

# MRALGA

## Monthly Committee Meeting 02/05/2017

### MINUTES

Attendees: Tony Matthews (Chair), Carol Andrew, Terry Fisher, Andy Lyman, Maria Moon, Mac Painter, John Raymond, Jake Sale, Richard Stevens  
Apologies: Matthew Andrew, David Holt

The meeting opened at 19.04

Agenda item	Action
<p>1 Welcome TM welcomed trustees and thanked visitors for attending this open meeting.</p>	
<p>2 A one minute silence was observed in remembrance of two recently deceased tenants: Mr Fred Waller and Mr Steven Caves.</p>	
<p>3 Minutes Minutes of the extra meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> April were amended to include JS agreeing to source and cost outside lights. The minutes of the meetings held on 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> April were then agreed and signed as correct.</p>	
<p>4 Matters Arising DO asked CA if any plants were needed for her stand at the <b>Woburn Garden Show</b>. CA &amp; DO to discuss at a later date. Tenant SF of plot 628.1 volunteered to help CA at the show. CA &amp; SF to discuss at a later date. <b>Easter event:</b> a very successful event. <b>PROPOSAL:</b> Letter of thanks to be sent to Jeanette Handley for making a wonderful chicken costume. Proposer JS, seconder RS. <b>AGREED</b> unanimously. <b>Camera updating – ONGOING</b> – see security report <b>Fire extinguishers– ONGOING</b> – 1 fire extinguisher in end room, 2 in maintenance room, 1 by front entrance and the 1 by the fire exit in the tearoom to be checked. <b>Lease update –ONGOING</b> <b>Blue lights for alarm – ONGOING</b> <b>Tenancy agreement</b> to be updated to include MRALGA email address – <b>ONGOING</b> <b>Transgressions – ONGOING.</b> As a deterrent, a display is needed to show the number of letters written to tenants. Last month’s unanimously agreed proposal (<b>PROPOSAL: Theft outweighs the Allotment Act and will mean immediate dismissal from the site. Policy is now: Minor incidents – 3 strikes and out. Serious misconduct as agreed by the committee, eg theft, wilful damage to property or any assault or violence, means instant dismissal.</b>) was discussed and published. The appeals procedure is still in place. <b>Fire door</b> – waiting for insurer’s recommendations for a permanent fixture. A temporary fix has been done to make the hut secure. The excess could be less than £500 but will remain unknown until the claim is agreed. <b>Water tanks – COMPLETED</b> <b>Community Payback – COMPLETED.</b> MRALGA’s supervision requirements are now</p>	<p>CA CA DH   MP  DH DH</p>

<p>confirmed with them.          Tenant SF of plot 628.1 volunteered to help on the site.  <b>Capillary matting – ONGOING</b> but under all control.  <b>Part P electrician – COMPLETED.</b> JS found a volunteer who will sign-off for free.  <b>Outside lights</b> around the building – <b>ONGOING</b> . Quotes received – for 6-7 lights, plus connectors, plus cabling – around £200. 3 other lights already delivered so if able to use them, the bill will be reduced accordingly. <b>PROPOSAL:</b> Accept the estimate of around £200 in total minus any donated lights installed. MRALGA to install, electrician to sign off. Proposer JS, seconder TF. <b>AGREED</b> unanimously.          Tenant SF also knows an electrician who could offer help.  <b>Quotes for doors</b> and frames from Adrian and another tenant builder not received. 2 builders arriving 3/5/17 to give quotes.</p>	<p>JS  JS  CA</p>
<p>5 Chair’s Report          Letter received from tenant asking for permission to put up a children’s slide on their plot. No need for the tenant to sign a disclaimer form as it will be on their plot so will be their responsibility. Letter giving permission to be sent to tenant making sure they know they are responsible for their own children and to confirm liability. It is their responsibility to maintain it and to remove it when they vacate their plot.          3 further thefts this week. Locks tampered with on plot 628.1 twice this week – to be written in the log.          Discussion re: double locking the entrance gate dismissed. Tenants need to challenge anyone seen entering or leaving the site very early or late.          Letter on behalf of Chief Constable read. One sergeant is to review incidents of offending and crime pattern. All tenants must be encouraged to report any incidents or suspicions to the police. A copy of this letter should be displayed on all noticeboards. PCSO Gina Carruthers and a representative from Community Safety will attend the Plant Sale - will give Crime Prevention advice. DH to contact them to ask if they will require a stand at the show.</p>	<p>DH  AL  DH DH</p>
<p>6 Secretary’s Report          Letter sent to Chief Constable and 2 local Councillors regarding break-ins and damage. Reply read in Chair’s report.          Letters sent to tenants who breach their tenancy agreements. Some tenants have now left the Association, others now taking remedial action          Problems with poor behaviour by some unsupervised children. A specific incident has been reported and a letter will be sent to the parent involved.          Tenants should tell a Trustee of any bad behaviour by children so a letter can be written to those particular parents.</p>	<p>DH ALL</p>
<p>6 Treasurer’s Report          No queries regarding the report.          The theft of £33.52 is shown in the accounts as a loss in order to balance the books when the claim comes through.          Projected income on plots has been exceeded.          10 plots are available for rent, mostly half plots. Possible further 2 may be given up.          Insurance claim will be submitted soon. No recommendations yet by insurer, probably after settlement.  <b>PROPOSAL:</b> to accept report. Proposer MP, seconder TM. <b>AGREED</b> unanimously.          “Growing Together” Thursday group being launched. Tenant SF of plot 628.1 volunteered to help.</p>	<p>CA</p>

