

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

Field Minutes of the Management Committee Meeting Held on Wednesday 20th February 2019 at Grafton Road Rushden

The Chairman opened the meeting at 7:00pm

Present:

Russell Jarvis	RJ	Pam Clark	PC
Anita Jarvis	AJ	Dave Flook	DF
Dave Craker	DC	Anita Medlock	AM
Keith Jackson	KJ	Mark Cox	MC
Alan Martin	AM	Peter Swindley	PS
John Bowerman	JB		

Apologies:

Dee Smith	DS
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The minutes for 16th January 2019 discussed and agreed.

Proposed PC
2nd AM
All Agreed

Minutes of Meeting held on 16th January Points

Action points Meeting 16 th January 2019		
Subject	Action required	Action taken
Action points :Any other Business	Review plots and make a list of members to be reminded to cultivate their plots for February meeting	Complete
Action points: Any other Business	Find out whether a separate bank account is required to keep deposit money after discussion with accountant	See Below
A separate account would be required but, if this is adopted, the account would need to be maintained by ourselves. Consideration had to be given to the amount of time such monies may sit in this account (many years). RJ asked everyone to think about this and discuss at the next meeting.		
Action points: Any other Business	Check what 'leavers' paperwork is outstanding	DF will pass paperwork to DS for action.

Secretary's Report and Correspondence

1. Letter – Michael Johnson – Lay Pipes

Mr Johnson had written to the Society requesting permission to run a water pipe down from Alexandra Road to his plot of land, this included a plan showing the various pipes. He stated that when the new houses were built some years ago, permission was given for a water supply to be run down Alexandra Road and now he wanted to link into that supply.

All roads around this area of land are owned by the Society and our permission had only been given to the supply to the new houses, not to Mr Johnson's land. RJ visited the land and found

the pipe that he has now laid from Alexandra Road to his property. RJ made contact with Anglian Water who advised us not to give permission but to ask for the 'connection Job Number'. It appears that Mr Johnson has also installed double gates across our road, near to his plot, effectively blocking access beyond the locked gates. This is unacceptable. A letter will be sent to Mr Johnson requesting him to remove the blockage across our road and to provide us with the Connection Job Number for his linking into the Alexandra Road supply. If he does not respond, we will need to take legal advice.

Action RJ

2. Email – A Member – Request to keep Pigs

A discussion was held about this request. Several other issues had been raised in the past regarding the actions of the member, however, it was reported that these had been resolved.

Concerns were raised about his ability to maintain the necessary safe housing and pens for normal use and rest areas. DF advised that the member's earlier request to keep chickens had been turned down, as he had not completed the required two years. DF explained that in this case, the pigs would only be 2 small 'suckling pigs' at any one time, for use in the family pig roast business, so there should be no problem with keeping them on his plot. DF felt that he should be allowed to proceed. Others had no problem with him keeping pigs as long as he could show good intent and the necessary licences and paperwork are all in order. However, a letter is to be written to him to inform him that the committee will review the cultivation of his plot in six months when he may re apply and provide appropriate qualifications / paperwork/licences. At that time the committee will reconsider his application.

Proposed PC, 2nd AJ
7 votes to 1, 2 abstentions

Action RJ

3. Email – A member – Request to keep Chickens

This relates to three members.

The plot(s) had not been cultivated and a first letter had been sent in January 2019. Their response was to ask if RJ would plough the plot(s) for them again. It was the view of the committee that this request should be rejected and a second letter requesting them to leave the Society sent.

4. Email – Request to become a Member at Highfield Road

The person who applied had been a member previously at Highfield Road but had left the Society in 2015.

The Committee were concerned that they had not cultivated the land when previously a member and were reluctant to just allow them to re-join. It was agreed that they will be informed that they will be allowed a 6-month period, but that if they did not show progress in that period their membership would be terminated.

Action RJ

5. Email – Emma McGeehan – Request for Plot.

Emma McGeehan runs a business looking after Autistic children; she is not local to Rushden. Unfortunately, it was not felt that it would be possible to offer such a facility, as the rules of the Society do not allow a Business to be a Shareholder in the Society.

A letter will be sent to Emma McGeehan, thanking her for her enquiry but advising that it is not possible.

