

MEETING MINUTES

Organisation:	The Gresty Street Community Allotments Association		
Date of Meeting:	5th March 2023	Start time:	12 noon
Location:	GSA	End time:	14.00
Chair:	Nathan Cotton	Minute taker:	Dianne Dixon

MEETING OBJECTIVES

1. Apologies (DD)
2. Minutes of the Last Meeting (NC)
- 3 Talk and Introduction from Charlotte Eccles (CE)
Community Development Officer
- 4 Plots & Delegation (NC)
- 5 Finance (SH)
- 6 Community Outreach
 1. Community Open Day (SH & TH)
 2. Family Garden Pack (TH)
 3. Request for help from Cauldwell Children (NC)
7. Priorities for 2023 (NC)
 1. Opening the Shop to the general public (NC)
 2. Community Area (NC)
 3. Site Maintenance and Security (ME)
 4. Weed Control for access area
 5. Lock change
 6. Improving Security for the site (RH)
 7. Fencing (RH)
 8. Work Parties (ME)
- Biodiversity and Sustainability (CD)
 - 1 Badger Sett and Green Waste
 - 2 Introducing new ideas to Support Sustainability on Tenant's plots
 - Plans to Open the Nature Reserve
- Correspondence (DD)
8. AOB

1 ATTENDANCE	
PRESENT	APOLOGIES
Nathan Cotton (NC)	
Mark Cotton (MC)	Cath Dixon (CD)
Dianne Dixon (DD)	Howard Dixon (HD)
Sarah Hill (SH)	Malcolm Eyres (ME)
Theresa Hudson (TH)	
Roy Hudson (RH)	
Peter Jones (PJ)	
Pat Woodward (PW)	
Priorities for 2023 - (NC)	Biodiversity and Sustainability (CD)
Opening the shop to the general public	Badger Sett and Green Waste
Community Area	Introducing new ideas to support
Site Maintenance (ME)	Sustainability on tenant plots
Lock change	Plans to re-open the Nature Reserve
Weed Control and access area	
Improving Security on site (ME)	
Fencing	
Work Parties	
2 AGENDA, DECISIONS, ISSUES	
TOPIC/ DISCUSSION NOTES	
<p>NC - Welcome. Welcome to CE Community Development Officer</p> <p>CE - Introduced herself and the role she plays, within the community. Community Development Officer, Apologised for not being able to attend the AGM in January. That would be the sort of meeting CE would normally attend. Happy she was able to attend this committee meeting. AM remains the main contact for anything to do with the allotments</p> <p>Deals with Community Investment Funding; Capital Funding - No live pots available at the moment</p> <p>Works with VAST - VAST has a bursary of £500; Free training, which could be of interest. Good Company to work with, and very helpful. Leaflets available, loads of information</p> <p>Look at ways to make your money go further</p> <p>NC - AM is happy with the process we are using; Have had two complaints that have been bounced back to us. Sent Risk Assessment template; AM to support us to remain a self-managed allotment, Help us to meet the criteria; Reassuring</p> <p>If we don't finish using the project money, the money has to go back? Money left around £500, could use this for a petrol mower, to help maintain the sensory garden. Petrol mower is £200, lavender plants for the sensory garden or £500 for legal stuff. Time frame ok?</p> <p>Could look at the shop online, website with the money.</p> <p>Mini digger - dig ground out - failing wall; falling onto plot; Have had quotes but could need added funding, considerable funding.</p> <p>CE - put it in writing; provide receipts; Money has to be used within six months; way out of the time frame. Its not been flagged up as yet</p>	

CE - VAST - link in with them; deal with alot od companies in the constructio\building area; Could offer a digger free of charge, to show how they are supporting community projects.

SH - Could we use the money to move the shed, buy a new base? Lease, we don't have a lease. ? consider limited company moving forward, ? could apply for more money; Spoke with NB - as an organisation could apply for a share of a £6,000,000 Government Funding - Shared Prosperity Fund; £3,000,000 allocated as priority for Communities in places; Cultural; Heritage; Local Businesses; People & Skills; It was in /community News

CE - VAST - use them,they have Solicitors, who could look through the lease; Accounts etc; CH nor aware of this Government funding, as yet, may have not gone live yet. Will look into this.

NC - Need to look into this Government Funding, will call VAST; £3,500 needed for the wall and turning circle; SPARS have initiative; Lottery - smaller pot funding; Co-Op funding; Will need a bigger pot of money; Finding the right one, as there is a cooling oof period before can apply again; Architect - finished plans will cost approx. £15,000

We will work through other stuff, pause, have a walk around the allotments.

