

MINUTES OF THE S.H.A.G.S. COMMITTEE

Meeting held on 11 May 2016 in the Ted Allen room

In Attendance: Lin Norman (LN)(Chair); Carole Pamphlett (CP) (Treasurer.); Roger Glanville (RMG)(Sec); Chris Wilson (CW); (RM); Rod Cooley (RC); Chris Overton (CO); Keith Davison (KD); Albert Callaewert (AC).

Apologies: Ralph Martin, Jenny Stevenson, Nic Hale, Hazel Upton, Jim Machin, Mike Cobby, Keith Rowland, Mark Sanders, Roger Gillett.

Minutes of the April 2016 meeting.

CP referred to item 3.1 Piggotshill, where Mike Cobby had mentioned “the small shed roof was leaking” and asked if there should not be an action point. AC clarified MC had been referring to the small machine shed and RMG agreed this should be an action point for MC to confirm plans.

In the absence of MC it was agreed this item should be held over to the June meeting.
(Action RMG)

Other than this point, the Minutes were passed as a true record by those present. Proposed CW.

Matters arising:

- 1) JM to ensure push mowers are security marked and details added to machine database.
In the absence of JM this item to be held over to the June meeting.
- 2) RMG to review past AGM Minutes in response to a concern that the Shop Accounts were not included in the Final Accounts reported at the AGM. This has been done and it was found that in the past Shop Accounts were not included in the Society’s Final Accounts, over the last 3 years and since CP has been Treasurer, they have been included as part of the AGM data.
- 3) Following Committee approval CP to have Final Accounts independently examined prior to the AGM. Completed
- 4) LN to take up machinery delivery delays with Tim Wall. CO commented that Tim Wall has now moved house and this means machines can only really be delivered at weekends. CO is still leaving the matter to RM to finalise, however we continue not to be charged for delivery. If we require a special delivery this will incur cost.
- 5) LN to check with John Bagshaw as to what was planned for the ex HC plot holder’s new plots at CF. Completed and top soil will be delivered to CF as promised.
- 6) RMG to raise the proposed sketch of a revised Piggotshill Lane entrance area at the meeting with HTC on 18 May Completed – see 3.2

7) RC to communicate Committee agreement to changes to the OR4 and OR5 boundaries and JM to check rental details. **The communication was handled by Mike Hughes and the rental will be adjusted next year.**

8) Site Reps to ensure Fire Notices are present in machine stores at all sites. **Item to be held over to June when more Site Rep's may be present.**

9) LN to book Park Hall for Awards Evening. **Completed and hall is booked for 30 Sept.**

10) RMG to refer the old OR Ryobi strimmer to Ralph Martin. **Completed - email from Mike Hughes forwarded to Ralph Martin. Item to be held over to June.**

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2. Finance

2.1 Cash Statement: CP confirmed rental collection was now complete at £9140 just short of budget. 5 plot holders had been Terminated. Any further income will be for re-lets.

Machinery servicing costs for the year has come in just short of £2000. The new second-hand mower has been bought for AB site.

LN asked for a vote of thanks to CP for her efforts in collecting the rents.

3. Site Matters

3.1 Site Rep's reports:

Piggotshill: AC reported concern that a number of plots had been taken on by new tenants but with little or no work and these plots now look worse than known vacant plots where action has been taken.

Various solutions were discussed: CO proposed new tenants be taken on probation and perhaps be subject to an inspection after an initial period, RC outlined the strategy at OR site that has used weed suppressant material successfully, although CW expressed reservations about the cost implications of this approach.

LN asked if the joining fee of £15 should be increased to £25 which in some cases may need to be discretionary.

LN asked that a proposal be put forward to the June meeting for a review the way new plot holders are admitted with potentially agreeing a probation period and possibly introducing a discretionary increased the joining fee. **(Action LN)**

MC had posted a question as to the advisability of washing mowers, however the consensus was this was not to be recommended.

AC queried the details of the access entitlement the homeowner adjacent to the Piggotshill Lane entrance gate possesses, following an incident where a delivery truck damaged the ground in the entrance. LN will make enquiries with HTC **(Action LN)**
Churchfield: KR reported all machines had been delivered.

No further work has been carried out by HTC on CF9/CF26 since late April; no boarding for raised beds had been done and no topsoil delivered.

KD asked when the first inspection was required and RMG confirmed end May.

Sibley Ave: CW had received a visit from David Wain who had reported an incident where rubbish had been thrown over a fence by a SA plot holder. CW had subsequently been contacted by the plot holder responsible who had made amends but in so doing so had spoilt another plot on the site.

Cross Lane: CO reported the wild flower meadow was coming up although there may be an issue with thistles and it may be necessary to set up a work party to address the problem.

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The bees are doing well.

Oakley Rd: RC confirmed there were 3 vacant plots which had been covered.

Mike Hughes had asked about rotovating the pathway between OR4 & 5 however it was agreed the compacted earth and the area would need to dig over roughly first.

RC agreed to contact the OR10 plot holder about his plot.

Aldwickbury: RMG read the AB report received from Hazel Upton. See reports. Roger White had encountered a problem with the second-hand mower when using it and had asked if there had been any warranty from Tim Wall's company to cover this machine and RMG agreed to forward the email to Ralph Martin to ask if any had been obtained. (Action RMG).