Action RJ

6. Email – A member – Request to put up a 6' x 6' greenhouse.

This was agreed by the Committee and approval granted.

7. Email/letter – Three members – Permission to erect a small polytunnel.

This was agreed by the Committee and approval granted.

8. Email – Alison Allen – Rowan Gate School – Update and Request for Tools and other items.

Miss Allen had been very grateful for the help of the Society in providing help to her students on the intricacies of growing plants and flowers. Her latest email is asking if our members might have any 'no longer required' gardening items (a list was included in the email) which may be able to be used by her students.

RJ will email the members and have them contact Miss Allen if they have any such items (which includes tools and seeds).

Action RJ

9. Email – Lucy Hawes – Greenway – Date for litter pick, tree planting etc.

Lucy Hawes had emailed us to say that the Litter Pick, Tree Planting will take place on Saturday 9th March and requested any assistance that members of the Society may be able to give. RJ stated that he would be available to help and would email members advising them of the request.

Action RJ

10. Letter – A member – Request for extra land.

DF advised that the land in question would be the half plot to be known as 63B.

This was agreed by the Committee and approval granted.

11. Letter – A member – Request to erect a shed.

The member will erect the shed on his existing plot 64.

DF advised that the member had also requested to take on more land and that he would be taking the other half of the plot that as above and that it will be named as 63A.

These requests were agreed by the Committee and approval granted.

Treasurer's Report

- The actual bank balance now stands at **£1,977.95 with £489.83** Petty Cash.
- This month we have paid **£7,219.14** for fencing at Washbrook Road and Highfield Road and **£5,670.00** for asbestos removal. There was also **£17,000.00** for the replacement of the tractor garage buildings. The Treasurer reminded Committee members that **£130,000 are held in long term investment accounts that are fixed term until 2021** and that if we wanted to 'draw down' from such accounts we would lose interest. The above capital expenditure amounts have been paid from our investment accounts.
- We have received a late statement from Triodos Bank, which includes **£618.14** of interest. The Bank had applied the interest to our account in September 2018 but we had not received notification until January 2019. The Treasurer has asked the Accountants if it is possible to include this in the year-end accounts. It may be necessary to issue an amendment to the accounts previously sent to Members, at the AGM. We may also have to pay a small amount

of Corporation Tax. The overall effect is positive. The Treasurer will include an explanation of this anomaly in his speech at the AGM.

- The Treasurer advised the Committee that after reviewing all aspects of the past rents, he felt that it would be advisable to keep the plot rental costs the same as last year, no increase. This was agreed by all members.
- The Treasurer requested the Committee to encourage members to use the Society's shop as this allowed us to include income into the accounts.
- He reminded the Committee that items such as the Fencing and purchase of Lawn Mowers are funded from Capital Expenditure and are therefore not included in the accounts shown.
- The Bank and Petty Cash balances shown above are actual balances to date. Note that the Bank balance does not show the balance of payment for Asbestos removal, which is **£4,806.00**.
- The Treasurer provided Committee members with a copy of the Income and Expenditure Account details. He invited questions and provided clarifications where necessary and the accounts were accepted by the Committee Members.
- The Treasurer presented a cheque to be signed by the Chairman, which is to cover the work to remove all Asbestos. The cheque was duly signed.
- The Treasurer will contact United Bank to with them a change to our 'signatories'.
- A question was raised about any potential increase to the Small Holdings rent. It was agreed that at the 2020/2021 review both Small Holdings and Allotment Plot rental would be reviewed.

Field Reports

Highfield Road

- Teenagers had been breaking into this field. Actions and help from neighbours, the Police and our own members resulted in the culprits being apprehended by the Police. RJ provided details to the Committee. All culprits have been given warnings by the Police and their parents and schools have been advised of their transgressions.
- Polite letters to two members.
- 1st letters to four members.

