

**MINUTES OF SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY'S
23rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
held on
SATURDAY 18 January 2020
at 10.30 am at
SUNNYSIDE RURAL TRUST**

Present:

John Eaton (Chair)
Andy James (Treasurer)
Jenny Sippings (Secretary – Minutes)
Cynthia Fulks
John Goffey
Kate Rankin
Clive Smith
Diana Ball
Geoff Giles
Philippa Jones
Jane Dickenson
Deirdre Ahern
Lin Phillips
Denre Bruins
Charlotte Cowell
Neil Kennedy
Tricia Kennedy
Peter Block
Vernon Garnham
John Driver
Jeanne Woodcraft
Fiona Naylor
Jeff Naylor
Steve Atkinson
Andy Dolwin
Diana Calderwood
Andrew Calderwood
Philip Biss
Chris Locke
Henry Ashton
Jamie Fulks
Wendy Calder

Apologies for Absence:

Annick Mulcahy
Helen Russell
Richard Russell
John Savage
Philippa Jones
Angela Wheeldon
Adrian Scarborough
Sue Pratt
Angela Whyte
David Norden
Geoffrey Halls
Jean Axford
Bernard Axford
Simon Heywood
Keith Shaw

John Eaton welcomed everybody to the meeting

1/20 To receive apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received (see above).

2/20 To approve the minutes of the last AGM

The Minutes of the AGM held on 18 January 2019 were approved as a true record.

Proposed by: Neil Kennedy

Seconded by: Diana Ball

3/20 To receive the Chairman's report

John Eaton thanked the committee and other volunteers:

Lin as the Newsletter editor and Jenny for publication.

Rota of volunteers for cleaning the toilet (Fiona, Philippa & Cynthia).

John explained the committee functions: they act as a contact point between tenants and the council, organise work programmes, letting plots (Geoff Halls taken over plot letting), organising tenant events, water management etc. Anyone interested in being a potential committee members can observe meetings.

John Goffey has coordinated the working party work on behalf of the committee. Thanks to them and the plot holders who have turned up through the year. Work has included: clearing coppices, sorting out leaf and woodchip piles, path renovation, repairing sheds and the toilet. There is a list of future work. for the general good, for which volunteers are necessary. John said it would be good to see new faces and that volunteers should come for whatever amount of time they can spare. Lunch is provided. John thanked Kate and Annick for preparing the lunches and also the volunteers who make the soup.

A new wood rack area, manure store and extra car park is being developed. Thanks to Clive Smith and Denre Bruins for this work, supported by others.

Allotment Management Team (AMT). This is a quarterly meeting of allotment representatives and town councillors. The council's information system is some improvement over the old one, but there are still some issues. This year the rent remains unchanged.

The AMT continues to have a more positive attitude to spending from allotment reserves: This included gate repairs, road surfaces, shoring up roadway, water system extension on SSN.

Dog fouling is still an issue due to the aggressive behaviour by dog owners

The Council continues with annual one-day closures to confirm the Council's rights of way and to ensure that no-one else can gain rights by default. Access for allotment holders is not affected.

There is a short waiting list and there are a few vacant plots.

Jenny and Diana inspect plots about three times a year in order to see that the Council's tenancy terms are being met. People experiencing problems should contact a committee member. The council send out 2 warning letters followed by an eviction letter. In general plots should be kept clear of junk.

We had a successful open day, with Kate coordinating and ensuring that the rain held off until the kit was packed away (in the new shed!).

Christmas drinks went well in fine weather. Thanks to Cynthia (with support) for mulling the wine.

John Eaton informed the meeting that tree work was due to take place at the top of C Road shortly. Also trees along the railway bank are also being worked on, with access being gained from the allotments.

Deer fencing was looked into by the council, seeking advice from experts. It was decided it would be very expensive and would not necessarily work.

4/20 To consider and approve the Society's accounts and to consider proposals for expenditure

Andy James, Treasurer, presented the annual accounts, and informed the meeting that they had not yet been verified by an independent accountant.

Open Day was our major source of income and due to good weather the takings on stalls was higher. The charity we donate the raffle takings to is open for discussion. Last year the committee did agree to support another local charity Pepper Nurses, but due to mistakes on the poster the money was donated to the Hospice of St Francis again. Thanks were given to Geoff Halls for approaching local businesses to donate raffle prizes.

Our major expenditure this year was on the communal orchard project on Sunnyside Old above the society's storage sheds. New gazebos were also purchased.

The seed order raised a similar amount to last year, but fewer people ordered seeds. Many of those who took part placed orders for larger amounts. Around 30 people placed orders, although catalogues were distributed to about 80 paid up members.

The accounts were accepted as a true record.

