

Minutes of the TGAA Committee meeting held at 10.30 am on Saturday 16th August 2014 at 23 Chalfont Road, Oxford.

Present: Tony Hollander (chairman); Neil MacLennan (deputy chairman); Virginia Wallis (secretary); Carol Jarvis (lettings secretary); Pete Jarvis (pest control); Jonathan Clark (website and machinery); Vibeke Mannion (shop); Michael Wheale.

Apologies: Bob Crabtree (treasurer).

1 Mitigation works

Southern Electric have done the work they needed to do and are due to give the association £1,000 but it was pointed out that we should ask for more because the works took a lot longer than expected.

Network Rail's (NR) will soon be taking the fence by the railway line down very soon and will replace it with a palisade fence. Oxford City Council (OCC) will be given the option of reusing the old stock fence at another allotment site. Network Rail will also level the drainage ditch and have agreed to concede a bit of land so that the allotment path can be widened.

According to NR contractors, the mitigation works are delayed. The planning decision is due on 8th September 2014 and the new bridge and ramp to the allotment will not be in place before February 2014.

It was agreed that although we are pleased with the mitigation measures in general, both the width of the western end of the western path and its height need to be addressed. It was also agreed that we should reject proposals for chicanes (which were not included in the planning application) on both ends of the paths as they would obstruct convenient use of the path by both allotment holders and the general public.

The ramp to the allotments will be made of fibre-reinforced plastic and will have an expected design life of 30 years. The ramp will enter the allotment site east of the old pond and may restrict access to the southern path so the old pond may need to be filled in. The colour of the ramp has not yet been established but green is favoured. It was agreed that we need to establish in writing the OCC is responsible for the maintenance of the ramp. We also need to communicate our preferences for a no-slip surface and a lockable gate hinged at the east and opening inwards. Needs to be widened to be the same width of 3.5 metres as the new railway bridge. It was also noted that we need to ask OCC for a private car park sign.

Action NM to email the planning officer setting out the inadequacies of the mitigation measures. TH to communicate our other requirements to NR and OCC as appropriate.

2 Plot inspection report

The recent plot inspection was very dispiriting and resulted in a record number - around 25 - of weed and warning letters being sent out.

Action VW to send a reminder to all ploholders to mow paths between plots and to keep down weeds on both sides of any chickenwire fence around a plot.

3 Trees

The council has agreed to pollard the trees on our boundaries but won't be able to do it all in one go although it needs to happen before the wet weather sets in. The council won't, however, deal with the trees on plots so we need to employ a tree surgeon (possibly the former council tree man who is now in private practice) to take down the large trees and get a working party together to tackle the smaller trees.

Action JC to chase the council.

4 Safety of well on plot 108e

The well on plot 108e is severely eroded and needs a new liner as it could collapse at any minute.

Action JC and MW to look at well and see if it can be fixed.

5 Outstanding action points from last meetings

Federation meeting It was agreed that the committee would share attending Federation

meetings but no one is able to attend the next one which will take place on Tuesday 23rd September 2014. VW to send copies of the minutes of the last meeting to the committee.

Plot 29e It was agreed that this flood-prone plot would be made into a bee and butterfly-friendly plot and that the rubble bank will be relocated in an attempt to build up the level of the plot. The timber seats round the old pong will be used for the edges of the rubble bank. A planning meeting is needed.

Beekeepers need to be reminded that they need to pay a tithe of one pound of honey fro every productive hive.

6 Any other business

Compost The compost bins are cooking away nicely so will be available to members shortly. MW to send a note when the compost is ready.

New mower This was reported as being somewhat erratic but it may help to take the grass collector off. JC to have a word with Turneys about the slightly unreliable switch.

Rats Because the council no longer provides rat poison, PJ will buy some from an agricultural shop in Witney which sells large tubs of poison for £30.

Autumn newsletter This will be compiled after the next meeting at Phil & Jim school which is taking place on the 24th September 2014.

The meeting ended at 12.35pm