

RUSHDEN PERMANENT ALLOTMENT AND SMALL HOLDING SOCIETY LIMITED

Registered under the Co-operative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014.

Register no. 3126R

E-mail rushdenallotments@hotmail.co.uk

Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting Held on Wednesday 17th February 2021 **Remotely Due to Covid19**

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:00pm

Present:

Russell Jarvis	RJ	Dave Flook	DF	Ray Mc Donnell	RM
Anita Jarvis	AJ	Mark Cox	MC	Pasq Di Salvo	PDS
Alan Martin	AVM	Pam Clark	PC	Shane Webster	SW
Anita Medlock	AM	John Lowe	JL		

Apologies:

Dave Craker, Peter Swindley

John Lowe was introduced to the committee as the field steward at Highfield Road

1. Minutes from Previous Meeting

Proposed by RM 2nd SW Agreed

2. Actions From Previous Meeting

Date matter arose	Subject	Action required	Action taken	Comp
16 th Dec	Lock for Grafton Road Store	New lock to be purchased from Society locksmith	C/F	Complete
16 th Dec	Garage Inspection	Report from inspection to follow	PC didn't see the point of suppling to the committee	
16 th Dec	Garage Inspection	3 Quotes from Surveyor's required	RJ will get one of them.	C/F
16 th Dec	Key acceptance form	More amendments to be done – Add keys must not be copied	MC asked for it to be resent	
Oct	Plug Plants for Shop	Visit to Britton's in new Year	PC	C/F
20/1/21	Plants	Prices from Britton	PC	C/F
20/1/21	Plants	Send out to committee Prices from John Martin	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	1 st Letter	Ileana Sasu	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	CCTV	Purchase and Install Cameras	RJ	In Progress
20/1/21	CCTV	Source Signs	SW	C/F

20/1/21	Extra Plot	Letter to BR Member	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	Permission	Permission granted for BR Member	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	SH Enquiry	Reply that we are fully let	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	Strimmer for HR	Purchase strimmer for Highfield Road	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	Water Pump	Purchase water Pump	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	Members Leaving	Inform AB who is leaving from WR	DF	Complete
20/1/21	Potato Orders	Inform Members on different collect methods	RJ	Complete
20/1/21	Investment Account	Recheck which investment has best interest	PDS	C/F
20/1/21	Minute Secretary	Advertise	RJ	Complete

Silent Alarms – SW to check costs

3. **Secretary's Report and Correspondence**

3.1. BR Member – email 21/1/21, Complaining regarding declined extra plot

Comment was noted by committee.

The larger plots that some members have on all the fields is historic. It would not be right to take land from them.

RM stated end of story, leave to RJ.

3.2. BR Member – email 21/1/21, Permission for Chickens

Permission granted

3.3. WR member – email 30/1/21, Re closure of Grafton Road Stores

Comment was noted by committee.

3.4. BR Member – email 4/2/21, Complaint

I am writing to you to bring the appalling conditions I am to keep my hen on, the plot is not fit for purpose.

The health and well being of my hens concerns me. Both AM and PC have seen video footage of the flooding. If I had kept the original plot I wrote in about they would of been safer. I'm having to keep them shut in the shed for their safety but I do not feel this is right or fair. Also it's quite treacherous to walk to the plot and have also been Moaned at by Russell for the muddy tracks this is leaving, not only that it's pulling my scars making it painful having so Walk on the sludge and flooded area. I've tried my hardest to make this as safe as possible but I'm fighting a loosing battle. Please can I swap this plot for one that isn't flooding. As Russell has denied me previously in having a 'non chicken' plot I am pleading with you the committee to help me with having a suitable non flooding plot in which to keep my hens safe. I would like to swap it for Alan's plot making it easier for.

RJ stated that he had not spoken to the BR member for some weeks. The Society does not have spare plots as there is large waiting list. The committee asked that the BR member is written to with three options - 1) keep plot 2) move the 2 hens to her other plot. 3) Give up the plot.

They should also remove stack of wood and tarpaulin from land drain.

Also request from her when the alleged conversation with RJ took place.

RM added that as field steward RJ should deal with her

3.5. GR Member – email 7/2/21, Permission for shed 6x4

Permission Granted

3.6. BR member – email 16/2/21, Permission for 6 x 4m polytunnel

Permission Granted

AM stated that RJ is ignoring the Committee
Give DF the password for the email account.

