

# WIRRAL FEDERATION OF ALLOTMENT SOCIETIES

www.wirralfedallotments.org.uk

Minutes of meeting Friday 25th February 2011

- 1 **Welcome** - The Chair welcomed Cllr. Ian Lewis and Roger Calvert
- 2 **Apologies** - Kay, Joyce, Heather, Richard
- 3 **Minutes of previous meeting October 2010 & matters arising** - approved, no matters arising.

Treasurer reported balance of £380.34. Still awaiting grant from nsalg.

4 **WFAS Committee elections** - Members notified that Chair will be standing down at next AGM and that Secretary's post comes to an end then. Nominations were requested.

5 **Council update - including PACSPE, staffing, funding & strategy** - Update from Roger Calvert - Allotments will be retained by the council and move to the Asset Management Department from 1/4/11. Stella Joseph will remain, with admin support from Kerry Evans, but the structure and staffing of the allotment section has not yet been decided. Roger will retain his responsibilities until his retirement in June.

Funding available for the maintenance and improvement of existing sites, as follows:

£40,000 annual budget would continue.

£50,000 for the second year of the 3 year allocation.

£50,000 additional allocation for this year only.

The balance of the £40,000 allocated for new sites and matching grants would be focussed on obtaining new sites. The allotment development officer will not be replaced. A little over £20,000 will be available to be spent this year. Lansdowne now has new tenants on reopened site.

In addition Cabinet has ringfenced £60k for each Area Forum to bid into.

Roger supplied an account of the money spent from the first year's £50,000 allocation which he read out to the meeting. If anyone requires a copy of the list please contact David Jones at 'davidjonesdej@aol.com' or 608 6633.

Strategy - it will be up to each site to produce improvement plans. If no society, then this might be impetus to develop one. Sites to contact Roger if they would like help in this.

6 **Council communication with sites** - The issue was raised of 'dirty plot' notices being issued in Winter - Roger Calvert responded that they are targeted at particular plots identified in consultation with site secretaries and were felt to be appropriate. Issue was raised of Council asking ploholders to do things which weren't on tenancy agreement, (eg being asked to paint a green greenhouse because it was the wrong colour). Roger responded that if such things can be reported to him by ploholders then he will deal with them.

**7 Allotment watch** - Sites now have to pay for Smart Water. WFAS will bring a log book to meetings where members can log incidents. David Jones suggested that sites in the same area could have each other's contact details to pass on news of local incidents. This was well received. WFAS will investigate further. Bebington Rd site has just had successful bid for £3k to install security cameras.

**8 Draft quality standard** - WFAS committee is looking at this and will discuss it with Council. Then it can be brought to next Fed meeting to help sites with drawing up improvement plans.

**9 WFAS site visits this Spring / Summer** - Committee will draw up a timetable for visits. Fairview to be included in Oxtot Secret Gardens day Sunday 8th May.

Margaret Campbell suggested that sites might like to offer to show any new societies what their successes have been. Fed will ask for volunteers.

**10 Wirral Flower & Veg Show** - Survey of members asking which shows should be supported this year came out strongly in favour of WFVS. David Jones & Dave Morris met with them and would like others to contact them if they wish to be involved. Show is on 14th August, during National Allotment Week. WFAS will provide a stand and pots as well as a small raised bed, to show how to grow veg in small spaces. David will send out a list of 'wants' and ask for volunteers. The chair proposed a grant of £100 be given to W F&V show and asked that this be acknowledge in their sponsorship details. Agreed by meeting.

**11 Rota for teas and set up** - a request was made for helpers at meetings.

## **12 News from sites**

- Fairview have had £10k Lottery funding for fencing and toilets, and Liz Heydon would help other sites wanting to do similar.
- Dawson have had fencing from Council, but not tall enough. They also obtained a grant from the Area Forum for £3000 for fencing, which has been erected by private contractors and was of the correct size.
- Sandringham have new trailer for clearing plots and selling scrap metal for funds.
- Wingate. Sadly, the Chair of the society, John Collinson, died recently. Site is awaiting a draft of a new longer-term lease for a peppercorn rent. Roger Calvert said that the site should bid into Council allotment development fund to cover the legal fees for this (approx £400).

## **13 AOB**

- Beekeeping - intention is to form a Wirral Allotment Beekeepers society for mutual support.
- Tesco community liaison officer has offered a trailer for community use - contact Dave Morris for details.
- Hilary Ash offered free coppiced hardwood poles (mainly beech & ash) from recent work done by Wirral Wildlife, if sites could collect them.

## **New sites**

- Cllr Lewis is investigating a new site on unused land in Leasowe. Anyone interested should contact him.
- Possibility of allotments on WPH land in Eastham being investigated.
- Possible allotment land in Greasby is actually Public Open Space, and may be needed as such, but the Open Space Assessment, when completed, may clarify this.
- Land at The Warrens hasn't been progressed because petitioners aren't able to follow it up at present.
- Private land in Wallasey is being used to set up a private site with potential for 20 plots and to include all facilities. Cost £500/ year.