

WELLESBOURNE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION
MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON 28TH FEBRUARY 2013
AT 7.45 PM IN THE WELLESBOURNE CONSERVATIVE CLUB

In the absence of the Chairman (due to workload), the Treasurer (Mr K Manning) opened the meeting by welcoming all those present, with a special welcome to new members. (40 members present)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies were recorded from Dr G Freeman, Mr G Rose and Mr N Sims.

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the AGM held on 1st March 2012 were read and approved.

3. PRESENTATION OF BEST ALLOTMENT COMPETITION 2012

The winner of the "Best Allotment" Competition 2012 was Mr Ken Manning, who was presented with the cup and cheque by the Secretary.

4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Due to the absence of the Chairman at the meeting, his written report was read out to the meeting by the Secretary. The Chairman concluded his Report by informing the meeting that he would not be standing as Chairman this year. This report is attached to the Minutes.

Mr K Manning added to the Chairman's report by giving a tribute to Mr John McDonough who died at the age of 104 (very close to his 105th birthday). John had been with the WAA since 1956, and we should reflect on the thought that longevity is a "plus" for working on an allotment.

We had enjoyed some enjoyable events during the year, including a very successful Open Day, and a visit to Thetford Arboretum.

There had been continuing incidents of vandalism and theft, with sheds being broken into and mowers, tools and cultivators being stolen. The newly-purchased trail camera had produced photos of one offender, but the police had not been able to identify the culprit from the images. He added that Mr Eric Lawley from Neighbourhood Watch had kindly agreed to give a talk about allotment security later during the AGM.

Ken was pleased to tell the meeting that a grant for £600 had been received from the Parish Council to assist with additional security measures.

5. TREASURER'S REPORT

Ken Manning hoped that attaching the financial report to the AGM meeting notice has given members time to study the details of the accounts.

With reference to the £1 rise in rents for those with water, the cost of water had risen 50% since 2004.

There were several comments from the floor regarding this rise as a) little water had been used for the last couple of years and b) the Association had been making a profit for several years.

Ken replied that water costs are continuing to rise and that we must also take into account maintenance of equipment.

Question from the Floor as to whether there was any way the difference between rents for those with water compared to those without could be adjusted upwards and downwards so there was less of a gap.

Dave Roche replied that there are only 2 or 3 members left without water, as new members have to pay for water.

Ken Manning agreed that the Committee should review the water situation at the end of Summer 2013.

Mr Brian Cooke has resigned from judging the Best Kept Allotment Competition, a task he has undertaken for ten years. Ken told the meeting that he has managed to find a replacement judge from Garden Organic, but that the prize for the winner of the Competition would have to reduce to £20, as we will have to cover travel costs for the new judge.

Ken mentioned that clubs/associations can buy a Christmas tree to be displayed in the Church. Hopefully the members would agree to the WAA contributing to this.

A comment from the floor was that the cost per tree is £15 and all lights and decorations would have to be bought at own expense.

He went on to propose an Honorarium of £20 for the Secretary, and this was carried on a show of hands.

6. LETTINGS SECRETARY REPORT

Dave Roche told the Meeting that there are 3 people awaiting letters regarding the non-cultivation of their plots. He has already re-let 11 plots, with 1 plot to let (hopefully on Saturday 2nd March). The current waiting list is down to 3. It would not have been a good situation to be in if the Committee had agreed to take on the land on offer at Glebe House.

7. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

All positions were voted for and the following members were elected or re-elected for the year 2013/2014:

Chairman	Pete Smith	Committee Member	Marion Allerton
Treasurer	Ken Manning	Committee Member	Diane Major
Letting Secretary	Dave Roche	Committee Member	Steve Parr
Secretary	Tracey Caines	Committee Member	Jess Pinson

8. ALLOTMENT SECURITY

After a patient wait, Mr Eric Lawley and Ms Frankie Stuart from the Neighbourhood Watch gave an informative and relevant talk on what measures allotment members could take on their own behalf to protect their property. They were good enough to stay on after the meeting for members to discuss security in further detail.

