

## **Pretoria Road Allotment Society**

Minutes of the Committee Meeting

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> February 2024 - Pretoria Road Allotment Site 10.15am

### **Committee Members Present:**

Claire Nicholl – Chair (CN)

Doug Blackwell – Secretary (DB)

Derek Howell – Treasurer (DH)

Jenny Richardson (JR)

Richard Pruett (RP)

Chris Rowell (CR)

Rob Martinique (RM)

Mary Hayward (MH)

Mike Stinchcombe (MS)

Roger Loveridge (RL) - Patchway Town Council

Apologies: None

Item 1 - Minutes of last committee meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> November accepted.

### Item 2- Gates

Main Gate – DH reported gate lock working well and didn't freeze on coldest day.

Single Gate to/from Clermont Close – All agreed to swap padlock for combination lock.

Side Gate – All agreed to keep as key lock to support members who find combination lock tricky to manage.

Code Change – DB to email members with the new code for main gate when changed.

Item 3 – Key Deposits – As keys will no longer be needed to access the site, DB to email all members regarding their plot deposit. Members will be asked if they would like to donate their plot deposit to the Allotment Society. Cheques will be issued for plot holders who wish to have deposits returned.

Item 4 – Purchase of Woodchipper and Chainsaw – Following the work of Patchway town council to cut back the hedging and trees surrounding the site and the subsequent use of the materials generated, it was felt that a Woodchipper would not be necessary at this present time. All agreed that a small, battery powered chainsaw would be bought. This would be used by a designated committee member only to maintain communal areas. For a small donation, plot holders may request that the designated committee member use the chainsaw to cut back the trees on their plot.

Item 5 – Orchard Pruning – Apple tree needs to be removed.

Plum tree to be pruned after fruiting.

Blackcurrants need thinning out.

Ground needs strimming.

Working parting: Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> Feb (Weather dependant)

#### Item 6 – Site Maintenance

- Roof of Hut/Kitchen now repaired. Thanks given to PTC for supporting with the cost of this work. Thanks given to DB for organising this work.
- External Painting of metalwork at front of Hut (and Noticeboard) – DH to buy paint.

Item 7 – Skip Hire - Deputy Clerk PTC sent details of x2 skip hire. Payment for these will be made using the Pollinator Grant funding.

Item 8 – Fly Tipping – All agreed that if anyone is found leaving waste materials of any kind in communal areas or on another plot, they will be given the opportunity to remove their waste. Should a member continue to fly tip, they will be asked to leave the society and their membership will cease.

DB to email plot holders regarding the changes, i.e. we no longer have a bonfire site for wood materials, the green waste site has gone, and plot holders are encouraged to compost their own waste. It was acknowledged that the committee had received 1 objection to the removal of the green waste site. However, at this time, the committee felt that it was important to encourage plot holders to consider what they have been putting on the green waste site and develop their own composting systems.

Item 9 – Dates and Topics for Rob's Talks – Rob reported that he has prepared a presentation "NO DIG, NO TILL – Soil and Composting". Two dates were set for Rob to deliver this presentation, Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> March and Saturday April 13<sup>th</sup>, both to start at 10.15am in the Hut. Refreshments will be provided for a small donation.

The committee agreed to reimburse Rob for the Projector and Screen that has been purchased and installed to deliver this valuable presentation (Total £100).

MS suggested that it would also be useful for members to have something on the Website regarding this topic. RM to investigate preparing something for publication on website.

Item 10 – Date for Egg Hunt – Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> March. Bacon sarnies to be served. DB to send poster to MH for updating and to send to local schools. MS to contact Tesco regarding donations of egg. JR to buy eggs for event and all agreed to donate some of these to PTC appeal.

Item 11 – Machine Hire Training Dates – DH to run training for using the rotavator, strimmer and mower on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> March. A date for April to follow. DB to add dates to email to members. Members who wish to refresh their training will be very welcome.

Item 12 – Shop Rota – The rota has been circulated. All agreed to use the Whatsapp group to swap shop sessions if necessary. MH to put a copy of rota in the shop.

Item 13 – Review of Policies – Safeguarding – discussed safety policy and agreed to update annually. Also agreed to bring safety policy inline with Quartet Community Foundation minimum safety requirements (for the purpose of grant application – see 15 below). DH reminded the committee that all accidents and incidents must be recorded in the Accident Book held within the shop.

MH and CN to include importance of up-to-date Tetanus Jabs in revised Handbook.

Item 14 – Harvest event and potential fruit/veg show – This was suggested to take the place of the annual bonfire event.

RL, PTC, spoke about the impending closure of Patchway Garden Society. RL felt that it was maybe something that Pretoria Road Allotment Society might like to take on.

After much discussion, it was agreed that at present (due to Pollinator Project) the allotment Society were not able to fully take on this commitment.

However, members of committee to speak with Les and Cath (Patchway Garden Society) with a view to taking over Patchway Garden Society and developing it slowly. All agreed this could be initially by taking part in Patchway Festival in a small way. (To be discussed further at the next committee meeting.)

Item 15 – Future grant applications – Application to Quartet Foundation (end of March) for funding for the purchase of a ride on mower. This purchase would help support the maintenance work undertaken by PTC.

CN reported on the successful application to the Woodland Trust, and how we will shortly receive 270 tree saplings. This will support the work being undertaken as part of the Pollinator Project.

CN also reported that an application has been made to Thatcher's for more apple trees for the new apple orchard.

Item 16 – Pollinator Grant – Update given by CN

Item 17 – A.O.B

- DH to investigate internet banking and BACS payments for members.
- DH to organise CN as a signatory for banking.
- Greenhouse Application – DB reported that 1 member had requested installing a greenhouse on plot. Plans had been submitted to the committee and DB had requested details of the exact location on plot.

#### Handbook

- MH and CN to update handbook and include amendment of size of structures permitted to align with South Glos.
- MH and CN to include a Health and Safety section. This will include, tetanus jabs, Sun protection and hydration (DB to remind plot holders by email that the tap water is safe to drink.)
- DB reported that a member has questioned the suitability of the gazebo and wondered if this could instead be used as a site for green waste. MS outlined how much water this structure generates – all agree that it is a valuable resource that we do not want to lose. The committee agreed to return to this topic after investigating the suitability of moving the structure nearer to the community area that has been identified for use by local schools.