7	<p><b>Security</b> Cameras are up and running with some siting particular targets. They are monitoring for security not tenants. All tenants should take responsibility for valuables, ensuring they are secured reasonably. Need to be pro-active so anything suspicious must be reported to the police for action. Tenants can contact Andy Lyman or other Trustees about any security matters. There are a number of weak spots along the site perimeter so vigilance is needed. There are ongoing issues with the gate being left open when the shop is closed. The Council Allotment Officer has reported 4 separate break-ins at Goldington and Barkers Lane sites.</p>	<p><b>ALL</b> <b>ALL</b></p>
8	<p><b>IT Report</b> All minutes of committee meetings to be put on the website and on the noticeboard. Up-to-date photos are needed for the website.</p>	<p><b>MA</b> <b>CA</b></p>
9	<p><b>Fire / H&amp;S Report</b> Risk Assessment for Plant Sale and talks in end hut underway. TM &amp; DO cleared the end hut so a final assessment can be done on Thursday. Double electricity socket by handwash bowl in kitchen must be blanked off asap. Do not need Part P. TF &amp; tenant GB to do High fences around the site are blocking the sight around the plots resulting in reduced security and safety. Consider banning future high fences. Fencing being erected without permission of the trustees. <b>PROPOSAL:</b> Tenants wishing to erect high fencing must seek permission from the trustees and should abide by the rules. Proposer JS, seconder TF. <b>AGREED</b> unanimously.</p>	<p><b>MP</b> <b>TF</b> <b>TM</b></p>
10	<p><b>Maintenance Report</b> Extra water tanks are coming. New tenants are abusing the system and keeping the taps open. Need to have the rules explained to them. If ignored, taps will be removed. The policy is 2 taps per road but some new tanks are being installed when requested, especially for health reasons. All water enters the site as water suitable for drinking. Chain saw is working fine. The breach in the perimeter fence is still there. The Council has repaired the gate so fencing is the secondary entrance. A temporary repair with wire is needed. Discussion took place as to the feasibility of MRALGA purchasing extra land at the front for further car parking. <b>PROPOSAL:</b> To approach the Council about including it in the lease. When ramifications of this are known, discuss again at a committee meeting. Proposer JS, seconder MP. <b>AGREED</b> unanimously. JS to approach council.</p>	<p><b>TM</b>      <b>JR,TF,RS</b>  <b>JS</b></p>
11	<p><b>Creature Report</b> Rat checks ongoing. Tenant complaining about big rats on her plot but she keeps moving and handling the boxes so rats not caught. If they are moved again, JS to remove them. It was noted that there was a rat box on top of a compost heap but JS not informed. JS cannot deal with it if he's not told. Visuals to possibly be displayed on the walls. There are a lot of wasps at this time of year. If there is a wasp nest on a plot, the tenant should buy a can or two of wasp killer and JS will spray. Although tenants are responsible for rats or wasps on their plots, rats or wasps in the communal areas are MRALGA's responsibility. Swarming of honey bees is not dangerous unless they are attacked. JS will deal with them. There will be a dummy beehive on display at the Plant Sale.</p>	<p><b>JS</b> <b>JS</b>  <b>JS</b>  <b>JS</b>  <b>JS</b> <b>JS</b></p>

