

Coton Community Allotments Association

Annual General Meeting

Saturday 26 May 2012, 14:00, The Quaker Meeting Hall, Coton Hill, Shrewsbury

Present:

Alexey & Tanya Goldvatyuk	Plot 9
Alistair Black	Plot 13
Ben Wilson	Plot 14
Charlie Bell & Kay Hawkins	Plot 21 and 22
Clare Owen & Dave McGarry	Plot 4 and 5
Dave & Ronnie Marmion	Plot 31A
Doreen Hancock (Secretary)	Plot 20
Kath & Simon Howard (Chair)	Plot 19
Libby & Phil Oliver	Plot 18
Martin Howard	Contractor
Matt Lush (Treasurer)	Plot 8
Paul Juniper	Plot 32 and 33
Steve Millar	Plot 3
Tony Lord	Plot 18
Charlotte Cluderay	Plot 26

Apologies:

Steve Brazier (Plot 27 and 28)
Bex Syrett (Plot 11)
Anne & Dave Timmins (Plot 7)
Gordan & Vanna Jones (Plot 6)

S Howard welcomed everyone to the Associations first AGM.

1) Site Security

Following the recent break-in to the communal shed and the shed on Plot 4, S Howard informed of the following:

- The matter was reported to the Police and incident number issued.
- Contact has been made with local crime prevention officer and additional patrols will now be made to the site.
- In addition, community police officers will be making ad hoc visits during the hours of 17:00 – 22:00.

Suggestions made by members to improve site security are as follows:

- Notices informing “no valuables or petrol driven equipment kept on site”
- Contact to be made with a company offering a free trial for sensor alarms.
- Explore costs of dummy and real CCTV camera system.

Action: D Hancock to write to Bono Security
D Hancock to produce laminated signs.

2) Update on Constitution, Rules and Regulations

No change to Constitution.

Discussion regarding current rules and regulations covered the following points:

In the event of a plot becoming vacant, this will be offered to those on the waiting list in strict rotation; this will include existing plot holders wishing to rent a second plot. As new plots are due to be marked out in June 2012, existing plot holders who would like to rent a second plot were reminded to place their names on the waiting list.

S Howard reminded all of the requirement to keep sheds and structures to the agreed size of 6x8 feet; in addition, plots holders are asked to liaise with neighbouring plot holders and reach agreement regarding siting of shed/structure(s) to avoid any potential problems with casting shadows.

3) Election of Committee

Chairman	No nominations or applications received - S Howard to retain this role.
Treasurers	No nominations or applications received – M Lush to retain this role.
Secretary	Application received from Charlotte Cluderay

K Hawkins suggested role of Secretary could be split as follows:

Social
Fundraising
Membership etc.

Claire Lowe has offered to take on the role of Social Secretary on behalf of CCAA – Agreed.

Action: S Howard to liaise with Committee and agree how best to split this role. When agreed, D Hancock to manage handover of secretarial role to C Cluderay.

4) Communication

In addition to electronic communication from S Howard a notice board will be purchased (or donated) and placed at the entrance to the site.

Action: Committee to source notice board and erect on site near entrance.

5) Party on the Plot

The National Allotment Association are running a competition in August for best story and photo with a prize to the value of £150. CCAA will aim to register for this, but in the event that registration does not take place, CCAA will still hold a party/BBQ during August, although it is noted that the 'Party on the Plot' event does not have to necessarily take place during national allotments week (Aug 8-14). Those present at the meeting agreed that a Saturday would be most suitable.

Action: Committee to organise BBQ. Lead to be taken by new Social Secretary.

6) Weed Pile

All agreed the weed pile should be re-sited. S Howard suggested that as a group CCAA should get together to sort the pile and move to a more suitable location – it was agreed that this could take place on the day of the BBQ. S Howard will liaise with other members of CCAA to look at a suitable alternative area. Agreed that the pile should be sorted into three: 1: Composting, 2: Burning and 3: Recycle. In the meantime, plot holders are asked not to add to the pile if at all possible and try to compost on individual plots. It was also thought that the space currently occupied by the weed pile could be used as part of the “Community Area”.

Action S Howard to liaise with other plot holders regarding alternative location and sorting of weed pile.

NOTE: Martin Howard to come to site approx. 10 June to mow off grass and sift weeds, etc. from soil in the weed pile. Soil to be spread around communal area in front of shed, weeds, etc. to be stockpiled at location to be agreed for later sorting on day of BBQ.