4. Warning letters

Warning Letters							
Name	Field	Polite letter sent	Outcome	1 st letter sent	Outcome	2 nd letter sent	Outcome
	HR			25/06/20	Email reply received 29/06/2020		Monitor
	BR	Request ed 18/11/20	No response				Monitor
	WR			20/1/21	No response	Issue	

5. Treasurer's Report

Since we last met in January here are the main changes:

Income added since:

- We've had Store Sales: HR £180.00, GR: £3.25, BR: £238.60

Expenditure added since:

- Couple small Anglian Water charges
- RJ Smith paid -Washbrook Road padlock £73.99
- Store stock purchases £243.60 -netting, pipe & barrels, + £85.25 (Onions/Shallots) from Brittons
- Equipment purchase figure of £425.51 -comprised of strimmer £238.25, £158.37 for water pump & £28.89 intake pipe

RJ asked if we had a water bill for Haydon Road, there should have been one, has it been missed?

PDS will check

PC requested a break down of the water bills by field from last to compare with this year.

PC feels that Bedford Roads water bill year to date is too high.

RJ pointed out to PC that the bills for each field do not come in at the same time. Bedford Road had some summer usage included where the other field do not yet have that. This will balance out later in the year.

RJ stated that the last bill for Washbrook Road, just before the year end, was for over £1000.

Some members of the committee have asked that the treasure has access to the accounts for the last 7 years.

RJ asked what did these members of the committee want to know about in the accounts that they have no responsibility for as they were not members of the committee. These accounts have been signed off by the members at AGM's. They would not say why they wanted them.

MC stated that he wants in capitals in the minutes that RJ IS REPEATEDLY IGNORING THE COMMITTEE.

PDS said they would be useful to have to compare prices.

AM stated that she thinks that RJ is not fit to be a Chairman.

AM asked what is RJ hiding, what is your big plan?

RJ states that he wants to know why is any of the committee now interested in the accounts when before no one has shown a blind bit of notice to the accounts before.

AM states that RJ has many feathers in his cap, don't delegate and there is no transparency.

AM also stated that you are not letting anybody play with your train set.

RJ asked what I have never told you about?

PC said are you serious?

AM said you never tell us anything. We did not know about Highfield Road's road repair until had been done.

RJ pointed out to that during a committee meeting it was approved to be done.

AM agreed but did not know that it was being done.

AM and PC continued to claim that they did not know when the road repairs at Bedford Road and Highfield Road were going to be done.

RJ reminded them that when both were approved. RJ told the committee it would be done that month with the volunteers from the fields. MC, at the time, had asked if the 2 fields would be done back to back. RJ had stated that there would be a gap between the 2 fields of 2 weeks.

AM stated that it is the Anita and Russell show again, the committee are not allowed to know anything.

RM said stop saying that.

AJ said I totally agree.

AM says Its ridiculous.

AM asked AJ to come into the meeting and stop slagging us off.

AJ says I am agreeing with you it is the Anita and Russell show.

PC and AM wanted all this minuted.

(This is true record from the recording of the meeting)

6. Field Reports

Highfield Road

JL took on a new member to day. 2 more being taken on Saturday.

Washbrook Road

WR member requested permission for a 6x6 greenhouse

Permission Granted

WR member requested permission for a medium size poly tunnel.

Permission Granted

Former member's plot – During her funeral her son stated that he would take over her plot. He will continue to pay rent on both plots but allow members to sit on the plot.

DF bought that him and RJ had looked at the road on Washbrook Road for improvement repairs.

DF stated that he could get an 8 wheel lorry in the gate to deliver road plainings.

DF felt that 6 x 20 tonnes would be sufficient.

DF stated that the measurement was 2 x 245 and 2 x 200 meters about 900 meters.

It was agreed to source plainings at a maximum of £26 per tonne capped.

DF would get a quote for a roller and the scoop.

DF to manage project.

Proposed DF 2nd PC all agreed

Bedford Road

No report

Grafton Road /Small Holding

No Report

7. Store

Delivery due Thursday.

Committee wants to keep Grafton Road shut. DF would like us to open it. This will be reviewed next month.

8. Health and Safety

Nothing to report

9. Any Other Business

9.1 Secretary Advert

DF questioned the length of time for the closing date.

Committee want the date changed to the 12th March

9.2 Surveyor for tractor garage

MC asked if the tractor garage had had planning permission?

RJ Yes

MC asked if it was agricultural.

RJ reintegrated that we had planning permission.

9.3 New Website

SW bought up the subject of having a new website. Emails sent by SW

Cheers. Think I have been on it before now, but a long time back! Pretty simple to navigate, informative, does the job....

Regarding selling online. Totally aware of our demographic and that its also a social thing, and do agree with what you've put below. That said, and I've spent a few Saturday mornings in the shop just before COVID kicked in, its clear to me that its the 'same people' that turn up each week in the main, and with a broad base of circa 300 members, a lot of people will have different buying habits. Think about the social events - again, its the same 30-40-50 people that attend them.

Im not planning on doing much work on this; just a case of finding out the costs (set up) and ongoing costs, then presenting them at the meeting. My business could cover the hosting costs (we have a number of servers) so hosting costs would be zero. Domain name would be about 7quid for 2 years. So I think you (will all) find that its actually a very cheap and an addition method of selling stuff, and therefore making more money for the society.

