

## **Cripley Meadow Allotment Association Minutes of the AGM held on 10th March 2009**

**1. Welcome by Chair:** Wendy welcomed members attending with a slide show of the site and all the plots. She referred in particular to St Claire's "green gyms", to the allotment shed decoration for which Dave Simms and John Langsbury were thanked and to the intention to have a water tank there when funds permitted, there would be another bridge to Cripley Island with access along the side of plot 18, there was to be a trial of green waste to be used for raising level of plot 84, she thanked members who had given up half of their plots when they realised that they could not use them fully and she explained why the council green waste was always dumped on plot 109 which was because of access problems for the delivery vehicle. Finally she explained that there had been problems over the car park but most issues had been resolved and the ticketing system would begin on April 1<sup>st</sup>. She finished by reading out a message from Councillor Susanna Pressel (this year's Lord Mayor) in which she apologised for not being able to be present and congratulated everyone on the site looking so good and the turn-out for the litter pick.

**2. Members present:** Gaby and David Topliss, Caro Fickling, Diane Newell, Alex Hollingsworth, James Allan, Carolyn Dutton, Stan Lodowski, Dave Simms, Tony Clear, John Sivell, Sheila Allen, Wendy Skinner Smith, Andrew Honey, Jane Eagan, Jamie Forbes, Alison Campbell, Felicity Parker, Giovanni Abarno, Aja and Karl.Hansen, Cathy Ferreira, John Langsbury, Susan Briggs, Roger Baker, Rik Wells, Liz Sanders, Adrian Edwards, Sedhar Ball, Donna and Tom Han, Victor Elms, Doke Ostle, Suki Pay, Jeremy Hyde, Ann Dawson, Helen and John Lowe, James Serjeant, Bernie Fry, Richard Gilson, Ali Bharmal, Julie-Ann Vickers, Katie Zabel, Emma Coles, Jo Davies, Godfrey Cole, Julia Maxted, Ben Rowland, Mike Howe, Kiri Summers, Katherine Lomas, Virgil Clarke, Roberta Catizone, Fiona Ross, Patricia Blanco, David and Felicity Feeny, Barbara Latham, Ian Barry, George Burnett-Stuart, Lydia Cole, Kate Stewart, Peregrine Riviere, Nicole Pohl, Tom and Liam Ghee, Sarah Wookey, Reneth McKenzie, Lynne Fredlund. (70)

**Apologies:** Susanna Pressel, Sue Perry, Gina Cowen, Arabella White, Patsie Franks, Tim Bone, Tim and Ann Bradshaw, David Rundle, Paul Cullen, Ros Weatherall, Jane and Simon Mollison, Diana Parker, Jane Wilson, Antoinette Piercy, Louis James, Richard and Sophie Quaterman, Kam Dhillon, Andy Lindridge, Caroline Methot, Claire Pike, Christina Fries, Chris and Wendy Ball, Chris Hope Jerram, Cyril Pead, Micki and Ross Mather.

**3. Minutes of AGM held on March 11<sup>th</sup> 2008:** Alison Campbell moved that the Minutes should be approved, seconded by Alex Hollingsworth, accepted nem con.

**Matters arising:** none

**3a: Changes to the constitution:**

**i) Trustees:** (introduced by James Allan)

There was a lack of clarity in the constitution about trustees particularly concerning what their duties were and how they were to be appointed in order to be accountable. James pointed out that the 4 former trustees (2 of whom had resigned) who had signed the lease in 2001 had been committee members at the time. The Council and Allotment Federation had asked associations to clarify this issue to ensure that trustees knew their duties of managing the site as described in the lease and were regularly elected. The committee had raised this over a year ago with trustees and was now proposing that the trustees should be the Chair and 3 other committee members chosen at the first committee meeting after the AGM. As the lease stated

that trustees have the responsibility to manage the sites it seemed more appropriate if the trustees were committee members and as they would be elected annually this would be better with regard to accountability. In response to a question it was explained that there were 14 years left on the present lease but we would have to sign a new lease to include Cripsey Island in association allotment land as an orchard. This was necessary to qualify for Lottery funding.

After some discussion Alison Campbell proposed that the AGM should vote on the constitutional change re Trustees; this was seconded by Caro Fickling.

Ian Barry and Richard Gilson acted as tellers

56 members voted in favour, 7 against and 3 abstained.

**ii / Membership:** (introduced by Alison Campbell) The association was proposing that it should follow the principle of one plot one vote (or one member with several plots only one vote) and an arrangement for a second member on the same plot who had signed the rules to have the vote in the event of the first named not being able to attend the AGM as long as the secretary had been informed in advance. After discussion it was agreed to allow up to 2 members per plot to vote and the revised wording of the change to the constitution was read out and agreed. Alison Campbell proposed that the AGM should vote on the constitutional change, seconded by Alex Hollingsworth. 52 members voted in favour, 1 against, 1 abstained.

