

PRETORIA ROAD ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 2nd September 2023

at Pretoria Road Allotment Site

Committee Members Present:

Claire Nicholl – Chair

Derek Howell – Treasurer

Doug Blackwell – Secretary

Mary Hayward - Minute Secretary

Mike Stinchcomb – Committee Member

Norman Bradford – Committee Member

Richard Pruett - Committee Member

Chris Rowell – Committee Member

Jenny Richardson – Committee Member

22 Plot Holders attended the meeting.

Apologies: Jody Frayne (Committee Member)

Chair, Claire Nicoll opened the meeting and extended a welcome to everyone.

ITEM 1 The minutes of the 2021 AGM were adopted, and a copy was signed off by the Chairman.

ITEM 2 CHAIR'S REPORT

Claire thanked everyone who had helped with the running and maintenance of the site during the past year and felt it had been a very productive and successful year for the allotment society.

Claire first outlined the building work to the shop and kitchen that had taken place, including the roof, electrics and painting, and offered thanks to all those involved.

Claire noted the expansion to the orchard that had taken place, including maintenance to this area. She highlighted that the orchard is a space for all allotment members to use.

Claire noted that the Bonfire and Easter events had been successful events and raised approx. £300. It is hoped these events will be repeated next year.

Some of the other successes for the year were noted as securing a discount for entry to Gardener's World Live, MS organising trip to NT gardens and Manure delivery.

Claire also reported that in conjunction with Patchway Town Council, the Allotment Society had secured a £31,000 grant to develop the scrub land on site. Claire said this would be spoken about more fully later in the meeting.

ITEM 3 TREASURER'S REPORT

Derek thanked all members present for attending today's meeting. He distributed copies of the General Account and copies of the Fund-Raising Account for the year September 1st 2022 to 31st August 2022. Derek acknowledged that both accounts were in credit. **A full copy of both Balance Sheets will be displayed with the AGM Minutes and can be viewed on the Allotment Notice Board and on the Allotment Website.**

Derek noted that the water bill had been slightly less this year and thanked members for their careful use of water. Derek highlighted the need to extend the sites water harvesting stations in the future should funds allow.

It was felt that the £250 taken in hire charges during the year would need to be used to buy a new strimmer due to the damage sustained to the ones currently in use. Derek felt that the training currently offered to members would help reduce further breakages and damages.

Derek explained that there was still a little to do regarding the current building works and requested volunteers who wish to help to please contact a committee member. He highlighted a specific need for a carpenter to help repair/install new door.

Derek extended thanks to Mike Stinchcomb for his support organising and maintaining the shop and the stock levels during the past year. Derek said suggestions from members for products to be sold in the shop would be welcome.

Derek also thanked members who supported or organised fund-raising events.

Claire thanked Derek for all his work during the past year as Treasurer.

ITEM 4 SECRETARY'S REPORT

Doug thanked everyone for attending. He also extended thanks to all those who have helped with events, helped with building work, and supported the society throughout the year.

Doug stated that Patchway Town Council are inviting representatives from the Allotment Society to report quarterly to the Parks and Open Spaces Committee.

Doug also stated

- A sub-committee would be established to work on the new project to develop the scrub land and develop the use of the site for members and the community.
- 99% of allotments are now occupied. (This may increase when plots rentals up for renewal at end of Sept.)
- There is small waiting list of 7.

- The Allotment is FOR members – not for the committee. The committee is made up entirely of volunteers and all members are welcome to become involved. Doug requested members to please support the committee.

Claire thanked Doug for all his work this year as Secretary.

Adoption of Officers

The following members were proposed, seconded and elected as Committee Members for the following year:

Claire Nicholl – Chair

Derek Howell - Treasurer

Doug Blackwell – Secretary

Mary Hayward - Minutes Secretary

Norman Bradford - Committee Member

Mike Stinchcomb – Committee Member

Jenny Richardson – Committee Member

Richard Pruett – Committee Member

Chris Reed – Committee Member

Rob Martinique – Committee Member

(Derek Howell stated that this was likely to be his last year as Treasurer. Derek offered to support any member who may wish to take on this role in the future and advised that it may be helpful to consider working alongside him during this current year.)

Claire stated that members can contact the committee at any point during the year if they wish to join the committee.

Any Other Business

1. Locks

Main Gate lock changed to combination lock. Working well. Side gate available to use with key if necessary. The combination code will be changed in October after potential changeover in plot holders.

2. Shop Opening

Next year the shop will return to SATURDAY ONLY opening. (If a committee member is on site at other times, requests may be made to open shop or rent out mowers etc.)

3. NEW GRANT

In conjunction with Patchway Town Council, the Society has been awarded £31,000 from the West of England Combined Authority – Grants for Pollinators Fund.

In brief it is anticipated that this will involve,

- Flattening the currently unused area of the site.
- Development of 8-10 new 'no dig' plots.
- Working with local schools.
- Development for disabled access.
- Erection of polytunnel/s for members and community use.
- Re-establish pond area.
- Install native hedgerows and tree border.
- Development of a wildflower meadow/bee banks.
- The Green Waste area will be removed.
- The Bonfire Site will be removed.

There will be a meeting with PTC on 23rd September to discuss plans further and updates will be communicated to members. Volunteers requested for the sub-committee to lead this project.

5. Structures

It was proposed to make changes to the handbook to align with South Gloucestershire in relation to the size of sheds and greenhouses permitted on site. This was agreed by all members present. (Once amended, new handbook to be sent to all members.) It was also agreed that, from October, all members wishing to erect a new structure on their plot will need approval by the Committee prior to installation. This request will need to be in writing and clearly state the dimensions of the intended structure.

Members were reminded that any concerns should put it in writing and brought to the attention of a committee member.

6. No Dig/Organic Feed

It was suggested that Saturday mornings be used to share knowledge and skills with other plot holders. Plot holders will be contacted and invited to impart their relevant knowledge and skills such as No Dig method and Organic Feed.

7. Loos

Members were reminded to leave the facilities in a clean condition after use.

8. Nettle Area

A request was made for a protected nettle area. It was felt that this could be accommodated during the work to develop the site and would be considered by the sub-committee.

Claire thanked all members for their attendance and invited all to stay for tea and cake. The meeting was then closed.