NC read through the Minutes, for the meeting 12th February 2023. True and accurate account? Proposed NC Secoded RH Majority gained.

Plots & Delegation

NC - Plots - three plots now filled; one plot available

Plot 37 & 38 Two men are now coming onto these two plots from 8.3.2023, so let's make them most welcome. AC has had a final, final email. The two new members will be putting up a fence first and making the plots secure. Our two new members have agreed to buy the greenhouses and AC can have the money or a cheque. I will email AC final closure email; AC trespassing if comes on site; Need to remove anything else off the plot needs to ask permission; Prop NC Sec SH Majority gained

Finances

SH - Gave an account of the finances following receiving the February Statement from the bank; Explained what was in both the Current and Savings accounts. What money had been received and what money that had been paid out. At present, the balance looks healthy, but there is always a lot of expenditure at the beginning of the year. The compost that had been brought has paid for itself with a small profit as well. Rent received from one plot (58) half paid half to be paid

NC - Approx. 20 bags of compost sold and another 20 bags could be needed; If plot 58 is up to scratch, then consider doesn't pay rent next year (2024)

Role and Allocation - please see actions below - actions sent out

NC - Skip delivery - 4.3.2023; green waste; metal and general waste; with another skip to be delivered Monday 6.3.2023 Proposed NC; Sec SH; Majority gained

Community Outreach

SH - Talked about SH & CD visit to Heron Cross Allotments; Impressed; The allotments have bees; good compost area; Good Community area, one being under cover; All on the flat; Five year waiting list; Wonderful wild life area; Orchard; Haven't got our views; It was very good and informative meeting people from other allotments; Lease , have a lease. Acreage £50 year with 5% increase, better than £200 acre we may have to pay. No lease - no funding; Our lease doesn't specify end date, usually 15 years.

CE - what is the delay with the lease - Review; Legal hold up; No lease, no funding especially for large amounts

Community Open Day

TH - National Allotment Week 7-13th August 2023; - Soil Health

How do we organise our open day? Use the Community shed as the hub; Have an organised walk around the site; Cake stall - taste see if you know what it made of; Seed Swap; Jams & Chutneys;

Expert station - for Advise; Have a bee person; Free stalls for support; Involve the children - lucky dips, plants, bugs Open Day decided Sunday 13th August 2023; Prop SH; Sec MC; Majority gained Staffordshire Wildlife Trust could support for a small fee - Biodiversity;

TH attended Staffs University; Insect Fair; loads of people willing to help; Rent a Beast £80 special events; Allotment Society more than happy to get involved; TH made packs for children; printed off pictures to colour; free gift; To do these packs four times per year; TH showed a multitude of posters she had gained from this meeting; Scare crow competition; Life cycle plants; bird feeders

Bug hotels; Kids can go look for buds, flowers and mushrooms

CD & TH to get together to organise the Open Day; Concentrate on the Open Day work on other ideas moving forward

Cauldwell Children

NC - asked for support to raise funds for Cauldwell Centre Keele; Anh donations kindly received; Seeds; Plat pots; Compost; Maybe could buy a bag of compost and donate to Cauldwell children

SH - asked if any one would support the Willows school with the poly tunnel there

Opening the Shop to the Community

NC - Proposed to open the shop to the general public from 1.4.2023 for one month, to see how it goes, marketing; Comms to go out; Rota for support in the shop; Prop NC Sec RH Majority gained

Community Area;

NC - need to stick to original plans; see previous minutes for full details; Container; Move Community shed; Sensory garden; general tidy up in and around community area

Site Maintenance and Security

NC - our system is dated.. Need to be careful, as welding straight to the lock, voids the insurance. Numerical lock, change code regularly. Proposed to change the three locks as soon as possible; Security must be priority; three locks + seventy keys; cost implication £1047. One key given to named owner of the plot; other keys has to be put in writing the reasons for a second key; Sixty old keys are missing for what ever reason, makes the site at risk; Solar panel security camera to view the main gate Gresty Street; Police requirement, cost approx £120. Key Policy needed

MC - Ensure locks and keys can be resurfaced; double differs available; MC and ME reinforced the lock on the container MC and ME have keys; Weld a keysafe box on the side of the container. All committee members to know the code, so as to be able to get the keys for the shop and container; Prop NC; Sec MC Majority gained

Toilet Cleaning and Future Plans

NC - The toilets were cleaned on 20.2.2023; I would normally jet wash the toilets as well. Aren't cheap to get cleaned and they are cleaned every 6 -8 weeks. Not cleaned properly; NC to contact the Company; Not paying for this service; ? Composting Toilet have these on other sites; Could apply for funding for these composting toilets; ? proper toilets, there is a pipe on site; to be looked into. We need to have proper toilets on site. We have got access to the drains. We have the toilets as well and need to look into this.