**4. Accounts:** copies of the audited accounts were circulated. In answer to a question Alison explained that some years ago the association had bought black plastic in bulk either for use by the association or for selling on. The proposal that the accounts should be accepted (proposed by Sheila Allen, seconded by Wendy Skinner Smith) was approved *nem con*. The Secretary would write to thank Ken Jones for verifying the accounts.

Budget: a member pointed out that the 3<sup>rd</sup> note should read “members who did not attend . . .” There were no questions.

Alison Campbell was thanked for her work as treasurer.

**5. Annual Report:** there were no questions on the report.

**6. Elections:** (all officers and committee members were elected unopposed)

Chair: Wendy Skinner Smith – nominated by Sheila Allen

seconded by Alison Campbell

Vice Chair: John Sivell – nominated by Wendy Skinner Smith

seconded by James Allan

Secretary: Sheila Allen – nominated by Wendy Skinner Smith

seconded by John Sivell

Treasurer: Alison Campbell – nominated by Wendy Skinner Smith

seconded by John Sivell

Other committee members: Tony Clear, Jamie Forbes, Alex Hollingsworth, James Allan were re- elected unopposed.

Cathy Ferreira and Gaby Topliss were proposed and seconded and elected.

**7. Items for discussion from Annual Report:**

**a/ Sheds:**

Jamie Forbes reminded members that the previous AGM had agreed maximum shed size as 6x8x6 and that they must submit plans and must apply to the committee for permission.. Any porch or platform should be shown on the plans and the AGM was

asked to agree that it should be left to the committee to decide whether any changes would be needed taking into consideration the position of the shed. The committee felt that it was a good idea to raise sheds where flooding was an issue. Members were also reminded that they should apply to the committee for permission for greenhouses and polytunnels including a plan with the application as orientation and height were important. Glass remains an issue and members were asked to not to bring it on site. It is impossible to remove from the soil and in our experience most 'useful' windows end up breaking where they were stored!

**b/ Fruit trees:**

There was concern that in some cases too much of the plot was being given over to fruit trees so it was proposed that **a maximum of a third of a plot could be used for fruit trees**. The committee needed to be applied to for permission and the application should include details of varieties and rootstock. No objections were raised. It was also suggested and agreed that there should be a survey of fruit trees on the site.

**c/ Bees:** Alex reported that the committee could no longer recommend allowing bees because a letter of concern from a member had been received but that it was still a matter for the meeting to decide as all members had been notified. The contents of the letter were explained.

Caro Fickling and Di Newell had circulated papers about bee-keeping and related matters. They explained that they had 2 full-size plots and there was to be 1 hive initially with 1 more later if there were no problems. In answer to questions they explained that the hive would be screened by netting to guide the bees, they would put up a warning notice which would also say clearly what to do in the event of a serious sting together with contact numbers for swarming officer. A risk assessment needed to be done on what to do in the case of a life-threatening sting but this needed to be done anyway. It was agreed that a risk management plan would be put on the website and in future newsletters.

The proposal to have a trial of one hive for a year was agreed *nem con*.

**d/ Cripsey Island:**

Wendy was congratulated on getting a £10,000 lottery grant (confirmed that morning) and on getting the new lease sorted out.

In answer to questions members were informed that once tree work has been done it would be possible for members to go on to the island but a risk management document would need to be completed as there were hazards, particularly deep water and children should never be there on their own. The lease stated it had to be an orchard and the intention was for it to be a place of quiet retreat. Rules for the island would have to be worked out over the coming year. Members were asked to do an additional hour working party a year in order to cope with the extra work the island required or pay a donation at the end of the years...as we do now. Apple varieties to be planted would be ideally Oxfordshire varieties but we would be advised about rootstock by MSOG. There was already a walnut, a pear and an apple tree (+ trunks of 2 dead trees ) though they were all in need of a lot of work. Members' recommendations about varieties would be welcomed. The association would be working with its 5 partners during Year Two.

**Andy Howard from Mid Shires Orchard Group:**

Andy talked about what the Group does promoting heritage apples and teaching pruning and grafting skills. It also promoted orchards because many have been lost and there is a need for enough orchards in order to safeguard varieties. With the right range of trees apples can be harvested over several months. An orchard on Cripsey Island would benefit local food economy and wild life, it could be a training resource,

and events could be held throughout the year to celebrate apples (blossom day, apple day, and wassail).

In answer to a question Andy said that it was not illegal to cut down dead apple trees but as they may have preservation orders it was necessary to check. (The tree officer had informed us there are no tree preservation orders on the island). Andy gave his website address and phone number for members to follow up orders for apples or questions on caring for them.

[www.msog.btik.com](http://www.msog.btik.com)

01295 810516

He said he could run a course here if there were enough demand. It costs £10 a year to join the Group. The association is a member.

**8. AOB:** Soil testing – the site had been tested as before but this time the research was looking at how contaminants are bound into the soil. All sites had passed though they had higher levels than would be allowed on a new plot being set up. There will be an evening meeting arranged for members to learn about the findings when we receive the results.

The meeting ended at 9.30pm after refreshments.