Washbrook Road

- MC provided pictures, diagrams and 'estimated' costings for carrying out barbwire work along the Greenway side of Washbrook Road (the South side). The Committee commended MC on putting together this comprehensive assessment of the work that needs to be carried out. However, there was an extended discussion on this matter, with many views as to what had to be done and how best to achieve it. MC stated that he was unable to provide more than a very outline view of the costs, as he was not qualified in all aspects of the work. After much deliberation and discussion, it was agreed that the following should be sanctioned:
 - That we should proceed with the work that is necessary, taking into account comments from RJ that there will be areas that cannot be penetrated, due to dense foliage, or other reasons and therefore will not require doing. This will mean a reduction in the cost of the work.
 - The budget should be set at no more than £1,000.00, should more be required a further estimate must be approved by the Committee before the additional work is carried out.
 - Society members should be asked to help by volunteering in deploying the necessary wiring and supports, and in this way hope to reduce the substantial estimated Labour cost of **£739.94**.
 - RJ will source the barbwire as part of the budget.

Bedford Road

- Nothing to report. RJ entertained the Committee members by explaining how a duck escaped from Bedford Road.

Grafton Road /Small Holding

- Nothing to report

Store/Rota

- Seed potatoes have been delivered and from now the store will be open every week. RJ will email members accordingly. RJ added that the seed potato orders will be made up starting tomorrow 21st February 2019.

Health and Safety

- The Committee were advised that the asbestos clearance firm had completed the work very satisfactorily including some bits found after the main clear up. However, the roof of the tractor shed has still to be sorted out and removed at a later date.
- MC & AM reported that they had discovered more asbestos. It was agreed to add to the removal of the tractor shed roof.

Any Other Business

- Planning permission has now been granted for the work to replace the tractor building and work is due to commence sometime in March (when weather permits).
- RJ advised that applications for two more homes to be built adjacent to our Alexandra Road property (the road network), have, in the past been turned down. However, a new application has now been approved by the Secretary of State. RJ has put in an objection on behalf of the Society, stating that insufficient thought has been given to the locations, as the houses will be on our verge, which is not allowed.
- The Speakers Evening for this year will take place on the 13th June at the Freemasons Hall. Our Speaker will be Pauline Pears who will present 'Growing a healthy allotment without the use of pesticides'. RJ re-affirmed that the council pay for this evening completely, as long as it is open to the public (not just the Society members).
- AJ raised the point of our not using emails to overcome the need to prepare properly details and estimates of any work required in the fields. This was generally accepted however there followed a long and sometimes heated debate on what had prompted this question re emails. MC felt that he had done his very best to provide 'estimates' of any work; which had then been approved by the Committee at a meeting. However, there have been addition email requests to obtain approval to works that were not included in original estimates and this is where the question of using emails arises. The plans and estimates that MC has provided were applauded as being the right way to achieve funding for work to be carried out and MC was thanked for his work. However, any interim funding requirements cannot be requested by email but must in future be put to the Committee at a meeting, for approval. It was agreed that in the event of extra funds being needed it would be discussed at the "next meeting". An emergency meeting of the Committee would only be called for emergencies
- The AGM will be held on the 5th March 2019 at the Freemasons Hall.

- The Rent day for 2019/20 will be held on the 23rd March at the Societies store location. However, JB will send an email to all members, requesting them to make use of the simple electronic money transfer facilities to pay their rents.

Meeting Closed: 21:40

Date of next meeting Wednesday 20th March 2019 at 7:00pm

Signed _____

Counter signed _____

Date _____

Action points Meeting 20th February 2019		
Subject	Action required	Who to action
Action points: Secretary's report and Correspondence	Access via the second gate into our area must be sorted out and a new lock obtained. A letter will be sent to Mr Johnson requesting him to: - Remove the blockage across our road. - Provide us with the 'Connection Job Number' for his linking into the Alexandra Road supply.	Russell Jarvis
Action points: Secretary's report and Correspondence	Write to a member advising him that the Committee required seeing progress on his plot for 6 months as well as seeing his official licences/other paperwork permitting him to handle pigs before approval is granted	Russell Jarvis
Action points: Secretary's report and Correspondence	Reply to an applicant informing them that they will be allowed a plot which will be reviewed at the end of 6 months	Russell Jarvis
Action points: Secretary's report and Correspondence	Reply to Emma McGeechan regarding decline permission for a plot.	Russell Jarvis
Action points: Secretary's report and Correspondence	RJ will email the members and have them contact Miss Allen if they have any such items (which includes tools and seeds).	Russell Jarvis
Action points: Secretary's report and Correspondence	RJ stated that he would email members advising them of the Litter Pick, Tree Planting on the Greenway which will take place on Saturday 9 th March	Russell Jarvis