Weed Control for access area

NC - Weed Killer is on order and the black covering - could sell the black covering in the shop.

ME sorting this. Will be completed once back from his holiday

Fencing

RH - Tried to get three quotes; once seen the job, don't want to put other peoples work right; No mans land in between; ME has a file with peoples names in; straight fence in would be ok, not interested otherwise; Need a Plan B

NC - I'll contact Phil;; Is it ok if I give him your mobile number, so he can contact you direct? All plot holders aware of whats going on, been going on for five years. To have a plan for the next meeting

Work Parties

NC - Next work party will take place on 8.4.23. Time 10 am - 2 pm. Need to ask if anybody can spare an hour to help. Keep rent down if everybody participates. Comms to be sent out. Bring food to have a picnic. maybe a small Easrer Egg hunt for any children on site.

Biodiversity and Sustainability

NC - Need biodiverse plan - more of a concrete plan

What can and can't do;

Time phased approach

Not working at present; Will cost too much

Protect, get that, but needs to be practical as well.

Encourage small contained fires - if can burn, then burn

Communal Compost

? Funding for Hot Composter

Stop using green waste area

PW - Whats happening with the green waste? Creeping up again; A lot of money to keep on having a digger

TH - Clear it all; put a fence around, with a wheel barrow run. Make a pallet fence

MC - What do other allotments do to manage their green waste?

NC - Manual movement; Careful who does it - same people; designated area

Digger last July; Need to find out the legalities; Once sorted - fence, make a run; A digger will take about an hour; instead of a full day doing it manually

VAST - big group of people - ?20 volume - Need risk assessmen, support to cler the site

Clear waste; fence up. badger garden together

Weeds only down there

Compost, burn as much as possible; Need a quick fix;

On every Comms put out - green waste only

Surveyor to come out, look at the area;

Conscientious effort is needed by everybody

Needs managing again; Need to adhere to rules and regulations

CE - Visual pictures around the site; Posters

NC - Thank You everybody. AOB?

AOB

Asbestos - if not perished and in good order - leave alone; otherwise use red bags; AM place where it can be put once in red bags; May need specialist for advise

Open Day first - then decide

If the open day goes well; then look at doing something for Halloween or Christmas

Correspondance

AP - Thanked the Committee for repairing his neighbours fence, but has noticed and is concerned that the brambles, at the rear of the plot are overgrowing to the pont that they are coming into AP potting shed. AP would be obliged if this problem could be solved

NC - Read out CD correspondence; Put a questionnaire together; Contact all plot holders

Coronation - King Charles; Local community to do local stuff

Meeting ended 14.00

Next Committee Meeting - 16th April 2023 at 12 noon

3 ACTIONS ITEMS			
3.1 ACTION		RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE
Responsible:	Action:	Completed by:	
Cath	Look into sustainable products to use on-site for weed kill	05/03/2023	
	Look at a plan to introduce more biodiversity on each plot	05/03/2023	
	Work towards beekeeping on site	05/03/2023	
4	Mark	Order and replace the outside lock on the container	05/03/2023
		Block off plots 37 and 38 until we plan to clear	05/03/2023
Malcolm	Order the weed killer and black sheeting	05/03/2023	
	Start the weed control on site	05/03/2023	
Howard	Work with Malcolm on the site maintenance	05/03/2023	
Sarah	Add Dianne as a signatory	05/03/2023	
	Look at the trustee situation to have the 3 rd member	05/03/2023	
	Order the toilet cleaning	20.2.2023	

	Order more compost	ASAP	
Dianne	Complete the minutes for the AGM, and committee meeting	5.3.2023	
	Add the current Minutes from the last meeting and council meeting to the website		
	Produce two mailing lists one for all info and one for important		
	Complete the membership list up to date	5.3.2023	
	Populate the diversity information from the registration forms	Started	
Roy	Start to work on the quotes for the site fencing	05/03/2023	
Theresa	Start the agenda for the community open day Ideas Ect	05/03/2023	
Pat	Sort out the seed secretary online account with the National allotment association	01/09/2023	

	Prepare the shop ready for opening	04/03/2023	
Nath	Complete the shop catalogue and coms	19/02/2023	
	Continue with the sensory garden project	05/03/2023	
	Find out about the funding course	05/03/2023	
	Support with the shop opening	04/03/2023	
	Newsletter and feedback form	01/04/2023	
	Fill the plots vacant from the 1 st of March	01/03/2023	
	Complete the site Risk Assessment	ASAP	