Proposed by: Jane Dickenson

Seconded by: Steve Atkinson

5/20 To receive any nominations for officers/committee members

The following officers were nominated:

Chair: John Eaton

Treasurer: Andy James

Secretary: Jenny Sippings

The position of Vice Chair remains vacant.

All remaining current committee members seek re-election. Steve Atkinson volunteered to stand as a committee member. John Eaton said he would continue as Chairman at present.

6/20 To elect Officers and Committee

The following people were elected to the committee by group election:

Chair: John Eaton
Treasurer: Andy James
Secretary: Jenny Sippings

Committee Members:

Geoff Halls
Angela Wheeldon
John Goffey
Kate Rankin
Lin Phillips
Diana Ball
Jeanne Woodcraft
Steve Atkinson

The Chairman re-emphasised that any tenant considering joining the committee can observe at a committee meeting by prior arrangement with the Secretary. The next committee meeting is 7.00pm at the Council Chambers in the Civic Centre on 17 March 2020.

7/20 To elect Allotments' representative on Town Council's Allotment Management Team

John Eaton was elected as the site representative, and Geoff Halls as the Deputy with Jenny Sippings as the substitute.

8/20 To consider future developments

A discussion took place about the Society organising a social event on VE Day on 8 May 2020. This could either be a lunch or evening drinks. Cynthia Fulks explained the background to the idea for this event to try and include people who maybe cannot manage to get to the Christmas drinks. There was some feeling in the meeting that people would not support an event associated with war, so a suggestion was made that we could hold a Summer Solstice Party on Sunday 21 June. This will now be taken back to the committee for further discussion.

Steve Atkinson put forward a proposal that the Society should buy an apple press and pasteuriser so that tenants can press and bottle their own apple juice. This would require a group of volunteers to organise and also to access an electricity supply. It would cost in the region of £640 (£445 apple press and pasteuriser £195) plus approx. £1 per bottle. Another tenant pointed out that hand presses are very hard work. Questions were also raised about where this equipment would be stored, kept clean and hygiene standards adhered to. John Driver informed the meeting that Sunnyside Rural Trust had gained another orchard and made use of a local business to press and bottle the juice. Other tenants also pointed out that there a number of facilities in the area that provide this service, usually at a cost of £1.70 per bottle (there may be a minimum charge). John Eaton suggested that the committee should look into this proposal in more detail.

Other issues also raised:

- Now that Angela Wheeldon has given up her tenancy of the tea hut area, a new awning for the seated area was suggested. The summer house has recently been re-roofed.
- Sunnyside Rural Trust have been clearing the chippings on Sunnyside New carpark.
- Denre Bruins suggested that the allotments should be chemical free and we should aim to be greener. Discussion took place on this and it was agreed it might be hard to enforce this, but tenants should be encouraged not to use chemicals eg through newsletter articles. John Eaton also agreed to raise this with the council at the Allotments Management Team meeting.
- Andrew Calderwood pointed out that several houses in Meadway have put gates from their gardens on to the allotments on C Road, So they have permission from the council. John Eaton said he would raise this at the next AMT meeting.
- A question was also asked about the height of hedges on the allotments. This referred to the SRT hedge on C Road. John Driver offered to take a look and report back to SRT.
- Metal debris and possible hiring of a skip. It was pointed out that the metal heap has now been removed and that notices have been put up telling tenants not to put any more rubbish on the heap.
- Maintenance of paths between plots. It was agreed that rough paths would be noted on allotment plot inspections. The minimum path width should be 27 inches.

Clive Smith thanked the committee as the meeting came to an end.

9/20 Any other business

- a) The next AGM is scheduled for 23 January 2021

The meeting closed at 11.40 am.



Sunnyside Allotment Society

Statement of Accounts for Year Ending 31 December 2019

Opening Balance £4,565.35

INCOME

Subscriptions	£360.00	(328)
Produce Sales	£141.00	(174)
Donations	£29.10	(27)
Material and Tool Sales	£15.00	(109)
Seed Order 2018	£1,320.85	(1322)

OPEN DAY

Refreshments	£549.40	(382)
Raffle	£175.00	(138)
Produce	£507.65	(295)
Plants	£262.90	(179)
Books/Tools	£206.82	(101)

TOTAL INCOME £3,567.72

Income less expenditure £1,088.18

Closing Balance £5,653.53

EXPENDITURE

Insurance	£83.64	(84)
NSALG affiliation	£276.00	(240)
Printing	£110.13	(142)
Postage	£3.17	(3)
Seed Order 2018	£1,105.73	(1106)
AGM hall hire	£30.00	(30)

Tea Hut & Toilet costs £110.84 (121)

Open Day expenses £154.05 (91)
Materials £255.95

Orchard Project £175.03

Donations

Hospice (raffle) £175.00 (138)

TOTAL EXPENDITURE £2,479.54

Verified as a true reflection of the society's financial position at 31 December 2019

Jane Hughes