

**DIAMOND JUBILEE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY**

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**20th MARCH 2019**

**HELD IN Richard Cooper Room, Shenstone**

**23 people in attendance**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Julia welcomed everyone to the meeting, including some people who had joined the group in the past year. Apologies were received from Terry White.

**2. Notes of meeting held March 2018**

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**

Julia briefly talked about the site in general over the last year. There had not been any major developments or issues in terms of the site. Unfortunately, we hadn't had any social events due to health and family issues for Carolyn. We hope to have more planned for the coming year.

The major issue that Julia wanted to highlight was the matter of vacant plots on site. We have run this year with a few vacant plots and more people have given notice or are expected to give notice for the coming year. As the loss of income from these plots presents a particular challenge, added to the fact that vacant plots become difficult for surrounding plot holders, the committee had been trying to address this issue.

Several advertising campaigns had been run, including leaflet drops and notices in each area of the parish, but they had not really resulted in much interest. Therefore, the Committee decided to approach the Parish Council, who are the leaseholders for the land. A report was produced and Julia, Debbra and Viv attended the September Parish Council meeting.

The report outlined the position and listed the options available, including giving the Parish Council the option of meeting the financial shortfall, although this still didn't answer the problem of keeping vacant plots clear. The preferred option in our report was to extend the geographical boundaries for plot holders. We know that Lichfield Council run a waiting list for plots and local areas such as Shire Oak don't have sites available. Equally, we had been informed that councillors only have to live within a three-mile boundary of the Parish to be on the Council.

After some discussion, the Council agreed that, providing we first of all run another article in the Parish magazine, if this still doesn't produce results, then the geographical boundaries can be relaxed, but priority should always be given to people that live within the Parish.

We have found that the majority of new ploholders come via word of mouth, so all members were asked to spread the word and encourage friends and relatives to join the site.

She then went on to thank people for the work in keeping the site presentable. Special thanks to Carolyn and Carol Dockerill for keeping the toilet cleaned and to the people who helped with mowing the car park and paths. We do need more people to join the rota. Now that Roger Fullard was having to give up his plot due to a shoulder injury, we needed to revisit the rota. Anyone willing to help with the mowing was asked to give their name and details to Graham Black.

## **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 just about break even this year, as we haven't had any major expenditure. But we must work hard to fill the vacant plots, to prevent challenges in the future.

## **6. Nominations for committee members**

No new nominations had been forthcoming. Roger Fullard was stepping down from the Committee and Viv Tsesmelis was giving up the role of secretary. We had emailed and asked for volunteers but none had come forward. Julia said she was prepared to carry on as Chair, but would be happy to stand aside if anyone wanted to take on the role. No-one came forward. The remaining committee members all agreed to continue.

Julia thanked Viv for her support and gave her flowers on behalf of the committee. She explained that Viv's role had also become the membership coordinator. It had been agreed that we could separate out the roles and everyone was asked to consider if they would either take the notes of meetings, send out papers etc.. or be prepared to deal with the membership issues. Unfortunately, no one felt able to take on these roles.

Dave Pitcher agreed to join the committee, and he also said he'd be happy to show prospective new members around the site. At the moment Graham Black has agreed to do this also.

At the end of the meeting Cathy Fisher also offered to show people around as she is generally available in the afternoons.

## **7. Questions from the floor**

- i. Valmae asked about people putting weeds along the hedgerow rather than disposing of them properly. Julia agreed to include this in a newsletter and remind people they are responsible for removing their waste from the site.
- ii. Paul Dockerill asked about the possibility of getting a lease extension from the landowners. Debra explained that she had approached the landowner, who said they were willing to consider this, but not until closer to the end of the lease, which still has three more years to run.
- iii. Paul also mentioned that the new water butt close to plot 39/16 took a very long time to refill. It appeared to be an issue with the valve. Tony agreed to look at this and if necessary get this repaired.
- iv. Paul also thanked the committee members for their work in keeping the site going.

**The meeting closed for refreshments at this point.**