

SAUGHTON MAINS ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION
SMAA ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING, Sunday 23 September 2018

- 1 **Present:** Kate Anderson, Duncan Blair, Peter Brown, Margaret Brown, Jan Bradbury, Alan Brown, Methla Brown, Kay Barclay, Jean Carletta, Rolfe Clarke, Chiara Puppi (The Welcoming), Susan Deebank, Malcolm Dawe, Graeme Evans, Carol Finlay, Neil Gray, Wendy Lord, Dez Peffers, Alison MacRae, Alan McStay, John McCleary, Sue Miles, Peter Moir, Alan Ramsey, Mary Simpson, Donald Stevenson, John Waterlow, Douglas White, Ronnie Wickster, Frances Wright, Rosina Weightman.
- 2 **Apologies:** Anna Kretzinger, Innes Stephen Muir, Ian Meek, Brenda Roman, Jenny Wilson, Agnes Cunningham, Pat Neary, Avril Auchterlonie.
- 3 **Minutes of the 2017 AGM:** These were proposed by Peter Shaw and seconded by Rosina Weightman.

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

a.Improvements to communications. The original FB page now has 66 followers, some comments get as many as 90 views. This is the main forum for news. As suggested at the last general meeting in May a SMAA group page has been set up on FB by Jean Carletta as well as a website which contains all the permanent documentation relating to the SMAA eg the plot holders guide, a site map and the constitution. See below for the link <https://www.saughtonmainsallotments.org>

The committee holds a list of email addresses for members which allows us to communicate news to ploholders easily. Major information will also continue to be posted on the notice boards around the site.

b) Rosina thanked Mary Simpson and her son Nick for producing the Plot Holders Guide. A laminated copy is attached to the chalet for easy reference, paper copies are available on request from any member of the committee or electronic copies can be downloaded from our website. Ian Woolard will provide a copy to all new plot holders. This is a really easy read that gives lots of useful information about using the many shared benefits on site

c) The Zoo Poo / liquid gold delivery in May was extremely popular and sold out! We had lovely weather and there was a very sociable and amicable atmosphere as people queued to collect barrowload's of manure at £1 for 3. We didn't quite cover the costs of haulage at this rate and so a small contribution of £10 or so was required from funds. The committee will arrange another delivery in Oct. The haulage quote is slightly more expensive so prices will need to increase. Delivery needs to be a weekday morning to fit with availability for collection at the zoo, so apologies in advance to people who aren't available mid week. We need notes of interest from people to decide whether to have 1 or 2 truck loads. Please contact us through FB, the website or tell a member of the committee if you want some, and roughly how much you would like. We need volunteers to collect payment and supervise distribution on the day. Dates have yet to be finalised, but are likely to be 1st or 3rd Oct.

d) Skip hire was arranged earlier in the year as an experiment to see if this would encourage people to tidy up their plots. Many items that were put in the skip were removed by some other plot holders - so it acted like a Swop Shop ! There was a problem with some people putting vegetative waste in the skip despite a notice not to. The skip did fill up, but there are no current plans to repeat this. We cannot recoup the cost of skip hire so it was paid from SMAA funds. The committee debated whether this was the best use of our funds as we all have a responsibility to take our own rubbish off site.

e) Apple Press. Thanks to Yvonne Dawes who arranged the apple press weekend last year using the FEDAGA press. Donald Stevenson is arranging to borrow the press this year on 29th Sept - watch put for details of times etc. Just bring a sharp knife, a chopping board and of course your own apples.

d) Apple trees in the communal orchard beside the small car park have been grafted this year with some tasty varieties by a friend of Rosina's and Duncan King - Thanks to Richard Web and Duncan. The grafts have taken quite well and we should begin to get an edible crop in the next couple of years (the trees there were just root stock before). Many thanks to Peter Shaw who has planted more communal fruit trees in the

area where the Pylon used to be.

e) A charity called The Welcoming have taken over plot 160 this year and have made considerable improvements to the plot in a short space of time. They held an open day for the public to visit the plot. They are a friendly bunch and want to contribute to a community feeling on site

f) We have contributed to the **research project called Myharvest** which is looking at the influence of urban pollution in the soil. Dr Miriam Dobson and her team visited the site, took soil samples and interviewed 5 plot holders. They will report back in a year once the samples have been analysed. If you are interested there are opportunities to get involved with this research, we have posters up to explain how.

g) FEDAGA. Mary Simpson and Rosina Weightman have attended the FEDAGA meetings regularly to represent SMAA. New volunteers will be needed for the coming year, please contact the committee if you are interested. The Allotment Food and Flower Show in Sept was a great success with more entries from SMAA than last year and 3 first prizes going to SMAA members.

h) Many thanks to all of the committee who continue to contribute so much time, energy and enthusiasm to maintaining and improving the site. A special thanks to

Donald Stevenson who maintains the composting toilets

Alan McStay from the committee who tirelessly work to maintain the site.