It could also provide members wih the incentive of ordering stuff for their friends/family etc, as they get a discount. I doubt very few would think along those lines when they come to the shop, some would I accept, but not many.

Obviously, we would not be sending stuff out in the post, so those logistics would have to be discussed/covered. I just know that if there was a simple to navigate, user friendly website I could log onto and order stuff like compost, seeds etc etc, Id be absolutely far more inclined to do so. It is also a benefit to the members, and provides them with a simple mechanism to order stuff and pay for it without having to hand over cash, sort out bank transfers etc.

All Ill get us is a price and then explain as to why I think we should get a site sorted. Then if it has support, we get another couple of quotes to compare. The guy Im speaking with is, we use for outsourcing purposes (overflow that we cannot cover inhouse), so it wouldn't be going through my business, we would just host it. I would like to make it absolutely clear that Im not looking to get a project for my business, its 'mates rates' from a guy we use,

whom works independly from Seventy9. Im only making this point for complete transparency and know that no one is thinking anything, by the way!! :)

Like I say, Im spending no more than 30 minutes on this at this point and I do believe its something we should explore!

Hi Guys

For consideration, this is where I am at with this..

I have had a zoom with our web guy; Seventy9 (my business) specialises in bespoke websites (on our own software) and is more aimed at the higher end stuff. Our website address is www.seventy9.co.uk - not that that is relevant in this case but Im being totally transparent.

Matt has a business called somewhat media. He specialises in wordpress sites. Wordpress is an off the shelf solution and is ideal for ecommerce. To put it in perspective, my business spends around 3-4k a month with him, so we are a valued client of his. Occasionally I ask him to do a job on 'mates rates'. Because we spend good money with him, he is usually compliant with this request!! To put it into perspective though, I've only asked him to do one other job previously on this basis (over a year ago), because being honest, Id rather the work go through my business for obvious reasons. Seventy9 is far too busy to take on a job with no monatry value, that is time consuming etc etc; and I myself am not a web developer, I just run the business and mainly concentrate on the sales side of things. I've copied and pasted 'his quote' below for you's all...

As you will see, its £300. For an ecommerce website. I/we wouldn't be able to rush him, but he's happy with a 3 month lead time. We'd need that in anycase because we need decent imagery, and it wont be until April/May time when the allotments are nice enough to get decent photos of. It would also involve myself having to upload all of the data/products via the cms (content management system - this is the 'back end' of the website) which is the limit of my technical capabilities!! That is going to be time consuming, we would need images of each product we sell, that kind of thing. Not difficult, just time consuming.

My business would charge around £5000 for this type of project, as would any 'full service agency', maybe more in many cases. A 'one man band' would normally charge as a guess £750-£2000 roughly but that one man band would not have decent design capabilities as well as technical ability. You might get someone a bit cheaper than that, but trust me, he/she will 'not be very good. You wont get anyone anywhere to do one for anywhere near £300 that will deliver anywhere near a decent website. Our only chance as a committee is if one of us knows someone or can do it themselves...which is where I obviously come in!

So in a nutshell - for £300 and an annual cost of £50 - detailed below (My business will host the site F.O.C) - Ill get us a decent website sorted. It would replace the current site and have a shop on it. Viva Wallet would be a preferred payment option at this stage, very very low charges for transactions. Paypal obviously takes a bit of a chunk in commission.

So something for you's too think about. I know its on next weeks agenda to discuss, but wanted to get all the main info to you's before then. This is also an area where I think I can add decent value to us (committee) due to my own experience.

RJ asked SW where did he get his figures on the number of members using the stores from?
RJ disputed the numbers in SW email, SW had stated the same 30, 40, 50 members use the store. RJ told SW that 128 different members had used Grafton Road last year. And 81 out of 90 members on Bedford Road had bought from the Society.
RJ asked where SW would get the extra sales from to pay for a new website.
SW replied you only have to sell a couple of items to pay for it all.

RJ was concerned about the cost of online payment transaction (e-commerce), eg a £5 bag of growell compost would cost and extra 34p just to pay on line.

AVM asked who would have access to buy
SW replied just the members.

AVM was also concerned that if we delivered we would have to have plant passports.

SW said he had done a survey on the Society's facebook asking if members would order on line
47 said yes, 5 said no, 62 could not be bothered to press yes or no. SW thought this was a good response.

SW and PC did not think much of our current website.
SW said that we should have our photographs on the site and not "stock" photos.
RJ pointed out to him that the photos on our current website were taken by members.
SW signed on to check and then agreed. He did not realise they were our photos.

RJ gave SW the number of visits to our current website last year – 1423 visits.

SW said the new website would be written in wordpress.
RJ question SW on the costs of wordpress. RJ said the wordpress website had a cost of £36 per month for e-commerce website.

