

# **Saughton Mains Allotment Association**

## **Committee Meeting, Sunday September 5th, 2021, 11am**

**Apologies:** Nigel Wilson, Jan Bradbury (Secretary), Kevin Hamilton

**Present:** Witold Miedzybrodzki, Ed Irvine, Peter Moir, Jean Carletta (Treasurer), Yvonne Dawe, David Todd, Peter Shaw, Sandy Dundas, Fiona Liddle (observer)

### **Site Maintenance, Tasks and Volunteers.**

1. The move to Metrobank has gone smoothly, however we have had very long delays from the bank and still have not managed to get our mandate changed. We re-confirm June's resolution that the authorised signatories in the current mandate for the Saughton Mains Allotments Association Metrobank account be amended to remove Jenny Wilson and add Edward Irvine. The mandate will still require dual authorisation. Jean Carletta (banking name Jean Gifford) and Janet Bradbury will remain as signatories. The banking agreement was proposed by Sandy and seconded by Peter.
2. Alan McStay has repaired the electric lights in the chalet that stopped working when the chalet roof was damaged in the storm.
3. Witold will assess whether we need to strengthen the chalet repair.
4. Zoo Poo will be delivered on Friday October 1st. Jan will organise a rota of volunteers.
5. Autumn Whackback: Peter Shaw will inspect the site to see what areas still need attention and then the committee will decide whether to organise a day or just ask for a few volunteers. We may treat it as an "Autumn Forage".
6. The FEDAGA leek ordering day was in November last year. Ed will check the date for this year.
7. Order forms for the potatoes and onions etc are on the chalet veranda.
8. **Capital Expenses**  
The Council has £10K available to make allotments more environmentally friendly and is keen on chippers and water harvesting. This is for capital expenditure only. FEDAGA also expects to have matching grants

available like last year. We need to have comments ready for a FEDAGA meeting on 14 September where Ed will represent our views. The committee discussed the following options:

- a). Chipper. We need to understand Council expectations re Health and Safety advice, insurance against theft and third party liability, especially as we've been told we could be expected to loan the chipper to other sites, a grant condition we have previously rejected for other equipment. There is a difference between storing it for the Council/FEDAGA and owning it. A concern was also raised that even if loaned out, a chipper would be used so infrequently that hiring would be better environmentally. Peter Shaw will ask how Redhall handles their chipper and Peter Moir will investigate the insurance.
- b). Water Harvesting: put gutters round chalet to collect rain water. Peter has \*2\* 1 cu ton water storage containers which we could use. Storage is of most benefit in the winter when the taps are off, but then requires frost protection. Although we could annually harvest 26 cu ton of water from the roof, we could not store it so the environmental benefit could be limited.
- c). Free Standing Compost Bin: the bins we have have been a great success, but are too small and are already full. We intend to double capacity in the same concrete bay, again with treated wood instead of pallets as the lifespan should be 10 to 15 years. Estimated costs a few months ago were £450 but prices have risen and could be up to £600. This is our preferred grant option but our understanding is that FEDAGA and the Council may not see this as a priority.
- d). Trolleys: FEDAGA has previously given grants for trolleys with mesh sides and pneumatic wheels. They cost around £100 each with maintenance costs of £40 every 3 years to replace wheels. They could easily be stolen so we prefer flat bed trolleys.
- e). Notice Board: replacement for the front gate as the old one is very dilapidated. There is currently no notice board on the pedestrian side gate, which is now in frequent use, so ideally we would also relocate the chalet notice board there.
- f). Safety Mirror on entry drive: Nigel raised this but we aren't sure where it could be mounted for good sight lines. Scottish Power own the drive and getting permission to mount on their side could be tricky, and homeowners may not be keen. We also think its likely to be vandalised,

but at £40, if there is demand, we could try. We will ask Nigel to make a more concrete proposal if he wants to proceed

- g). Solar Panel and lights in metal container. Currently volunteers have to use torches. An alternative might be stick-on LEDs if they can be made bright enough.
- 9. A request has been made that we re-site the scrap metal collection site. Peter Shaw will look at potential sites and how to contain the heap with pallets. We prefer not to have the heap easily visible to the area where rogue tradesmen dump outside the main gate as that could encourage them.

#### 10. **Small Matters:**

Peter will paint white lines in the top carpark as this has been requested by a plotholder.

Some committee members don't have chalet keys yet. Witold has been given original master key to get these cut. Four copies were authorised.

Anti bac gel has been requested at the gate. This would be difficult to mount so we do not intend to take this further.

There is not enough interest in the apple press to make it worthwhile borrowing it.

There have again been complaints of the theft of produce from plots. This is unacceptable and plotholders should stay vigilant.

There has been a complaint about a plastic tank full of plywood behind plots 137 and 138. Committee members to go and check.

The mower is accessible for mowing communal areas. We now have secure key arrangements and can allow plotholders, after H&S training by Andrew, to use the mower on communal areas only. The mower must be left ready for use, with petrol and blades free of obstructions.

Peter Shaw will go through the buckets and see what bulk dry goods need reordering.

The chalet porch and toilet doors need repainting. Witold will assess what else needs painting.

People are still having bonfires, despite the council ban between March and October. Yvonne will email Ian Woollard and Jean will put a reminder on Facebook.

## **AGM**

The AGM has been postponed until spring 2022.

Jan Bradbury has indicated that she will step down as secretary at the third week of September, our usual AGM date, so that she can concentrate on organising services, such as zoo poo, on our behalf. We thank her for her service and are delighted that she still intends to make what are very valuable contributions to the site.

We must appoint both a Secretary and Chair, not just for good operations, but to retain full control of our bank account. Jean has been chairing during much of the vacancy as well as taking care of electronic communications, but is unwilling to continue on this basis. She will revert back to contributing as Treasurer only starting January 2022 unless progress is made on appointments. Jean will draft “terms of reference” expressing the duties and time commitments for key posts for the committee to discuss, as there is some confusion about this.

A date for the next committee meeting has not yet been agreed.

The meeting was closed at 12:15pm