

Alers Road Leisure Gardens Association Committee Meeting Minutes - 30th May 2021

Present	Apologies for Absence
Adrian Hawthorne - Chairman	John Young
Debra Collins – Secretary	
John Hollands - Treasurer	
Eddy Haydon	
Linda Hartard	
Ray Mitchell	
Mary Harrison	
Richard Collins	
Roy Seymour	

Min	Item	Action
1.0	WELCOME	
	Adrian welcomed everyone to the 1 st meeting since September 2020	
1.0	OPEN ACCESS	
	None	
2.0	Notes 31.01.21	
	The notes written and distributed on the 31 st January 2021 were agreed as a true record.	
3.0	CHAIRMAN'S REPORT	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adrian welcomed Debra and Richard as new committee member and thanked John for his many years as secretary and continued support to the allotment gardens as Treasurer. • Our last official Committee Meeting was January 2020. • This has been a difficult year due to Covid and the restrictions, it has been good to have access to the allotments during this time. Research has shown there are health and well-being benefits of having an allotment, and links with the environment. • Gardening saw a surge in popularity during lockdown as millions picked up trowels and bedded in blooms • Researchers at Sheffield University have calculated that an average of 24 minutes work is required to produce each kilogram of fruit or veg grown on an allotment. • The continual rain and wind in May after a sunny April, which is having an impact on the growing / crops • Compost is being phased out – Peat free compost from 2024. EU banned peat being lifted from Ireland. Due to shortage, bringing compost from Russia. Likely to be an increase in price due to scarcity. Eddy has been experimenting and feels that it has been okay. John Holland is doing a piece for the Horticultural Newsletter and will share. 	

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5.0	TREASURER'S REPORT	
	<p>John Gave out a printed sheet of the accounts to all committee members present and explained the accounts. If further clarification is needed, please speak to John. The account sheets will be included with the minutes for the records.</p>	
6.0	PLOTS REPORT	
	<p>Following the recent cultivation survey and some plots holders relinquishing their plots, we have just let 2 full plots and 6 half plots. Site is currently full again and we have 15 people on the waiting list, this includes two existing plot holders waiting for specific plots. All new plot holders, have seemed keen and they have all made a start on their plot. The majority of the enquiries have come via the Website. We are getting 2 or 3 enquiries a week. When the cultivation survey was carried out it was noticed that some areas / plots were unsafe, eg. broken glass and over grown nettles. Adrian recommended that a Health and Safety survey be carried out again. Ray and Adrian carried out previous Health and Safety survey's and were happy to do this again.</p>	AH /RM
7.0	SITE REPORT	
	<p>Some of the water tanks have had leaks. Over the winter Eddy, John and Gerry cleaned all the water tanks. 12 tanks had damage / leaking. The tanks have been sprayed with bitumen. 4 – 5 tanks have had holes sealed with a putty. They all seem to be okay. Debra will mention in the newsletter, asking people to be vigilant and to report any leaks that occur straight away. There has also been some water leaks due to forks through pipes. It has been noted / raised that the water tanks at the top of the site take a long time to fill up during periods of heavy use. John has looked into increasing the number of tanks at the top of the site, so though the tanks fill slowly, there will be more tanks available for use. At the moment there is no tanks available. The cost is approximately £150 -£200 per tank. The Committee thank Eddy, Gerry and John for all their work, as this was a really big job over the winter.</p> <p>Toilet block –</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing misuse of the toilet block, large banner now up but still a nappy was put in the pit. John shared that disinfectant and t-rolls keep going missing. • John H feedback that the toilet block is in need of some maintenance. Floor needs painting, so will need to close the toilet for a few days. The structure needs painting with wood preserver. Need to clear some of the from the last 2 years. Not a pleasant job but needs doing. John explained that the waste in the past has been spread over a vacant plot. As soon as a plot becomes free 	J Holland

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	<p>then the waste can be used. John asked for a working party.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The boards to the pit also need replacing. <p>Debra to mention the misuse and the repairs in the newsletter and ask if there are any volunteers to help. Eddy, John, Richard and Roy all volunteered to help.</p>	DC JH, RC, RS, EH
8.0	MACHINERY	
	<p>Some of the machinery was serviced over the winter John to look at purchasing new heads for the strimmer's</p>	J Holland
9.0	FEDERATION REPORT	
	<p>In January there was a Zoom meeting and John attended. Only a few attended. Colin Rowland, at the local authority was made redundant. Allotments are now in department with libraries. There was no consultation around rent increases. James was not able to explain as he did not know about it. James is a cemeteries and allotment technician. Adrian asked what the purpose of the Federation. John explained the Federation was set up when allotments in the area needed representation at the recreation subcommittee. The Federation had 3 seats on this committee but this has now been cut to 1 seat. The Federation is the voice of Bexley Allotments to the council. John said that they were doing very little at the moment.</p>	
10.0	WEBSITE	
	<p>The website has been renewed for the next 2 years. We are able to have 3 shout outs to all members with email addresses per year. Debra shared that the majority of the plot enquiries have come via the website. So far everyone on the waiting list have taken up plots, no one has declined a plot or asked to come of the list.</p>	
11.0	ANY OTHER BUSINESS	
	<p>John Young sent 2 points via email:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The trees and bushes overhanging the boundary fence on the west side of the allotments. i.e. as you come into the left hand side of the road going up to the top of the allotments. JY knows that these have been talked about numerous times but this year's growth seems spectacular. The overhanging trees could potentially be dangerous and they cover some of the plot that people rent both above and below ground. <p>JH has written to the council and James passed the information to the arborists. They informed us that they have no authority to tell people to cut trees, however home owners are 100% liable for any damage. Plot</p>	

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	<p>holders can cut down any growth if overhanging.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Again, on the west side of the allotments there are some verges that are not being maintained by plot holders. JY was informed of this by a plot holder wearing shorts that had been stung by very large stinging nettles. <p>Adrian and Ray to do a health and safety survey Debra to mention the importance of maintaining paths in a good state. Richard and Eddy said that the verges were noted when carrying out the cultivation survey, particularly problematic on the west side</p> <p>Debra will compile a newsletter over the next few weeks, once written will send to John Harrison to do a shout out.</p>	<p>AH / RM DC</p> <p>DC</p>
	<p>Meeting Closed at 11.30 Next Meetings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TBA 	