

## **SAUGHTON MAINS ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION**

### **EMAIL COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS 17 Sep 2020- 19 Jan 2021**

**Officers:** **Chair:** vacancy; **Secretary:** Janet Bradbury; **Treasurer:** Jean Carletta.

**Committee Members:** Yvonne Dawe, Sandy Dundas, Jenny Wilson, Peter Moir, Peter Shaw, Kevin Hamilton, Ed Irvine, John McCleary, Chiari Puppi.

The Covid restrictions over the last 10 months have prevented the Committee meeting in person. However, matters have been dealt with effectively by email.

The Committee has formally adopted the following motion:

**that we open an account with Metro Bank in the name of the Saughton Mains Allotments Association, closing the RBS account, with the signatories Jean Carletta (Treasurer), known as Jean Gifford for banking purposes; Jan Bradbury (Secretary); and Jenny Wilson (Committee Member) and with a rule that two signatories must sign for all bank account transactions.**

This was moved by Jean Carletta on 12 Jan 2021, and seconded by Jenny Wilson, with a further 6 committee members in support, no objections or abstentions.

The following items have been discussed, agreed and implemented since the reports sent out on 16 September 2020.

### **EMAIL COMMITTEE DISCUSSIONS and Decisions 2020/2021**

**Committee Members contacted by email throughout the year.**

Yvonne Dawe, Jean Carletta (Treasurer), Jan Bradbury (Sec), Sandy Dundas, Jenny Wilson, Peter Moir, Peter Shaw, Kevin Hamilton, Ed Irvine, John McCleary, Chiari Puppi. The position of Chair is currently vacant.

The Covid restrictions over the last 10 months have prevented the Committee meeting in person. However, matters have been dealt with effectively by email. By way of a roundup the following items have been discussed, agreed and implemented over the last year.

**Change of Bank Account** As one of the conditions of their government bail-out. RBS has told us that we are eligible for a bonus of £1250 if we switch to another bank by the end of February. Metro Bank PLC is the only bank on the approved list with a suitable account. They do not appear to have a specific policy re ethical investing or fossil fuels and so it is unclear whether the move accords with the request at the 2019 AGM to consider a change to a more ethical banking arrangement. They have a free banking option but this will require them to phone the second signatory for authorisation. If this becomes burdensome, for £5 a month we can move to a platform that handles complex authorisations.

**CoVid Policies.** The toilets must remain closed until CEC informs us we can reopen them. We are in the process of renewing signage as distancing and hand hygiene.

~~measures are unchanged~~**Grass Cutting of communal paths.** CEC purchased a new lawn mower for SMAA in March last year to help the association take over the cutting of communal grassed areas. This has worked well as we the grass is cut when required and when it is dry. ~~. You are encouraged to wipe down the gate as you pass, as well as your hands. Try to avoid getting sanitizers and soaps in the lock mechanism itself. The Council accepts that the lock will degrade faster than usual. If you are struggling with the lock, insert your key before you try to close it.~~

**Painting of the Chalet.** The chalet and veranda were painted in June/July. Some areas could do with further coats which will be carried out in the Spring.

~~**Collection of Rubbish by CEC.** The Council have continued to empty the white bin regularly throughout the year which helps keep sites clear of accumulating rubbish.~~

~~**Scrap Metal.** The area to the side of the metal container is for scrap metal only. Please avoid stacking anything against the adjacent fence, which is getting damaged. We have looked for alternative sites but need one near the gate without blocking any passing points. We are attempting to get the metal collected earlier before the pile grows too big. We store scrap metal to the side of the metal container. At times the pile grows very large and causes the adjacent plotholder concern. We have looked at whether it could be relocated but haven't found an alternative site that is both close to vehicular access and the main gate. To manage the situation better we have tried to make sure we get the metal collected before the pile grows too big.~~

**Big Skip.** We paid for a big skip in October to give people the opportunity to get rid of waste material. We do this once a year as it is a good way of helping people keep their plots free of unwanted rubbish.

