

Minutes of the TGAA Committee meeting held at 10.30 am on Tuesday 27 August 2013 at 23 Chalfont Road, Oxford.

Present: Tony Hollander (chairman); Virginia Wallis (secretary); Bob Crabtree (treasurer); Carol Jarvis (lettings secretary); Pete Jarvis (pest control); Jonathan Clark (website and machinery).

Apologies: Neil MacLennan (deputy chairman); Vibeke Mannion (shop).

Agenda

1 Railway developments

Network Rail's contractor plans to erect a palisade fence alongside the allotment fence. Their engineer has yet to confirm that he has received the plan for the new ramp drawn up by Simon Beattie. Tom Landell-Mills, who is a landscape architect, has expressed an interest in meeting Simon to discuss the ramp plan. The plan should be part of Network Rail's planning application which is due to be submitted to the planning committee in November 2013. Approval is due in March 2014. If approved, Network Rail aims to have the new bridge in place over a weekend in May 2014. There has been no change to the proposed new car park which will have twelve spaces. There has been no further contact from Southern Electric.

Action Carol to let Simon Beattie know that Tom Landel-Mills is interested in contributing to the ramp plan. Tony to write to Network Rail's engineer outlining our requests for the mitigation work.

2 Plant sale 2014 (and beyond)

Hearty thanks were extended to Pete and Carol for all their hard work in organising the plant sale for the past twenty years. This year it raised £1,200 and a further £100 was raised from the sale of leftover plants and additional seedlings at the shop. Although they have decided to step down from the overall organisation of it, Pete has very kindly agreed to continue to put up paper adverts for the sale. It was agreed that the organisation of the plant sale would in future follow Pete and Carol's tried and tested method but that jobs would be shared out among the committee and other volunteers. The most pressing need is for volunteers who are prepared to act as plant repositories for people who can't bring plants to the St Margaret's Institute. Michael Wheale would be asked to join the committee with the role of plant sale coordinator. The St Margaret's Institute has been booked for 25th and 26th May 2014 which is the first weekend of spring half term. It was also agreed that the shop would hold more mini sales of surplus plants at different times of the year.

3 Communal compost

The new compost collection bay is working well and plot holders appear to be obeying instructions. John Ashby has also built a separate turf bank between the compost bays and the communal bonfire.

4 Flood-prone plots

It was agreed that the highly flood-prone quarter plot next to the damson orchard would be levelled and turned over to grass. The half-plot near the new pond will be given over to buddleia and other butterfly- and bee-friendly plants. Both low-lying plots will be designated as rubble collection points in a bid to raise their levels. Really good signage will be needed. It was also agreed that we would pay someone to strim the border of the pond.

Action Carol to buy buddleia plants. Jonathan to commission someone to do the strimming and to ensure that the cornus are not damaged.

5 Autumn newsletter

This will include news on railway developments, communal compost and turf bank, the plant sale, harvest supper, new rubble banks, honey for sale, thefts and pests.

6 Beekeepers' tithe

Beekeepers currently pay only a membership fee but do not pay for the apiary 'plot'. So it was agreed that beekeepers would be asked to contribute one pound of honey per productive hive to be sold at the plant sale. It was also agreed that the beekeepers could increase the number of hives on the site to ten.

7 Ian Salisbury's proposals

Ian's suggestion that the new railway bridge should include a conduit has already been included in our requests to Network Rail. The committee did not agree that the old pond should be filled in. It was agreed that the proposals for a communal polytunnel could not be considered until we knew what the plans for the new ramp were.

8 Thefts

Several crop thefts have been reported but there are measures in place to identify the perpetrators.

Action Jonathan to ask people to notify him about thefts in the autumn newsletter.

9 Pests

Rat boxes are available but ploholders need to tell Pete the exact location of any rat problem. People who have had rat boxes in the past need to return them.

The meeting ended at 12.25pm