

Western Wards Allotment Association **Minutes of 2014 Annual General Meeting**

Held on 27th November 2014 in St Mary's Church Hall, Warsash.

48 members signed in as present.

Bob Hughes, Chairman, welcomed members to the 42nd AGM, his second as Chairman.

1. APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from Pat & Walter Metcalfe, Anne & John Crathorne, Sandra Milam, Diane Palmer, Janet Baldwin & John Parsons.

2. MINUTES OF THE 2013 AGM:

Accepted.

3. MATTERS ARISING:

None.

4. HONORARY CHAIRMAN'S REPORT:

The Chairman thanked everyone for coming the meeting which is seen as an important element of the Association. Particular recognition went to Keith Thompstone and Norman Hatch for keeping the machinery in good order, Gill Rock for her sterling work as Secretary, the Site Managers, Trustees and volunteers.

This year he visited each site in order to write the Spring newsletter and was impressed by the high standard of allotments. There are still two beehives at Sarisbury and one at Hunts Pond Road; both have been seen as a success and good quantities of honey produced at Sarisbury.

Changes in management of the website layout and content have recently taken place. Fiona and her mother were thanked for running the site over last few years. Keith Taylor has returned, for a holding period, to help with accessibility to the website until Rona Neilson takes over as the new webmaster. Keith will work with Rona to develop the content and build a new site. As the website will be a good point of reference for the Association, any views on the new site are welcomed from members.

The Chairman sympathised with the on-going drainage challenge at Hunts Pond Road. Fareham Borough Council is due to carry out some remedial work soon. Site Managers have communicated with members and welcome any assistance in helping make these improvements a success.

Although the General account balance and Trading Hut income saw small reductions from last year, the Association and Trading Hut finances remain in a strong position through sound management.

Members were asked to submit any ideas and proposals for work to be carried out to site managers who, in turn, will bring them to the committee.

Some good ideas have already come forward. As an example, fence repairs have been carried out at Hunts Pond Road and Lodge Road and a turning circle and new gate will be completed next year at Warsash.

HONORARY SECRETARYS' REPORT:

The Secretary noted the poor representation of tenants at the meeting; in view of the fact that the Association has 440 tenancies, most in two names, therefore there are about 600 plus members.

This year has seen a further reduction in waiting lists and the Committee has increased the maximum for any tenancy to 15 rods. Historically there are some larger plots still in use.

The drop in waiting lists has continued and this problem needs to be addressed. Until recently would-be tenants had to wait some time to get a plot. This is no longer the case but this fact may not be widely known. Full sites are beneficial to all so it is necessary to spread the word that there are plots available. Martin Barnett, site manager at Hunts Pond Road, has taken on marketing and, following an article in the Forget-Me-Not magazine, he has already received an enquiry for a plot at Warsash. He welcomes suggestions from members on how to raise the profile of the Association.

The Association did very well in the Fareham in Bloom competition:

Allotments up to 5 rods: Gold & Overall Winner - Sarah Redman, Warsash. Sarah only took on the plot in October 2012.

Allotments over 5 rods: Silver Gilt & Overall Winner - Geoff and Sandra Milam, Lodge Road. Sandra is the Site manager of Lodge Road.

The Secretary announced that she is to give up this role, having originally held the post for three years in the 1980's and then in 2001 when that secretary resigned. As she had done it before, she offered to fill in as a temporary measure - now 13 years later it is time to call it a day.

She stated that she is still passionate about the benefits of having an allotment and thanked people for their support. She has enjoyed being Secretary and has done her best to facilitate tenants having good plots on good sites.

5. HONORARY TREASURER'S REPORT:

The Treasurer reported a deficit of £1,720 for the year ending 30th September 2014, due primarily to expenditure on hedge cutting of £200 at Hunts Pond Road, £1160 at Posbrook and £590 at Lodge Road. Fences were replaced/repared at Hunts Pond Road and Lodge Road at a cost of £1992. Standpipes were installed at the lower end of Hunts Pond Road at a cost of £988 and additional expenditure of £660 was incurred for the hire of skips at Hunts Pond Road and Sarisbury Green.

It was noted that the figures for the Trading Hut were also down by £800.

The Posbrook allotment is leased from the Church to whom the Association pays rent of £500 pa. Fareham Borough Council do not allow the rent to be paid from the General account therefore the Site Manager increased the tenants' rent to bring it in line with that figure and will increase it again next March to avoid reliance on contributions from the General account.

He stressed the need for ideas, proposals and plans to be submitted to the site managers who in turn would bring them to the committee.

The Accounts were proposed by Ray Baldwin and seconded by Gordon Neilson.

6. HONORARIUMS:

It was agreed that the Honorariums for the Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and Trading Hut Manager should remain at £300. Site Managers' Honorarium remains at £150. The Honorarium of £300 for the Equipment Manager task continues to be split evenly between Keith Thompstone and Norman Hatch.

7. ELECTIONS:

All Committee members offered to remain in position, apart from Gill Rock who will stand down as Secretary. Two offers to fill this post are being considered and it expected that an announcement will be made in Spring 2015. Gill will continue to act in an advisory capacity during the transition period.

The Chairman, seconded by Ray Weston, proposed that voting should take place en-bloc; this was agreed and the following people were re-elected:

Chairman – Bob Hughes
Treasurer – Phil Pike
Secretary – TBN
Trading Hut Manager – John Parsons
Site Managers:-
Sarisbury Green – Ray Baldwin
Warsash - Gill Rock
Lodge Road - Sandra Milam
Posbrook - John Parsons
Hunts Pond Road – Linda Tomlinson, Martin Barnett and Phil Pike

Auditor – Brian Baker
Trustees – Vera Flynn and Richard Bastow

8. MOTION 1 – WHEN ELECTING SITE MANAGERS, ONLY PLOT HOLDERS FROM SAID SITE MAY VOTE. Proposed by Alistair Burnett, seconded by Keith Johnson.

The Chairman stressed the need for each site to work together as an Association and not be divided by perceived animosity between sites. It was pointed out that a couple of sites were poorly represented which could influence voting.

For – 24
Against – 17

Motion carried.

9. MOTION 2 – MEMBERS MAY ONLY HOLD ONE POSITION ON THE COMMITTEE. Proposed by Alistair Burnett, seconded by Keith Johnson.

For – 14
Against – 26

Motion not carried.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS:

10.1 A request was made to clarify some of the wording in the Constitution. The Chairman agreed to look into this and provide a response.

- 10.2 Drainage at Hunts Pond Road continues to be an issue with serious flooding affecting some plots. Progress on installing a French drain (soak-away) has been slow; a proposal for work costing £1,200 is awaiting approval by Fareham Borough Council. As this is a relatively small sum the Chairman suggested that Site Managers make this issue a priority over the next few months to ensure the problem is addressed. John Cousins was asked to facilitate discussions between Site Managers and Matt Wakefield from FBC.
- 10.3 Following the success of installing skips at Sarisbury and Hunts Pond Road sites it was agreed that this should be an annual event. The number of skips required to be at the Site Managers' discretion.
- 10.4 It was suggested that the lack of representation at this AGM from smaller sites could be a problem when voting was required. This was discussed but not deemed to be an issue.
- 10.5 Tickets are still available for the Warsash Christmas dinner on 6th December at the Silver Fern. People wishing to attend should contact Richard Elkins, plot 17. Details of this event to be published on the website.

There being no other business the Chairman thanked all those people who attended and closed the meeting at 20.53 hours.