

Minutes of the AGM of the Christian Malford Allotments Association

Held at The Rising Sun Pub, Monday March 4th 2019 (19:30 – 21:00)

Present: Mike Wilkins (Chair), Mike Harlowe (Treasurer), Steve Hudson (Secretary), Kathryn Nicholas, Lynne Patchett, Liz Wilkins, Clara Hudson, Roger & Pam Carter, Stephanie & Danny Rowles, Neil Chambers, Kevin Watson, Mary Davies, Ben Smith, Derek Townsend, Leslie & Gill Sells, Vernon & Lynda Bundy

Apologies: Terry & Morag Johnson, Justin King, Rob Patchett, Adrian Barrance, Jacqueline Chenier

1. Review of Minutes of Last AGM

The meeting voted to accept the minutes of the previous AGM, which had been published on the Allotment website and were distributed by email prior to the meeting. There were no matter arising.

2. Officers Reports

The **Chair** welcomed the allotmenters to the 8th AGM. He was also delighted to welcome two new allotmenters, Vernon & Lynda Bundy, who have taken over Plot 14 from Ben Smith. Ben is now sharing Plot 3 with Kathryn Nicholas.

The **Chair** thanked the **Secretary** and **Treasurer** for their work for the Association this year and the support they gave him. The **Treasurer** in particular had to handle an increased volume of work due to the solar pump activities. Glowing reports about the allotment area continued to be received from “all and sundry” outside of the association, reflecting the views of users of the Meadow on the standards being achieved on the allotments. On the produce side, the plots seemed generally to have delivered, despite the normal attacks of mice, pigeons, squirrels and the hordes of small unnamed flying predators. Disease was possibly limited to small pockets of rust here and there, no doubt the hot summer didn't help.

The **Chair** congratulated Kevin who has started to expand his “micro-brewery business” with a bumper crop of hops and to MikeH who should be able to retire and set up a chippy to use the considerable harvest of giant potatoes he takes from his plot.

Away from the growing aspects of the season, it was an intense year. The association managed to obtain grants totalling £3,220 from Bradenstoke Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund and the Parish Council for the installation of a solar powered water pumping system, which has installed to the stage where water is pumped, but the system is still to be fully commissioned. What was achieved was due to the considerable amount of time and effort donated by members. As usual, everybody who was asked for help gave it willingly, and Danny, Kevin and Roger in particular. The **Chair** thanked all who contributed for the support.

Thanks were also extended to Ben, for his many services to the association, including the provision of shelter for the Social gathering (which was well attended and enjoyed), and to Kevin who stepped up to organise the produce competition. The Chair commented that he personally thought that the produce competition was poorly supported by the members.

The **Secretary** had nothing to report that was not already covered in the **Chair's** report.

The **Treasurer** reported that the association funds are in good order, and provided the meeting with the following summary:

Item	Amt (£)	Bal (£)
Opening balance 01/03/18		765.35
Maintenance Fees and Rent	750.00	1515.35
Monies Rec'd From	2651.60	4166.95
CM Parish Council Grant	500.00	4666.95
New Water Pump	-2239.43	2427.52
Rent to Parish Council	-375.00	2052.52

M. Wilkins	-950.15	1102.37
R. Carter	-24.88	1077.49
D. Rowles	-49.27	1028.22
K. Watson	-52.87	975.35
J. King	-81.11	894.24
N. Chambers	-6.15	888.09
Closing Balance 01/03/19		888.09

The **Chair** commented that a final payment of £23.45 was expected shortly from BSFCBF. The treasurer noted that the rent will stay the same as this is specified by CM parish council, but that his recommendation, given available funds and projected income/expense, is to reduce subscriptions this year from £25 to £15, subject to discussion later in meeting.

3. Election / Re-Election of Officers

All members of the committee indicated their willingness to stand for re-election. The chair noted that there had been no expressions of interest received from allotmenters to stand for election, and the secretary polled the meeting to see if there was any interest from members present at the meeting. There were no volunteers, and the meeting voted unanimously to retain the existing officers.

4. Water Supply

The **Chair** provided a summary of the rationale for the purchase and installation of a new solar powered water pump. It was purchased with a grant from Bradenstoke Solar Farm Community Benefit Fund and the Parish Council and installed with labour provided by allotmenters. The new system had double the number of troughs, and a broad description of how the new system worked was given. As initially installed, there was a mismatch between the supplied pressure switch settings and the water pressure being delivered by the pump. The delay in obtaining a replacement switched meant that fully commissioning the system had to wait until this spring. As a backup, in case of solar pump system failure, the system had been designed to allow our existing Patay pump to be connected into the pipe work. He recommended that at some point in this year, this work should be undertaken. He noted that we will also need to assess how effective the new system is in delivering sufficient water, as there is the potential to add another solar panel to increase power to the pump if additional availability is required. The Chair informed the meeting that the infrequent operation of the system on/off switch from the solar panel to the control panel requires the removal of a padlock, (keys with MW and SH).

5 Maintenance

- a. Shed roof – there is a leak due to a nail pushing through felt/roof and this will require repair; other nails are also coming through, but these are not currently leaking. The solution is likely to involve re-felting (part of) the roof.
- b. Clear grass around shrubs – as in previous years, it would be beneficial for allotmenters to clear competing vegetation around shrubs adjacent to their plots (9 of which are new, as replacements to previous ones that didn't flourish).

6 Expenditure going forward

- a. Communal Rotavator – There was a suggestion from Kevin, with support from Danny, to purchase a communal rotavator that would be stored in the shed (typical cost is £200 to £400). There was some question as to whether there would be room in the shed. The meeting voted on this proposal (2 for, rest against), and was not accepted.
- b. Water Supply – As per agenda item 4, it was suggested that we may need to connect the existing bilge pump as a back-up to the solar-powered system, and that we may need to install another panel if there is insufficient flow to meet demand. It was suggested by Danny that we assess the performance of the new system, and then add in bilge pump as required as this is a low cost item covered by existing funds. This was accepted by all present at the meeting.

7 Association Subscriptions for 2018-19

The meeting voted to accept the Treasurer's recommendation that the subscriptions for 2018-19 be reduced to £15. This will be reviewed at next year's AGM.

6 Produce Competition

There is no produce competition planned for this year, as the Summer Fete has been replaced with a concert by The Wurzels. Instead Kevin has instigated a giant onion competition; he reported that the seedlings are nearly ready for distribution. Mary pointed out that the produce the allotment offered as a prize at last year's event was not taken up by the winner due to personal circumstances, and proposed that we provide this in the Spring as produce becomes available – this was agreed by the meeting.

7 Social

It was agreed that last year's event was enjoyed by all, and this should be repeated this year. The date was set as Saturday August 3rd.

8 Date of Next Meeting – Monday March 2nd 2020

(Signed)

M Wilkins (Chair)