

**Western Wards Allotment Association
Annual General Meeting 2023
held on Tuesday 14 November 2022 at 7 pm
At The Malt Room, Titchfield Community Centre, Mill Street,
Titchfield, Fareham, PO14 4AB**

Present during the meeting: -

WWAA Trustees

Richard Bastow, Chairman of WWAA Trustees (RB)
David Doran (DD)
Dick Lamperd (DL)
Meg Thorpe (MT)

WWAA Management Committee Members

Paul Rann, (Hon Treasurer) Site Manager, Warsash; (PR)
Julie Prescott (Hon Secretary), (JAP), Plot holder at Sarisbury Green
Keith Johnson, Site Manager, Hunts Pond Road; (KJ)
Alistair Barnett, Site Manager, Site Manager, Hunts Pond Road (AB)
Martin Burnett, Site Manager, Hunts Pond Road (MB)
Sandra Milam, Site Manager, Lodge Road (SM)
Gill Rock, Site Manager, Warsash (GR)
Martin Wheeler, Site Manager, Sarisbury Green (MW)
Robin Green, Site Manager, Sarisbury Green (RG)

1. Persons Present

The following WWAA Tenants/plot holders attended the meeting as follows:

Hunts Pond Road, 16 members, David Doran, Norman Hatch, Keith Johnson, Dick Lamperd, Ken Simmons, Alastair Barnett, Sue Witcher, Phillip Witcher, Meg Thorpe, David Spyboy, Trevor Jones, Larina and Richard Bone, Diane D?

Lodge Road, 4 members, Sandra Milam, Sue Whitehead, Neil Jackson

Posbrook Road, 2 members, Jon Castle, Graeme Bond

Sarisbury Green, 9 members, Robin Green, Martin Wheeler, Clive and Julie Prescott, Kate Tucker, Ro Mc Kenzie, Martin and Paul Bennett, Ed Lait

Warsash, 8 members, Paul Rann, Wendy Wood, Richard and Denise Bastow, Gordon and Rona Neilson, Gill Rock, Sue Decicco

The number of members present totalled 38 (29 in 2022) and, therefore, met the requirements of a 'quorum of 10' in accordance with paragraph 9.5 of the Constitution.

2. Apologies for non-attendance

John and Pam Barber, Plot 34B at Sarisbury Green and Sue Green at Sarisbury Green.
WWAA Trustee, Ted Weager, and John Parsons, Site Manager, Posbrook Road/Trading Hut Manager.

3. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on Tuesday 22 November 2022

3.1 Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 22/11/2022, except for a few corrections as follows:

4.1 Sandra Milan – to be replaced to read Sandra Milam

5.1 'our last AGM was lade' to be replaced with 'our last AGM was late.

To amend that David Doran attended the meeting (it is noted for the minutes that the signing in sheet did not reflect this).

Subject to the above changes, the Minutes were proposed as a correct and accurate reflection of the meeting as proposed by Kate Tucker, Sarisbury Green and seconded by Alastair Barnett, Hunts Pond Road.

Changed/updated and now Discharged by Secretary

4. Matters Arising

4.1 CIO status

The Chair covered this item in his report to the meeting (See point 5).

5. Acting Chairman's Report for 2023 – Richard Bastow

- 5.1 This is my combined report as the Chairman of the Trustees and the Acting Chairman of the WWAA Committee but will be my last as the Acting Chairman of the Committee. The reason for this is that we have now become a Charity Incorporated Organisation and me and the other four Trustees now have to assume our more formal roles and have an overview of the running of the Association but not a day-to-day involvement.

I have been pleased to serve as the Acting Chairman following the resignation of the previous Chairman Aveon Perryman whilst a replacement was sought, and it was a role that I had held some years ago. The Committee have been and are still actively looking to fill this role which has now assumed a greater importance.

As Chairman of the Committee, I am grateful to all the help and support of The Site Managers, the Treasurer and Secretary without whose efforts we would not have such a well-run association. I am sure that you would agree with me on this.

Through their efforts a number of projects aimed at making allotment gardening more enjoyable, accessible and sociable have and are being progressed. They would welcome ideas from members on further improvements to the sites.

Discussions are also on-going with Fareham Borough Council over the terms of the lease to allow for changes to the rules on watering using a hose and the size of polytunnels. I know that the former has been of concern to several members over the last two years during the hot dry periods. It was for this reason that the Committee re-instated permission to use hoses for spot watering – subject to local hosepipe bans not being in force. The impact on the cost of water on our budgets is being monitored.

The Treasurer will update you on the state of the finances of the Association which are in a healthy state. We have sadly seen some tenants not renew their tenancies, but plots are in the process of being re-let and income secured.

Now I need to say a bit more about us becoming a Charity Incorporated Organisation. This was a journey started some years ago by Bob Hughes when he was Chairman and continued by Aveon Perryman and finally came to fruition through the efforts of Paul Rann (Treasurer) and Robin Green (Site Manager at Sarisbury Green), with acceptance from the Charity Commission on 3 November.

It puts the Association in a sound position and brings benefits such as discounts from suppliers and being able to reclaim VAT. It is a big thanks you to all who have contributed.

The Board of Trustees now have the responsibility of having an overview of the running of the Association's affairs to ensure that they comply with the rules relating to being a Charity. The work of the Committee is not diminished by this in any way and the day to day running of the Association and the sites remains with them.

The Trustees are me as Chairman, David Doran. Ted Weager, Meg Thorpe and Dick Lamperd and we are drawn from across a number of sites within the WWAA.

