for early payment. It was agreed that we could spend some of the surplus funds on a pruning ladder, a telescopic pruning tool and two more first aid boxes to be fixed on the communal compost shed and on the edge of the main path in the middle of the allotment site.

2 Annual General Meeting (AGM)

The AGM is taking place at 8.00pm on Tuesday 22nd March 2016 at the St Margaret's Institute.

Members will be invited to come at 7.30 to enjoy wine and nibbles as introduced at last year's meeting. CJ intends to stand down as lettings secretary. TimH mentioned that Roger Mumbycroft might be interested in taking over the role but if not, we could ask for volunteers at the AGM.

Action: TonyH to ask Neil and Sally if they would repeat the excellent job they did of providing refreshments last year plus nibbles as Vibeke won't be able to.

Action: CJ to contact Roger.

3 Railway update

JC attended the railway meeting at Phil & Jim's on 25th Feb 2016 as TonyH was unable to. The main news is that the date for finishing the bridge works has shifted to mid-September although it would more likely to be mid-November. The slippage is largely down to the fact that around 15 planning conditions need to be met before bridge work can be carried out. Once Network Rail has finished its bridge works, the school will need to organise contractors to remove topsoil. There will be no period when we are unable to use the crossing.

4 Spring newsletter

The Spring newsletter will cover: Railway update (JC); compost (MW); plant sale (VW); the mowing team (TonyH); shop and potatoes (VW); photo competition (JC). Contributions to VW by Friday 4th March 2016 at the latest.

5 Composting and shredder

MW to engage David Haynes to turn the communal compost once a month to improve the rate of composting. The current shredder is not fit for purpose and a budget of £3,000 was agreed to buy a better one. Martin Carr has volunteered to look after the communal bonfire.

Action: MW to investigate sources of high-quality, possibly second-hand shredders.

6 Bee garden

Action: VW to organise planning meeting for the bee garden with committee members and also Clare Hollander who has excellent ideas for planting it.

7 Shop

One of the shop volunteers has dropped out but Clare Hollander very kindly agreed to step in. TimH will buy potatoes for the shop which will open for business again on Saturday 5th March 2016.

8 Plant sale

This year's plant sale is taking place on Sunday 22 May 2016 with set up taking place the day before. The plant sale is unlikely to make as much as in 2015 and there will be fewer plants on sale and no tools as there were last year. The plant sale will continue to also sell honey and preserves as well as cookery and gardening books (introduced in 2015).

9 Harvest supper

This year's harvest supper – again run by Stuart Skyte - will take place on Saturday 12th November 2016 and will include the results of the photo competition.

10 Plot inspection

The next plot inspection will take place before the AGM and, as well as looking at cultivation (or lack of it) will look out for hazards of the type that injured Carol and also evidence of plot holders nibbling away at communal paths.

11 AOB

Pallets JC to ask Johnson Buildbase for another consignment of wooden pallets

Skip JC to order another skip.

Noticeboard MW to replace the noticeboard by the Port Meadow gate. JC to update and maintain the contents of both noticeboards.

Rubble bank MW to relocate the rubble bank with a suitable notice.

Wells MW and JC to supervise the digging of three more wells.

The meeting ended at 11.55 am