

## **CMAA AGM 2014 Criphey Meadow Allotment Association Minutes of AGM 17 03 2014**

The start of the meeting was interrupted by a previous member of the Association, and 3 supporters, who were also non-members. They wanted to use the meeting to air the view that the ex member had been treated unfairly by the committee. This is a member's only meeting and we had received no prior notification nor request from this ex member to attend the meeting extraordinarily nor that she would bring supporters. We cannot admit non members to the meeting except by prior agreement. Informally Alison referred this to the members. Alison stated that the committee had spent much time carefully considering decisions in this case. Members were asked by a show of hands to indicate if they wanted to listen. 2 members wished to listen, 8 abstained. The vast majority of members did not wish to listen to these grievances and we were requested to get on with the meeting.

- 1. Introduction by the Chair** Wendy showed slides illustrating events on site over the past year including the Jericho Street Fair. She highlighted the benefits of activities carried out at Working Parties, the various developments as a consequence of the new flats and successes in the Oxford Allotment Competition (Criphey Meadow was second in the site competition and Richard and Jean Haigh (plot 15,16) came first in the over 70's category.)
- 2. Members present and apologies for absence.** Present: Richard Haigh 15,16 Astrid Erber 106d Rob and Louise Bruce SF 19&20 Mark Doran 142b Andreas and Sarah Duering 126b Sedhar Chozam Ball 94.95 Emma Delap 1a/b Hannah Yeadon 90 John Sivell 46 Bonnie Mappin SF4 Andrej Sufranson SF6 Christine Long 8a Dot and Godfrey Stone 46 Richard Simms 102 Ian Barry 50a Heidi Rochowanski 133 Nigel Earl 153 Claire Pike 48b Wendy Skinner Smith 40,41 Rodney Smith 40,41 Alison Campbell and Godfrey Cole 14 Kiri Summers 100 Annalisa Cecchi 61b Jamie Forbes 63 Jeremy Hyde 91 Sarah Edwards SF7 Tony Coombs 104 Steve Carr 87 Sarah Garding 106a Sara Jones SF5 John Langsbury 101 Alex Hollingsworth 81,82 Keith Holton 131,132 Carolyn and Richard Dutton 9,64,65 Tim Bone 99 Carole-ann Turner 134 Patsie Franks 100,99 Sue Perry 8b Reneth Schoetz 48a Jonathan Finnerty SF3 Paul Allibone SF8 Tony Clear 124 (48) **Apologies:** Sheila Allen 12 Chris Smith and Anita Jassi 74b Nicola Harvey 61a Jane and Simon Mollison 122,123 Ada Grabowska 50
- 3. Minutes of the AGM of March 2013 and Matters Arising.** The minutes were accepted as correct. In Matters Arising Wendy noted Ada Grabowska-Zhang's AOB on seed sharing and that Ada had recently given birth to a daughter but hopes to be back on her allotment shortly and pursue seed sharing later in the year.
- 4. Annual Accounts and Treasurer's Report.** Copies of the accounts, which had been inspected by Ken Jones, were circulated. Alison noted the 2013 income was slightly up on the previous year, she explained the factors contributing to this and reviewed last year's spending. There were no queries about the accounts for 2013 which were accepted as correct.  
Alison then talked about the budget and explained that the chipper project had not been taken forward last year due to health problems of a key participant, but it will be completed this year, hopefully with the assistance of a Lottery grant. There were questions as to when the trial of a hired chipper would commence, who would be eligible to use it; and about training and arrangements for insurance cover. Initially it will only be used at working parties by committee members who will be insured. We will explore how others can be trained and co opted to with chipper work.  
Alison noted that our site rent will go up in March 2016, as a result of the OCC rent review of Allotment sites. Our subscriptions will reflect this site increase and the increased cost of maintenance. Subscriptions have remained unchanged since the last review in 2007. We will need to increase this by at least by RPI to keep pace with inflation. The budget was accepted and Alison thanked for her work as Treasurer.
- 5. Annual Report 2013** This had been previously emailed to members.  
Susanna Pressel asked about the amount raised by the Association at the Jericho Street Fair. This was £275 and will be used for bee friendly planting on the site.  
Sedhar wondered if there could be a system to inform members if someone is unwell and needs help with their plot. Another member reported they had been ill for some time and had informed the committee but that he had had no help. Wendy said such work has often been carried out at Working Parties but that the additional demands of the building site, protest activities, plot clearances and committee illness had mitigated against being able to help. Sedhar requested there be an additional time to Sunday morning for Working Parties (WP). When Wednesday evening was used the number of attendees was small but it was agreed the committee will consider reinstating an alternative date and time to Sunday morning for WPs

The newsletter and notice board are used as a source of information for members but the possibility of having an on-line Forum was raised. It was felt this would need an individual to run it as at present the committee could not take this on. Alessandro agreed to explore possibilities.