7) Bees

S Millar asked for agreement for 3 hives to be kept on the plot. Agreed. S Howard to meet with Bee Keeper to establish suitable location and to ensure all ploholders are kept fully informed and are not compromised in any way. Confirmation required that the keeping of bees will be in strict compliance with the British Beekeepers Association (as required under the Association’s Terms and Conditions of Tenancy).

Action: S Howard to meet with Bee Keeper.

8) Finance

M Lush’s financial paper detailing CCAA’s financial status was tabled. Copy attached to notes for reference. It is anticipated that in the first year CCAA’s accounts will breakeven. It was noted that start up expenditure had been higher than expected and that some cost items are yet unknown, e.g. maintenance costs, water rates.

Discussion took place as to how CCAA could increase revenue. Suggestions made:

Application to local council for guidance regarding small grants – S Howard to action.

Application to Awards for All (Lottery Funding). K Howard highlighted the difficulties associated with making an application to Awards for All e.g. Shropshire is not deemed to be a deprived area, CCAA’s current lease agreement is not supported by Awards for All criteria. K Howard agreed to continue to search for other possible sources of funding as well as pursuing the Awards for All funding route. S Howard to liaise with Land Agent to see if wording of current lease can be amended to assist in making an application to Awards for All.

A new application to be made to the Local Joint Committee – which meets in October. Note: Committee members to ensure all criteria contained in original application have been fulfilled prior to submitting new application.

The “100 Club” – a monthly raffle – individual plot holders pay in an agreed amount with a monthly draw offering a cash prize. E.g. plot holders pay in £2.00 per month with a cash prize of £20.

Life membership to the Allotment Association Magazine – at present CCAA pay £2.00 per member – current fee £56 per annum – which will increase as new plots are made available. Life membership is £300. S Howard asked for a donation of £5.00 per plot holder towards life membership – all those present agreed.

Donations – agreed members of the Committee would write to local businesses requesting suitable donations for the site – strimmer, bark chippings etc.

Fundraising activities – ideas invited.

Action: **S Howard to contact council to enquire re possibility for additional funding or grant opportunities, reminding the council we have had to use some of the existing grant for unforeseen works such as asbestos testing as previously agreed with the council.**
K Howard to progress possible options for funding via Awards for All.
S Howard and K Howard to commence preparing a new bid to LJC.
ALL if agreeable to make a £5.00 donation for life membership to the National Allotment Magazine – donation to be made to Secretary.
ALL to think of fund raising ideas and submit to Committee.

9) Any Other Business

Lease – S Howard remind all that the current lease is for a period of 8 years. Whilst this is a relatively short period of time in terms of allotment gardening, the CCAA Committee members felt that the Berwick Estate would continue to extend the lease in the future – as they have done with existing parcels of allotment land. S Howard assured those present, that he would commence negotiating for a new term approximately 2 – 3 years prior to the current lease expiring.

Toilets – agreed for temporary/composting toilet to be erected. Note “temporary” toilet can be classified as a shelter therefore no planning permission required. S Howard will, with assistance from other CCAA members, explore the legalities and practicalities of building. P Juniper offered to assist in the planning and building.

Action: **S Howard and P Juniper to liaise plan and build.**

Water – S Howard reminded all to use the water responsibly as CCAA water consumption is metered.

Plot Rental – all agreed that a pro rata rate will come into effect as from 1 September -50% of annual rental cost. S Howard advised that he would be reviewing local council plot rentals to ensure CCAA plot rental rate is in line with current rents.

Asbestos – all to be reminded to be vigilant regarding the possibilities of small pieces of asbestos sheeting in the ground – sample provided at meeting. S Howard referred all to earlier emails containing detailed information relating to asbestos issues.

Action: ALL to be vigilant re: asbestos as noted above.

Organic gardening – discussion took place regarding the possibility of segregating plots for those who wish to garden organically. It was noted that this would be difficult to achieve. S Howard asked all to be mindful when spraying, to liaise with plot neighbours and not to spray beyond their plot boundaries.

Action: ALL to note above re: spraying and to liaise with other plot holders prior to spraying.

S Howard advised that he anticipates to trim the boundaries and pathways within the coming weeks. In the event that other plot holders wish to help, S Howard reminded all of the need to take due care and responsibility for personal safety. M Lush will forward a risk assessment and method statement document that CCAA have been required to produce to comply with current insurance policy. All to read and adhere to the contents of the Risk Assessment and method statement documents.

Meeting Closed 15:45