9. JOHN GRANTHAM

On 28th Feb, the Secretary had received an email from the Chairman, asking to add Mr Grantham to the Agenda as he wanted to "talk at the AGM". The Secretary had already printed off the Agenda, and queried what subject Mr Grantham wanted to talk about. No reply was received to this, so in the Chairman's absence, Ken Manning agreed that Mr Grantham could be introduced as an additional item before AOB.

Speaking on his own behalf (and not that of the Parish Council), Mr Grantham expressed his personal opinions on the Committee's decision to turn down the kind offer of additional allotment plots at Glebe House. Both Dave Roche and Ken Manning tried to interject with facts regarding our current allotment area, where the waiting list is down to 3. This could leave us in a position whereby if other plot holders give up during the year, we could end up with vacant plots. As developers are taking over small sparsely-used areas within the village, we would be in a vulnerable position to being evicted from our current site.

10. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

• Polytunnels and greenhouses

Ken Manning proposed that the WAA Constitution should be changed to include a control on the size of polytunnels and greenhouses on the allotments. It was suggested that one polytunnel should be a maximum size of 15 square metres, and/or one greenhouse of maximum size 8ft x 12ft. No permanent footings should be allowed.

This proposal was passed on a show of hands and will be added to the Constitution.

NB: This only applies to new structures. Existing structures are not affected by the above change.

• NGS Open Day

Ken Manning told the meeting that the Open Day will take place on Sunday 14th July 2013, and then we will take a break.

• Volunteers for Chedham's Yard

Paula Kerr gave a brief talk on the need for additional volunteers and asked that anybody interested should talk to her at the end of the meeting.

• Boundary security

Gill Chislett asked about securing the boundary along the back plots. Ken Manning replied that those plot holders are asked to try and build up the boundary with the use of brambles etc, and that part of the Parish Council grant will be used for the purchase of hawthorn hedging and barbed wire to fill in gaps in the existing hedge.

• BBQ area

Richard Band asked what could be done about the BBQ area, which is full of weeds. Ken Manning replied that he would deal with the problem.

10. RAFFLE

The Raffle was drawn and those who had contributed prizes were thanked for their efforts.

Wellesbourne Allotment Association
28/02/2013

Dear Plot Holders,

Looking back over the year it all started off well with very warm March which really took nature by surprise and started everything too early

The weather forecasters told us we would be facing a drought and water rationing would be introduced.

Then a few weeks later it all changed and began to rain for week after week, and now we have too much water, as the season rolled by the growing conditions were too damp, too wet and not enough sunlight, however some crops welcomed these conditions, but the majority of crops were poor

It was only by good chance we had a fine weather slot for a couple of days for our NGS open event, and how lucky we were, this day was a day to remember for everybody,

People came from right across the county to see our site and afternoon event, and everybody was pleased with the event and how we do things, many questions were asked and there was a good exchange of ideas between people...

My thanks go out to all the plot holders who spent many hours putting the extra work into the plots, and paths and to make the site safe, and I give a special thanks to the ladies who put so much work into the build-up before, during, and after the event and then feeling very tired and stressed cleaning up during the evening.

So the year quickly moved on along with the rain up to Christmas, where many members may not be aware we were offered 2.5 acres of land for additional allotments I felt this would have been a very useful addition to our existing site, given the fact our village is going to be expanding, however I did feel disappointment when the committee turned down the kind offer.

For some time now I have greatly concerned about the lines of communication within the committee and the failure for the committee to listen to the members, and I will make no bones about it, there is one person who wants to do everything, and does not give sufficient consideration to others this condition has become increasing more difficult to handle and to this extent I am going to stand down as chairman.

I would like to see progress and change and strongly urge the members to elect a completely new Committee

I wish you all well for the future,

Adrian Osborn