3.2 HTC Allotment Working Party meeting: RMG reported on the attendance of this meeting along with CP. Present at the meeting also were Cllr Nicola Linacre (Chair) along with 2 other Cllrs, David Wain and Emma Payne from HTC staff and the current Chair Jack Longdon and the Chair-elect (name unknown) from EHGC.

The Agenda had included a report by HTC councillors on the National Pollinators Strategy and RMG was able to add that the bees project on Cross Lane was proving very successful, with a further hive being considered, however the Society was thoughtful about sanctioning hives on further sites owing to the H & S concern. Nevertheless, the Society had put in place a protocol to cover bees on site.

David Wain reported on outstanding works, and on the day of the meeting the new gates at HR site were being installed.

The remainder of this Agenda item was largely taken up by a defence by David Wain of the problems surrounding the hedge-cutting issue. Both the Society and EHGC took the opportunity to record our concern at the lack of action by the contractor in discharging their obligations and the delay in obtaining any commitment to address those concerns. DW maintained he had been trying to arrange meetings with the contractor but at the time of the meeting still had no meeting arranged.

DW also produced a facsimile of one of the Society's sites (taken from the SHAGS website) and proposed that Society's mark the hedges required to be cut on the map so that this could be given to the contractor. We informed DW that certainly SHAGS had been using this method for some time but still to no avail. DW had also printed on the reverse an extract from the contract which would clearly indicate John O'Connor is definitely not fulfilling their side of the contract. Both Societies pressed DW to continue efforts to improve the situation this and following years.

RMG raised the matter of improvement to the Piggotshill Lane entrance which had been proposed at the SHAGS April meeting by Mike Cobley, but HTC dismissed the proposal as too costly.

The amount of the grant had still not been agreed at that time by HTC Committee.

HTC confirmed the devolvement of OR and the now closed site at Heath Close from SADC and HTC are in the process of registering OR site as an allotment.

The meeting closed after 1 ¼ hours, next meeting allotment inspection days.

3.3 Noticeboards: LN proposed that the standard of information contained on the site noticeboards be improved and held up CF site board as a model that could be followed on other sites.

3.4 Fire Notices in Sheds: See "Actions" #8 above.?

3.5 AGM Update: RMG started by offering his regrets that the original notice email issued some 4 weeks ahead of the meeting had failed to be transmitted owing to an unknown system error and whilst this had now been rectified short notice action had been necessary. Preparation had now been completed. RMG confirmed there would be no planned changes to the Rules as time did not allow the Society to agree such changes and put them in a format ready for the meeting.

LN however was still in contact with the plot holder who had agreed to look them over, had received an opinion the Rules were largely sufficient except for a couple of areas and would continue to discuss with him so that a formal change could be agreed which might then be put before the membership for agreement. (Action LN).

RMG had received no other nominations or resignations and had prepared the Election of Officers schedule including the personnel changes agreed so far, and went on to summarise those Officers and Site Reps who would be elected/re-elected this AGM.

4. Lettings:

4.1 In JM absence please see Summary of Reports (Lettings) which had been issued with this month's papers.

5. Machinery

5.1 Machinery update: RM was unable to attend but had sent a brief report which RMG read confirming no major problems but push mowers were still awaiting collection.

CO commented on the unfairness of manufacturers in supplying spares. A part had recently broken on a CL mower but because of manufacturer policy a much larger and more expensive part had to be obtained. Also CO produced a photo to emphasise the dangers of introducing material into fuel tanks and urged the use of funnels with filters when re-fuelling machines.

Both points only serve to add to maintenance costs. CO proposed that this photo and advice be added to the website and in monthly emails to communicate the message to the membership. (Action RC/LN).

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6. Projects/New Developments:

6.1 There are no ongoing projects or new developments currently.

7. Communications:

7.1 Update: RC confirmed the monthly email had been sent out, the website had been altered to include information about the AGM.

RC asked that the website be changed to update data after the AGM (Action RMG).and that reference to HC site would need to be removed. (Action RC).

8. Awards:

8.1 Awards 2016 – next steps: CW told the meeting information regarding this year's judging would be sent out to Site Reps shortly (Action CW).

CW would also be sending to LN a summary of tasks that would need to be done ahead of the Awards evening so that tasks could be spread over more people.

9. A.O.B.

9.1 Rules Review: See 3.5 above.

9.2 Garden visit: RMG told the meeting JM had confirmed the visit was going ahead and a 53-seater coach had been booked.

9.3 Promoting the Society: LN plans to prepare a leaflet promoting the Society which could be posted in the Town Hall, shops etc. Also street drops could be considered and would be useful. Maybe utilise the leaflet used when the Farmers Mkt was in use. (Action LN).

9.4 CO asked that gate Lettings notices be changed to show the new phone number of Jim Machin.

9.5 Polytunnel application: RMG read out an email received from a PH site plot holder who wished to erect a polytunnel. The size proposed was double the permitted size and Committee members were concerned that the plot holder may be planning to grow crops not for personal use only.

RMG was asked to contact the plot holder to notify him of the size permitted under the Rules and to ask him to clarify his attentions. (Action RMG).

Date of Next Meeting: 8th June 2016 – Ted Allen Room