

DIAMOND JUBILEE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
21ST MARCH 2018
HELD IN YOUTH AND COMMUNITY HUT STONNALL

18 people in attendance as per signed list

1. Welcome and Introductions

Julia welcomed everyone to the meeting, including some people who had joined the group in the past year. There were no apologies given.

2. Notes of meeting held March 2017

These had been circulated last year and copies were available in the room. These were accepted as a correct record of the meeting

3. Matters arising from previous year

Julia explained that these matters would be picked up as part of her report on the progress of the society.

4. Annual report from the Chair

- i. There had been some good developments during the past year. The water troughs, discussed last year, had now been increased by three to give a broader spread across the patch. We had been fortunate in receiving a grant towards the cost of these via the District Council Community grants scheme. Thanks were given to Councillor David Smith for supporting this bid application.
- ii. Currently on site we have three vacant plots. Members were reminded that it is necessary to give notice if you are giving up your plot. Julia asked that in future anyone considering giving up, should let a committee member know and give two month's notice, in order that we can try and find a replacement plot holder.
- iii. We have decided to keep the rents at the same level for this year and Debbra will cover the finances in her report.

- iv. Julia went on to remind people about the break in at the site last year, when several items were taken from the shed. She explained our insurance didn't cover for those items, but they were below the value of the insurance excess anyway. Since the break in Debra has increased the amount of the insurance cover and has included the equipment. Members were reminded to be vigilant about locking the shed and gates.

Julia thanked Roger and Tony for taking immediate action to replace and reinforce the locks on the shed to increase security.

- v. Last year, people asked about the length of the lease on the site. Debra has been in touch with the landowner and they have indicated that they will be prepared to consider an extension. However, this will only be at the expiry of the existing lease. It is the parish council who have to agree this, and Debra has been in touch with them and they have agreed that they will support this at the appropriate time.
- vi. Site maintenance is an ongoing issue. Julia thanked Roger, Terry and the volunteers who assist them in keeping the site in order. Anyone who is willing to go on the rota for cutting the grass should contact Roger Fullard. Members were reminded of the need to be vigilant about stones on the paths, as these make grass cutting very difficult and have damaged the lawn mowers. Graham has made enquiries about a replacement lawn mower and this will be purchased in the very near future. He advised that for cutting grass on the smaller paths, people should use the strimmer in the shed, not the lawn mower.
- vii. There have been some issues with willow being planted on site and the roots growing in adjacent plots. Also, some of the willow is shading neighbour's plots. Members are asked to be considerate of other plot holders and remove anything that can be difficult for neighbours.
- viii. We have been asked about hiring a skip again. Julia asked members what they thought. After some discussion it was agreed to explore another large skip this spring, but that this should be for 'hard' rubbish such as planks and not for weeds!
- ix. On the subject of planks, Julia reported that we had explored options, but as there was not any prospect of getting further free scaffolding planks, it is for each plot holder to purchase their own supplies.
- x. We have also looked at options for getting manure delivered on site again. Julia has contacted the donkey sanctuary and is hopeful that they will deliver in return for a small donation.
- xi. The website had been mentioned and we have confirmed that Keith is happy to continue to run this, but it is quite outdated. Julia asked if anyone was interested in working to bring it more up to date, but we didn't have any volunteers.
- xii. To finish her report, Julia mentioned that due to a number of factors we had less social events last year, but this year we planned to have a fuller programme, beginning with breakfast on Good Friday morning.

5. Report from the Treasurer

Debra gave a full account of the income and expenditure for the year and the audited accounts are published on the website. She explained that with the current rent etc. the society will only have a very small surplus of £50-100, providing we don't have many plots vacant for long.

There are no plans for any large items of expenditure this year, so the accounts should be healthy for another year, with sufficient reserves to cover any upcoming costs.

6. Nominations for committee members

No new nominations were forthcoming. All existing committee members agreed to serve for a further year and this was accepted by the meeting.

7. Questions from the floor

John Street asked about the rent increase and whether this was expected. Debra explained that this was always in the original lease. Any future increases would be negotiated via the parish council.

John then asked about the plans to deal with vacant plots that became overgrown and noted these have a detrimental impact on neighbouring plots. He asked if we could use weed killer to deal with the problem. It was explained that we are going to ask Ken to use weedkiller and also to dig over the plot that has been vacant for over a year. John volunteered that if we provided the weedkiller, he would do the spraying.

There was then some discussion about how we could handle vacant plots. There was a suggestion that we could split up the larger plots into smaller bundles, which might attract people who didn't feel able to take on a whole plot. There was also some general discussion about how and where we can advertise. These issues will be discussed at the next committee meeting. In the meantime, members were asked to spread the word in their localities about the site

The meeting closed following this discussion.