



CHRISTIAN MALFORD ALLOTMENTEERS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the AGM of the Christian Malford Allotments Association

(Held at the Rising Sun Public House, Monday 9th March)

Present: Mike Wilkins (Chair), Mike Harlowe (Treasurer), Kathryn Nicholas, Lynne & Rob Patchett, Liz Wilkins, Roger and Pam Carter, Danny Rowles, Neil Chambers, Pauline Derrick, Terry Johnson, Justin King.

Apologies: Steve and Clara Hudson, Doug and Jenna Keating, Vernon and Lynda Bundy, Les & Gill Sells.

1 Review of the Minutes of Last AGM

The meeting voted to accept the minutes of the previous AGM as shown on the Allotments website. Proposed – D Rowles, Seconder – T Johnson. There were no matters arising.

2 Officers Reports

The **Chair** welcomed everybody to the 9th AGM of the Christian Malford Allotment Association. He was also delighted to welcome three new allotmenters to the association, Doug & Jena Keating to Plot 1, Penny Bell to Plot 3b and Pauline Derrick to Plot 8.

The **Chair** observed that clubs do not function without members support and participation, so he thanked the **Secretary** and **Treasurer** for their work on the association's behalf, last season. Thanks, were also expressed to Kevin, Danny and Roger for their willing practicable help given to the Chair. He also reported that Ben, due to family commitments, has given his plot up for this season, but as usual provided us with invaluable support in cutting the hedges and providing the marque for the social, which he thought was well attended and enjoyed again.

The **Chair**, deferred detailed comments on the water supply to the agenda item. But he observed that in our first season of moving to solar, and increasing our stored water capacity, there seemed to be enough water for our needs. During the season, preliminary designs had been developed that could enable the bilge pump to be connected back into the solar system.

The **Chair** also recorded the fact that towards the end of the season, the mower lost it powered drive. It has been repaired, but spent the winter at John Millar's premises in Chippenham. It was hoped, after a service, that it will be back in the shed in the next week or two.

Kevin instigated a giant onion competition, The **Chair** gave his opinion that compared to giant onions he had seen, we only produced rather large shallots.... But it achieved what was intended, a little bit of fun. Lynne augmented the competition, by challenging us to guess the weight of a large pumpkin.

The **Secretary**, (who was absent due to self-isolating), had nothing to report that was not covered in the Chairs report.

The **Treasurer**, reported that the association was still in good order and presented a balance sheet to that effect. The association last season received a net inflow of funds to the tune of £187.00, which included a one-off balancing contribution to the solar water installation of £91.45 from BFS. The association balance at 1/3/202 stood at £1075.09. He concluded his report, by saying that subject to any decisions taken later in the meeting, his recommendation was that the annual subscription rate to the association to remain at £15 per full plot.

Questions from the floor were raised about any expenditure going forward. The **Chair** replied that costs could be incurred in any implementation of the bilge pump and maintenance of the shed. Detail discussion on this was deferred to the agenda item on maintenance.

Mr R Patchett proposed that the accounts as presented be accepted, which was seconded by Mr T Johnson. The motion was passed unanimously.

3 Election/ Re-Election of Officers

In the absence of the **Secretary**, the **Chair** after informing the meeting that the committee on block were prepared to stand again, asked if there were nominations from the floor for any committee position. Mr R Patchett, proposed that the committee be re-elected, which was seconded by Mr T Johnson. The motion was passed unanimously.

4 Water Supply Report

The Chair gave a report on the installation of the Solar system.

Whilst commissioning the system, modifications had to be made to the control of the pump. The system was designed to switch off when the pump developed back pressure caused by the ball valves fitted to the troughs shutting of the flow of water to a trough.



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There were two problems, firstly the pressure switch monitoring this back pressure, was defective (thanks to Rogers detective work). After doing some tests to establish the actual pressure generated, a low-pressure replacement was provided and fitted.

Whilst it was established that the pump delivered water when we needed, the solar conditions didn't always provide enough power to drive the pump hard enough to develop the necessary pressure – this meant the pump was spending a large amount of time running unproductively.

Float switches were fitted to one of each pair of troughs to control the motor, and this solved the problem. Two observations are made, firstly floating leaves, tended to jamb up the float switches and stop them working. The syphon system fitted to transfer water from the second trough transfers water at a slower rate than water is delivered to the filling trough. It is therefore recommended that when taking water, it should be taken from the trough that is being fed from the pump. The syphon was an experiment, and time will tell if its construction stands the test of time.

5 Maintenance

The following topics were discussed:

- 1 The shed needs re proofing. It's clear that the water based treated that was used previously doesn't appear to provide protection for the sheds exposed position. Danny had already replaced some slats. After a discussion it was unanimously agreed that the **Secretary** be asked to form a working party to re-coat the shed in a material specified by Danny.
- 2 As a significant part of the solar pump installation is outside the fence, brambles, nettles etc grow up and significantly hamper access to it. The **Chair** suggested some form of permanent weed control in this area is needed.
- 3 In a similar manner, access to the pump requires climbing over the fence, a more permanent, safer solution, is needed. In providing solutions to this, the area in question, is home to the old site of the bilge pump, this too is overgrown and continues to get worse.
- 4 Maintenance of the water supply, could mean reinstatement of the bilge pump. This would incur expenditure.

A general discussion on items 2,3 and 4, with various suggestions were put forward from the floor. The **Chair** asked for a motion, that the committee be granted any necessary monies to address these issues. Mr R Patchett proposed, seconded by Mr T Johnson and it was passed unanimously.

6 Expenditure going forward.

Apart from the maintenance issues discussed there were no further items to discuss

7 Association Subscriptions for 2020-21

It was unanimously agreed to keep the subscription level for this season at £15.

8 Produce Competition

This coming season Lynne has agreed to take on running the competitions, with another onion challenge, the tallest sunflower and guess the pumpkin weight – results and presentations at the social. The Chair commented that he was disappointed in the number of us that took up the challenge, as it was introduced to be a 'bit of fun'.

9 Social

It was agreed that this year's social would be held as usual at the allotments on the 5th September.

10 Date of next meeting

It was agreed that the date of the next AGM would be Monday 8th March 2021.

Whilst there was not an AOB, Danny requested that because of the weather precluding normal grass maintenance, the grass at the allotment was very long, Ben be asked to cut it. This was agreed.

The meeting was closed at 8.30pm.

After the AGM, the membership present was given a 10-minute presentation by Becky Timmins, on her ideas for the wilding of the meadow.