<p>There are approximately 7 semi-feral cats on the site. The Cats' Protection League provides free wormers and flea treatment.</p>	
<p>12 Events Report  A Christmas and Easter Event have been run, along with an Apple Pruning Workshop, a Quiz Night and Gardening Club talks.  DO was thanked for very successfully acting as stand-in quizmaster on the Quiz Night in April.  There are 4 places left for the Willow Weaving Workshop in June.  Future events include:  Another Quiz Night in June  National Allotment Open Day on 18<sup>th</sup> August  MacMillan coffee morning in September  Pumpkin Day on 14<sup>th</sup> October  Trip to the National Arboretum on 21<sup>st</sup> October.  It should be noted that tickets must be paid for in full when booked. No reservations without payment.  The next event is the <b>Plant Sale</b> on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May. A great deal of work has been done over the past 3 months by all involved. A Guest Speaker, Mike Thurlow, has been booked to give 2 talks on the day and we need to ensure as many as possible are on site. Tenants and the general community are encouraged to buy plants and refreshments so a lot of help is needed on the day.  Local flier drop to be made by JS and tenant SF of 628.1.  Shelves in the end hut need to be removed.  CP to email Mike Thurlow about his requirements for the talks eg projector, screen etc.  Screen possibly available from friends of either JS or tenant of 628.1  Fliers to be printed  List of volunteers needed – SF &amp; GB volunteered.  JS was thanked for the plant watering system which works very well.  JS was thanked for sourcing 30 chairs so there is now sufficient seating for 60 in the end hut.  <b>Annual Show Brochure</b> to be completed and a copy to be brought to the trustees on Thursday for comments. CA to ask Unilever to print copies ready for the Plant Sale on 13<sup>th</sup> May.</p>	<p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>JS</b> <b>JR,TF,RS</b> <b>CP</b></p> <p><b>JS</b> <b>AL</b> <b>TM</b></p> <p><b>CP</b> <b>CA</b></p>
<p>12 AOB  2 tenants told to put out fires when it was not the first weekend of the month. A note should be given out with all new tenancies.  Micro-plots. Mr Thompson turned over and tidied the plots as CPB work not up to standard. Cost taken out of Community funds. Edging needs to be sourced as 3 tenants are waiting. JS to organise woodwork around and between the plots.  Plots will be available for tenants on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> May. The tenants can use the seating area in front of the shed and storage can be in the shed. <b>PROPOSAL:</b> Price per strip to be: membership £3 plus £6 for 12 months, £3 for 6 months and £1.50 for 3 months. Proposer AL, seconder MP. <b>AGREED</b> unanimously.  A number of complaints have been received regarding a tenant putting a load of concrete blocks on his plot ready to construct a car parking space. He has not sought permission to build it. If he vacates his plot, it will all have to be removed at considerable cost to MRALGA. <b>PROPOSAL:</b> A letter to be sent to his home address and also delivered to his plot stating that he has not asked formal permission to build a hard standing so he has breached his tenancy and should remove it within 28 days. Proposer JS, seconder AL. FOR: 8 AGAINST: 1. <b>AGREED.</b></p>	<p><b>JS</b> <b>JS</b></p> <p><b>CA</b></p> <p><b>DH</b></p>

<p>A tenant is causing considerable anguish amongst some ploholders and is becoming verbally aggressive. A letter to be sent to him regarding his aggressive behaviour. This will be his second warning. The situation should be monitored but the committee should be aware that it may escalate.</p> <p>A tenant with 2 shopping trolleys on his plot needs a letter as this is not acceptable.</p> <p>A tenant has complained that a dog on a long lead has been allowed to run all over his plot. It should be noted in the logbook by the tenant.</p>	<p><b>DH</b></p> <p><b>ALL</b></p> <p><b>DH</b></p>
<p>13 Next meeting Tuesday 5th June at 6.45 for 7pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 22.00