

WIRRAL FEDERATION OF ALLOTMENT SOCIETIES

www.wirralfedallotments.org.uk

Minutes of ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 25th June 2010

- 1 Welcome - Chair welcomed members and guests, Roger Calvert (RC), Sam Hird, and Steve McMorran.
- 2 Apologies - Heather Jones, Gary Williams, David Jones.

Short presentation from Sam Hird and Steve McMorran (Wirral Council's asset management department) about asset transfer and allotment sites.

Community Asset Transfer (CAT) is a process set up to look at the use and management of council buildings. Money to help the process was from the Community Fund - administered jointly with Wirral Partnership Homes and aimed at community development within WPH areas. Neither the process nor the funding was intended for the transfer of council land to allotment societies, and there is currently no mandate to look at this. The council is currently moving to grant a peppercorn rent to self managed sites, but there is no additional money from the Community Fund to finance site improvements to assist this. Sites may, however apply to the Community Fund independently if they wish. Societies wishing to explore self management / peppercorn rent should contact RC who can liaise with Asset Management.

A link to the CAT policy will be posted on wfas website.

Several questions arose.

How much would self-managing sites have to pay in water rates? - RC had looked at this some years ago and calculated £9 per plot per year. Nsalg estimate was £5-10 per year.

Would Love Lane be allowed to become self managing as site is part of the park? - RC advised that site is not classed as park land.

Some sites feel they are being pushed along self-management route - many sites, especially small ones would find it very difficult to be self-sustaining, and sites would not be compelled to do this.

What happens if self-management fails at a site? - the site would remain an allotment site with management reverting to the council.

- 3 Minutes of previous AGM – 25.6.09 Proposed Peter Mangan, seconded by Fabienne Matthews - agreed as true record.
- 4 Matters Arising - No matters arising.
- 5 Chairman's Report - Attached.
- 6 Election of Officers' and Committee - Chair Barbara Higson (1. Diane Ledder, 2. Peter Mangan), Vice chair Fabienne Matthews (1. Rose Chandler, 2 Diane Ledder) Committee member Richard Hill (1 Margaret Campbell, 2 C Marsden).
- 7 Treasurer's Report and Audited Accounts - Audited accounts were presented and approved. (1. Ron Jones, 2. Dave Morris)

8 Role of Federation - Members were assured that if they had any problems with the way that the council or its officers were managing allotments, then the Federation would follow this up on their behalf. Societies were asked to put their issues in writing to the committee to enable them to get a broad picture of problems. Roger Merry agreed that the Federation should be a forum for this, but that it needed to be handled sensitively so that it could be an opportunity for constructive working with officers rather than a forum for mud slinging.

9 Quality Standard - Work continues on this. Roger Calvert & David Jones to meet soon to finalise this.

10 Allotment Watch - Work is progressing with the Smart Water initiative. Some sites now have it, and the Federation is working to ensure that all sites have postcodes so that they can be allocated Smart Water.

11 Allocation of council funding to established sites - ADO did a survey of sites to establish need, but this took no account of needs as perceived by ploholders, so Allotment Officer has been visiting sites to see what their priorities are. Work is progressing at several sites; King George's Way - fencing and clearing disused plots; Sumner Rd - clearing plots; Lansdowne - clearing plots, water on site; Beaconsfield - improving drainage; Coronation Park - improving drainage; Harris - fencing; Teehey - road surfacing. Dave Morris commented that the intention had been for funds to be prioritised to allow very poor sites to be brought up to a reasonable standard, Roger Calvert replied that the council was working to ensure that as many sites as possible would get improvements while the money was available. He expressed concern that the funding might suffer due to cutbacks.

12 News from sites. Love La - local senior school interested in having a plot; Gilroy - council have agreed that Gilroy should be treated in line with other sites for erection of sheds etc; Beaconsfield now have container for secure storage; Harris society visited Hoylake site; Teehey have 150 Wirral Grammar pupils coming for follow up visit. Work progressing to explore setting up new site at The Warrens.

13. Diary Dates. Beb Rd - open day 24th July; Plymyard open day 27th June; Sefton Park 27th June; Kingsway Newton 11th July; Tatton Park RHS 22-25th July; Wirral Flower & Veg 14-15th Aug; Southport 19-22nd August - plants needed for wfas stand.

AOB Guide for new tenants being put together and will be posted on wfas website as well as sent out with tenancy agreement etc.

14 Date of next AGM - Friday 24th June 2011