**Zoo Poo.** We had 2x20 ton deliveries of zoo poo in October, restricting the amount people could have on the first 3 days to give everyone the chance to collect some. It went well and covered the haulage costs.

~~**Pallets.** We have asked FEDAGA for three dozen pallets as part of their scheme with Jewson. We still expect them at some point when Jewson volunteers to deliver them. If you see them, keep in mind that they are for the plotholders who requested them.~~

**Dry goods container on Chalet Porch.** We managed to keep this stocked up for most of the year. ~~Please leave cash in the postbox or send it in electronically, preferably leaving a note. -with money left in the postbox or payments made electronically. The latter make it more difficult to check that payments are made but it avoids the need to handle cash.~~ We will start it up again in March

**Woodchip and Leaves.** We have continued to benefit from deliveries of wood chip and fallen leaves. Many plotholders have taken advantage of both to surface their paths in and adjacent to their plots and spread the leaves as a mulch on their beds.

~~**Bulky Goods Orders** **Pe** Thanks to Peter Shaw for organising our joint order. organised the collation of a bulky goods order and their delivery to site. They were~~

~~initially stored in the chalet and then collected by ploholders. A few bulk goods items still remain and need to be claimed: from the chalet.~~

~~**Bulk Potatoe and Onion Orders.** Peter Shaw collated all the requests and put in an order Potatoes and onions are expected for the third week of February. They may be available for pickup later than usual as Peter intends to organise the orders alone due to coronavirus restrictions. It normally arrives in February. Peter Shaw to request what help he needs at the time, but it may take longer to sort because of Covid restrictions.~~

**Leek Orders.** We ordered Leek plants from FEDAGA, and expect them to arrive in May / June. We will need to agree how to distribute get them to ploholders.

~~**Underused and Untidy Plots.** We can expect more untidy plots than usual as some ploholders may be shielding. It is CEC's responsibility to re-allocated underused plots and they have been active in this. We welcome our new ploholders. It is accepted that some ploholders have been shielding and have not been attending their plots, others are habitually underused and neglected, and there are now a number in a very poor condition. It is Ian Woolards responsibility to contact ploholders and reallocate plots, but with an overall waiting list of over 4000 for allotments in Edinburgh it is important that this issue is tackled now, to give the chance to new people to get onto plots before the growing season. Some new allocations and swaps have been agreed and we welcome all the new ploholders to Saughton Mains.~~

~~**Rats.** We have an ongoing problem with rats on the site, which apparently is repeated throughout Edinburgh at the moment. There are a number of theories, but weWe have been asked not to feed the birds in ways and locations that could be reached by rats, not to put any food waste in the compost bins, to check sheds and bins regularly ( rats don't like to be disturbed ). The Councils rat catcher is attending every 3-4 weeks to check traps, and other ploholders have their own traps and bait.~~

**FEDAGA Small Grant Scheme.** We applied for 2 small grants, one to set up a tool library, the other to construct a green composting area. Both were successful but the sponsors of the tool library did not accept FEDAGA's condition of grant that we should be prepared to share any tools purchased with the grant with other allotment sites. Discussions have taken place with The Conservation Volunteers on the green composting bins and draft plans and costings have been prepared. ~~They will be circulated to committee members separately.~~ We hoped the bins could be constructed in February but the Covid restrictions mean that the Trust is not able to work at the moment, ~~so implementation of the scheme will be delayed a few months.~~

~~**Change of Bank Account** The Committee was asked to consider changing the bank account from RBS to another bank that was more environmentally and ethically managed. Jean Carletta (Treasurer ) has identified the Metro bank as a suitable alternative and emailed all committee members to seek their approval to the switch. This is an important item and Jean specifically moved that~~

~~**I move that we open an account with the Metro Bank in the name of Saughton Mains Allotments Association, closing the RBS account, with the signatories**~~

~~Jean Carletta (Treasurer), Janet Bradbury (Secretary) and Jenny Wilson (Committee Member) and with a rule that two signatories must sign for all bank account transactions.~~

~~This was moved by Jean Carletta and seconded by Jenny Wilson, with a further 6 committee members in support, no objections or abstentions.~~

**JB 19 January 2021**