6. **Welcome from Susanna Pressel and Elections** The committee and officers stood down. Susanna thanked members and the committee, and Wendy in particular, for their hard work during the year. She proposed Wendy as Chair. There was no other nomination and she was elected unopposed, unanimously. Subsequently the following officers and committee members were elected unopposed and unanimously: Chair – Wendy Skinner Smith, Vice Chair – Tony Clear, Treasurer – Alison Campbell, Secretary – Claire Pike. Other committee members – Alex Hollingsworth, Jeremy Hyde, Jamie Forbes, Richard Haigh Annalisa Cecchi, Sarah Edwards.

## 7. AGM Items

**Report and feedback on 2014 flooding.** Alex reported that although his plot had been under water from Boxing Day till March 9<sup>th</sup> previous work to raise the plot had had some beneficial effect. The main strategy to mitigate against flooding is to raise the level of the land. He stressed the importance of not removing any vegetation from your plot. Even perennial weeds can be recycled after rotting (either by drowning, which results in a very offensive liquid, or storing in a heavy duty bag for some months). He and Jeremy advocate taking any opportunity to raise the level of your land by adding compost, soil, leaf mould, chipper produce or manure etc. Start with the area that floods most readily. Earth can be taken from paths to build up beds and a trailer load of manure provides bulk and nutrients. It's important to check with the committee before bringing soil on site.

**Clearing plots** Over the past year 7 skips have been used (3 more than budgeted for). The skips have been used to dispose of items from plot clearances. Clearing plots and disposing of items left behind by previous holders is an expense for the Association in terms of Working Party man-hours and through the disposal of unwanted items. Some Associations are considering asking new members to leave a deposit to assist with the expense of plot clearance. Members did not feel this was necessary at present for Cripsey Meadow.

**Progress report on shredder/chipper.** This item was covered earlier but Tony confirmed he would be happy for others to be trained up to help with the chipper. Information about hiring the chipper will be included in the next newsletter. Nigel Earl and Tony Coombs expressed an interest in helping with chipper work.

**Trading Shed** Sarah recalled the talk by Vbeke Mannion about the Trap Grounds shop at last year's AGM and her interest in getting a trading shed going on Cripsey Meadow. The committee hoped the enterprise would be useful in reducing prices through bulk buying and also benefit the Meadow itself as eventually it should result in fewer cars and trucks on site. She started in the autumn selling bags of compost and recently has been selling second hand tools, which have been left behind by previous plot holders and were collected by Jeremy. They are sold for a nominal fee but she stressed they do not come with a guarantee. From March 24<sup>th</sup> there will be additional items for sale (enviromesh, canes, black ground cover and thick black plastic). She hopes in the future potatoes and green manure may also be on sale. The trading shed is located on the SF site, near the ash tree. Prices are on the notice board and will be on the web site as are opening times, which are a mixture of Saturdays and Sundays at present. Three members have volunteered to assist Sarah with the Trading shed. She is keen to hear from members about other products they would like her to consider selling and is happy to be contacted by email and or sell items when she is on her plot (adjacent to the shed).

**Fruit tree planting by the flats and other work by the University** Wendy gave an overview of developments this year. She felt that despite the various difficulties relationships with OU and OCC remain reasonable. Unfortunately the work by Longcross on the badger run, entrance fencing and water butts was unsatisfactory but this has been acknowledged by the University and the problems are being addressed. Eventually there will be 4 water tanks by the fence near the flats and it will be possible to collect water from them with a watering can. An emergency water supply had been properly re-installed. Espalier and free standing fruit trees will be planted on the green near the flats. Some tree planting along Willow Walk has been done by OCC but none of this is on the allotment site of Castle Mill. There are [proposals to replace some willow on our boundary with other trees which do not have dramatic changes of height due to pollarding. The priority had been to ensure any plans for the screening of Castle Mill did not compromise the allotment land. **Meeting ended at 9.20**