Peter Shaw for organising the potato and onion order. It is quite a lot of work to separate the orders on the day of arrival and Peter is looking for volunteers to help with this work. Please give him your email address.

Mary Simpson who has been secretary for many years and is standing down this year. Thank you for your patience and endurance in “organising” us all on the committee.

I) I’d just like to note the sad passing of **Tony Stanton** in August. Tony was the long standing Chair of SMAA and kept the committee going when it was flagging. It revived in 2010 when Alan, Brian Walter, Tony Hiddleston and Mary were recruited and went from strength to strength thereafter. I didn’t know Tony personally but many of the committee worked with him for many years and he was also an office bearer for many years of FEDAGA.

j) The bad news. There has been a recent outbreak of thefts from people’s plots, with flowers and potatoes being dug up, and trees stripped of fruit. This saddens the heart, and with no obvious sign of a break in it looks like it could be an inside job! Please be vigilant. Don’t approach anyone you suspect of stealing unless you feel safe to do so. However, you might feel able to take a photograph or video. Any thefts should be reported to Ian Woolard, the committee and the police. FEDAGA state a report should be made to the police so that if a pattern of theft emerges it can be noted.

People need to be discouraged from building structures or compost heaps against the perimeter which gave easy unauthorised access into the site.

5 TREASURER’S REPORT

Jean presented a verbal account of the finances. The income for the year was ££1,639.56; the expenditure £1,253.68. The cash assets were £5,128.18. Last year’s assets were £4,742.30.

Although the cost of potatoes and dry goods etc had gone up, selling prices had been kept static. The committee were keeping under review the level of assets held. Although the cash in hand seemed large in relation to current annual outgoings, unforeseen spending might arise in future particularly given the cuts in their spending experienced by the Council staff. e.g. we might have to take on expensive repairs such as water pipe repairs or rubbish collection.

The Council currently pay for keeping the water supply in good order, the rubbish collection, much of the tree felling especially when safety was concerned, fencing, padlocks (ie security); administration and allocation of lets and discipline. Only they had the power to expel any misbehaving plot holder.

Donald reminded us that although the water was good mains water and so could be drunk, not all the taps

were tested and **therefore it could not be officially designated as drinking water.** Doing this would involve the expensive testing of every tap.

6 ELECTION OF COMMITTEE for 2018-2019

The following current members were willing to stand again: Rosina, Jean, Jan, Yvonne, Mary, Peter Moir, Peter Shaw, John McCleary and Neil Gray.

Ciara from the Welcoming Group volunteered to stand as their current representative.

Alan and Brian were standing down.

Rosina thanked them for all the work they had contributed to so much around the site over the past few years. She hoped Alan and Donald would continue to contribute their expertise to the site maintenance.

The following were proposed and seconded as office bearers: Rosina was proposed and seconded as chairman; Jean as treasurer, and Jan as secretary.

7. PLANS FOR THE COMING YEAR

Jenny Wilson would like to set up a **scarecrow competition** and would like some volunteers to assist in whipping up enthusiasm. This and competitions like it e.g. a Yarn Bomb at Telferston Mains, had been very successful on other sites.

A Zoo Poo delivery will be organised for the beginning of October. The charge will be £1 for two barrows as this will help cover costs. The monitoring will be done by volunteers as before. Unfortunately it has to be delivered on a weekday only as the zoo does not allow deliveries on the weekends.

The potato and onion orders are due in by November 4.

If people want to pay directly to the bank they can arrange this with Peter Shaw when submitting their orders. They must identify themselves by Plot number so that payments can be identified.

Painting of the Gate was still required and Ian Woolard had suggested we get the paint and do it ourselves.

Painting the perimeter fence with anti vandal paint was more problematic as special clothing had to be worn. Donald, Alan and Peter Shaw will look into this.

8 ELECTION OF FEDAGA REPRESENTATIVES

Mary and Rosina had attended meetings over the past couple of years.

Rosina and Yvonne have volunteered to attend whenever possible in future but would like to know if other people would like to represent SMAA at FEDAGA.

Peter Shaw could attend if the meetings were on Tuesdays. Mary said the meeting dates were being shunted around to coincide with other events in the Community Centre otherwise FEDAGA had to pay £28 per hour for a Janitor to be in attendance.

The last FEDAGA meeting had considered the **Council's policy on allotments as part of the Community Empowerment Act.**

The Council's policy required the allotment waiting list to be not more than half the number of allotments, and the waiting list time less than 2 years. The Council Officers had indicated that this was just not possible given the current circumstances of far more people wanting allotments than available plots.

Their future policy would likely be to allocate land as available for allotment use, but leave the allocated plot holders to organise themselves and to be self governing.

9 Date of the Next Committee Meeting

This will be set in due course.