RG invited Questions. One member asked if it is easier to find a new Trustee than it is to find a Chair?

RG responded that he would rather remain as a Trustee than move to the role of Chair, noting in particular that he has undertaken the role of Chair in the past and that he has a full-time job which would make it difficult to give the role of Chair if full focus.

6. Treasurer's Report for 2022 – Paul Rann

Across all our 5 sites and the trading hut we had an overall surplus of £194.74 for the year ending 30th September 2023.

Excluding the Trading Hut our overall income was £92.34 higher than the previous year. This was a combination of the increase in annual membership fees, rent payments which

shows high letting levels and bank interest. In the previous financial year, we also had a £1,000 grant from Sean Woodward towards the cost of the compost toilet at Sarisbury whereas this year we did not receive any grant income.

Our biggest cost is ongoing maintenance and investment in our sites. Within this the largest items of spend in the year were:

- Posbrook – hedge cutting – this takes place every 3 years and is budgeted for over this period:
- Hunts Pond Road – new hedge trimmer
- Lodge Road – resolving a long-standing water meter issue.
- Sarisbury – purchasing sleepers for bins.
- Sarisbury – IBC tanks to collect surplus water.
- Warsash – resurfacing of the driveway.
- Warsash – purchase of a shed for a new hub point within the site.

All these costs are typically for materials for projects and the work to install, build or repair is normally carried out by our site managers and tenants who give their time to help. My thanks on behalf of the association for everyone who contributes to the ongoing maintenance and development of our sites.

Our next largest cost is water. This year the summer was the Treasurer's friend with the rain in July and August meaning that our costs for water were significantly lower than the previous financial year. However, we did have a 12% rise in water tariff costs this year which, coupled with increases over the previous three years, means that our tariffs are about 30% higher now, so when we get further hot summers, we will potentially see some very large bills for water.

The increase in water tariffs did mean that we had to review the cost per rod in Hunts Pond Road, Lodge Road, Sarisbury Green and Warsash. As you will have seen in the recent rent renewal letter this did increase to £8.50 per rod to help ensure we maintain our financial stability in the future. The cost per rod at Posbrook is higher than this as we have to pay an annual rent for the use of the allotments, unlike the other sites.

The Trading Hut generated a surplus of £939 this year, compared to a deficit of £577 the previous year. This was off an increase in turnover of almost 18%. The surpluses produced by the Trading Hut help with the overall running costs of the association so ultimately help us to keep rent and membership charges to the least we can.

Looking at the Balance Sheet at 30th September 2023 we have maintained a healthy position with net assets of just over £48k. Within this we hold working capital for the trading hut and ensure that we have adequate reserves for the unforeseen events in the future and at the same time retain the ability to maintain and invest in our sites.

PR added that looking at the Balance Sheet, the bottom figure is the WWAA net worth, which includes fixed assets, stock in the Trading Hut, cash in the bank and liabilities (Deposits received from new plot holders at Sarisbury Green).

Further explained that our Financial Policy states that we need to hold a reserve and this is currently £14k. This estimate allows for working capital for the Trading Hut and a sum for unforeseen circumstances or events. The rest of the money could be invested into sites. We cannot trade at a loss over a sustained period.

PR invited questions, no questions were forthcoming.

7. Honoraria

The Chair of Trustees chaired this part of the meeting whilst the other committee members left the meeting to allow discussion at 7.30 pm. Following the discussions, the committee were invited back to the meeting at 7.34 pm.

The decision and recorded minutes confirm/detail that the honoraria that was set for 2022/2023 was agreed to continue/be paid for 2023/2024 of an amount of £320 for all Committee members. The Trading Hut payment will be split between John Parsons and Norman Hatch. Rona Neilson as Webmaster will receive a payment of £160.

8. Election of Officers

All committee members stood for re-election and no new names were put forward or opposed. No objections were received from those members present.

Noting, that WWAA still does not have a permanent Chair and that RG will have to step down as Acting Chair in order to reflect the Charity Commission requirements that he cannot continue in the role as there is a conflict of interest in his role of Chair of Trustees.

9. AOB

- 9.1** Alistair Barnett explained that he has received deliveries via Equestrian Timber for Hunts Pond Road and in one of their communications to him, they contravened the Data Protection Act as they sent him the names and email addresses of their other 300 customers.

As a result of this, AB explained that the company offer him a trade discount of 17% and so AB enquired that as a Charity will the WWAA be able to claim a discount of 34% (because we will be VAT registered)?

It was explained to AB that as the WWAA had only recently been set up that this is something we will have to look into and report back to at a later committee date.

ACTION – Honorary Secretary to add to January Committee meeting for further discussion.

A Tenant at Hunts Pond Road raised the issue of flooding at some plots on the site where the water, particularly on his plot, is 5 to 6 inches deep. Discussions took place between the Tenant and Site Manager, KJ. KJ explained that several rows in the past have been dug and had gravel added to them in the past. KJ also explained that the work that needs to be done relies a lot on voluntary labour.

As a result of these discussions, it was agreed that this item will be discussed at the next Management Committee meeting in January 2024.

ACTION – Honorary Secretary to add to January Committee meeting for further discussion.

- 9.2** For the purposes of the Minutes, a Plot Holder, Neil Jackson came forward and volunteered to be a Site Manager together with Sandra Milam at Lodge Road. The Honorary Secretary made a note of his email and has made contact with him.

Date of next AGM is to be set, it is likely to be Tuesday 12 November 2023, 7 pm at Titchfield Community Centre.

Meeting ended at 20:00