RJ felt that we should survey the members properly as most of the membership is not on facebook. Also SW had not stated in his survey that if paying on line would cost more.
AJ was concerned that if we had more bank transaction we may start to incur bank charges. We currently have free banking
PDS said if we have BACS payment they would be free.
SW stated then we would not take payment on line but just take the order and give the order to the field steward.

RJ will start asking members their opinion as they purchase from us if they would order line.
JL will ask the Highfield Road members.

RJ asked SW to produce a specification of what the new web site would look like and to verify the total cost of set up and ongoing running costs.

SW said that it would take a long time to photograph all our products for the website.

9.4 DF proposed that JL becomes a full committee member replacing DC (who has been unable attend due to illness). All agreed.

Meeting Closed 9:50pm

Date of next meeting Wednesday 17th March 2021 at 7:00pm

Signed _____

Counter signed _____

Date _____

Action Points from Meeting		
Subject	Action required	Who

Permission	BR Member Chickens	RJ
	GR Member shed	RJ
	BR Member Poly tunnel	RJ
	WR Member Greenhouse	RJ
	WR Member Poly tunnel	RJ
Warning Letter	Issue 2 nd Letter	RJ
Complaint	BR Member – Ask when alleged conversation occurred, move items from land drain and options	RJ
Secretary Advert	Change closing date to 12/3/21	RJ
Website	Full requirements & verify costs	SW
	Silent Alarms – Verify Costs	SW
Key Form	Re issue	RJ
Road Repairs	Costs of Road Plainings, roller and scoop	DF

Rushden Permanent Allotment and Small Holdings Society Limited							
Income and Expenditure Account							
Expenditure				Income			
Anglian Water	£904.82			Annual Rents	£0.00		
	BR	£491.19		New Rents	£29.25		
	GR	£26.73		Floats for stores and rent day			
	HR	£238.37		Stores Sales	£1,062.00		
	WR	£148.53					
	Hay	£0.00			BR	£477.60	
					GR	£169.70	
Printing, Stationary and Postage	£186.00				HR	£301.30	
Floats for stores and rent day	£0.00				WR	£113.40	
Stores Purchases	£2,950.13			Ploughing, rotavating, topping	£0.00		
Field Hours £	£34.88			Rent card / website sponsorship	£0.00		
	BR	£34.88		Donations from members	£0.00		
	GR	£0.00		Machinery/accessory sales	£0.00		
	HR	£0.00		Replacement/Additional key	£0.00		
	WR	£0.00		Sales of pre-loved & ex stock	£0.00		
Field Machinery (Fuel)	£26.00			Seed Orders	£0.00		
	BR	£19.50		Brittons Potatoes	£0.00		
	GR	£0.00		Misc Income	£1,612.40		
	HR	£6.50		Transfers from deposit accounts	£2,000.00		
	WR	£0.00		Assoc. Mems	£0.00		
Official documents, etc	£0.00			P in the P - Rushden Council	£0.00		
Tractor Fuel	£0.00			Wayleave Consent - WPower	£0.00		
Locks and Keys	£165.98			Socials	£0.00		
	BR	£22.99		Water Licence	£0.00		
	GR	£23.00					
	HR	£23.00					
	WR	£96.99					
Field / Property Maintenance	£36.16						
	BR	£0.00			£0.00		
	GR	£0.00					
	HR	£36.16					
	WR	£0.00					
Website / Publicity	£0.00						
Professional Fees (accounts,etc)	£936.00						
Gifts / rewards / donations	£0.00						
Equip't Repairs & Servicing	£279.36						
Insurance and Safety	£532.55						
Hire of halls and refreshments	£0.00						
Equipment purchases	£425.51						
Field Steward rewards	£0.00						
E.ON	£26.00						
Officer (Sec/Tres) payments	£675.57						
Tax - HMRC Corp. & FCA	£35.00						
Key and share returns / refunds	£6.50						
Grafton Rd - refreshments	£0.00						
Party in the Park Talk / hall / raffle	£0.00						
Payment to Kings Seeds (orders)	£0.00						
Britton's Potatoes	£0.00						
Good gardening rewards	£0.00						
Bank charges	£0.00						
Transfer To Deposit	£0.00						
Misc Exp	£0.00						
Short	£0.00						
	£7,220.46				£4,703.65		
Income over Expenditure	-£2,516.81						
	£4,703.65						
Balance as at 16/02/21							
Income and Expenditure Account at 31/10/21				Cash with Cashier			
HSBC Current Account	£3,781.61			HSBC Current Account	£1,264.80	Current Ban	
Cash	£0.00			Cash	£0.00		
Floats	£90.00			Floats	£90.00		
Income over Expenditure	-£2,516.81						
	£1,354.80				£1,354.80		
				Investment Accounts:	£172,325.52		