

MRALGA

Monthly Committee Meeting 10/11/2016

MINUTES

Attendees: Carol Andrew, Matthew Andrew, Terry Fisher, Mark Herminie, David Holt (Acting Chair), Tony Matthews, Mac Painter, John Raymond, Jake Sale

Apologies: Maria Moon
The meeting opened at 19.00

Agenda item	Action
1 Welcome and Minutes October minutes confirmed and to be signed as correct.	
2 Contact details sheet completed by all committee members.	
3 Appointment of Officers and Portfolios Chair: Tony Matthews Proposed by CA, seconded by MH Vice Chair: Maria Moon Proposed by CA, seconded by JH Treasurer: Carol Andrew Proposed by DH, seconded by TM Secretary: David Holt Proposed by CA, seconded by TM David Holt handed over the meeting to Tony Matthews. Security, Fire & Safety: Mac Painter Pest Control & Chickens: Jake Sale Events representatives: Jake Sale + 1 other (tbc or on a rota) Maintenance: John Raymond & Terry Fisher Shop Manager: Tony Matthews Catering: Maria Moon Plot Inspection co-ordinator: John Raymond & Terry Fisher IT: Matthew Andrew All appointments were unanimously AGREED	
4 Sub-Committees. Events sub-committee to continue with David Osborn leading. The possibility of a volunteering sub-committee or organiser was discussed but rejected . CA - further membership engagement needed for volunteering. JS – members need to be told what is happening and how they can help. TF – perhaps monthly newsletter. DH – send broadcast via email. JS – leave at front for all to see. Each portfolio member to arrange own volunteers. Notice showing what tasks volunteers are needed for to be put up outside. AGREED	

<p>The possibility of a communications officer was discussed but rejected. There are too many notices on the front gates so they tend to be ignored. There should just be a welcome notice and emergency contact number. Noticeboard by the bench to be reinstated. Meeting minutes to be put on board outside the huts to engage with all members. Blackboard to come down. “Plots Available” sign to be put on the fixed gate, not on the opening one.</p>	<p>JR DH JR</p>
<p>5 Treasurer’s Report The independent examiner gave the following 5 recommendations regarding the accounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) More evidence is needed when claiming any expenses, eg an invoice as well as an MRALGA expense form. If over £50, any expense should be approved at a committee meeting or, if an emergency, could be by a quorum. b) Credit or debit card suggested in order to reduce vulnerability of committee members eg online purchasing by DH & CA. Credit card suggestion rejected but debit card AGREED. Current bank account is totally free but does not have a debit card facility so bank to be approached. Discuss at next meeting. If a debit card is not possible, there needs to be a pre-process for purchasing items. TM suggested a limit of £150 per purchase. c) Last year’s figures mistakenly included un-presented cheque for the water this should have been shown as creditors for 2014/2015 accounts instead, Anglia Water’s bill of £245 shown at the AGM should have been in the previous year. CA has made the adjustment to the accounts and this is the only difference between the accounts shown at the AGM and the accounts going to the Charity Commission. d) Hard copies of all financial reports should be included in the minutes. e) More referencing is needed for evidence. Process must be shown at every stage, eg with float money, if key deposit money is returned, then that plot number must be written down. <p>Bank statement received and reconciled by CA every 2 weeks.</p> <p>Basic insurance covers money transported between CA’s home and the bank. It covers a maximum of £500 but this needs to be increased as occasionally over £1000 is taken from plot fees and shop takings. There was discussion regarding the viability of installing a safe at the huts but this was rejected. CA to discuss increased premium with the insurers.</p> <p>Charity Commission reports and accounts to be submitted. Companies House return is also needed. Companies House to be given new trustees’ details.</p> <p>Cheque signatures: CA & TM still OK. Signatures of Maggie & Tanya to be removed. David Holt (secretary) & Maria Moon (vice-chair) to be included as signatories so need to contact bank. AGREED</p>	<p>CA CA CA, DH CA, DH CA, DH DH, MM</p>

<p>6 Matters arising from AGM</p> <p><i>RHS v NSALG membership and insurance:</i> CA explained that the deal with the RHS was a package and so trustee indemnity and stock cover were not available. It is not for managing the site etc. NSALG insurance also covers personal liability with an excess of £250 and gives legal advice (MRALGA have had to use this on occasions this year). CA also said that the NSALG had negotiations underway for 2018 that when a member joins, insurance cover will be included for that member thus saving MRALGA the cost. CA reiterated that we cannot get the cover we need through RHS.</p> <p><i>Non-members' increased fees:</i> DH & CA had discussed and agreed that it would be better if there were a standard and membership was £3 for everyone. Non-tenants can use the shop and have members' insurance cover.</p> <p><i>Carpet ban:</i> Original deliverer appears to have stopped but someone else has started delivering.</p> <p><i>Bonfires:</i> Tenants need notification about new rules. CA suggested a letter be given to all local residents outlining the new bonfire rules, with a contact number for them if they have any concerns. MP agreed as it could make residents feel more included and more affable to help with security etc. TM gave a possible handout to be given to all tenants, which included dates of permissible bonfires (all day on first full weekend of every month starting January 2017), dates of committee meetings and main events. AGREED. Coloured card to be used for more impact. AGREED. Plots that are given up but have a lot of carpet to be cleared – discussion regarding possibility of a lockable skip rejected due to cost (£385). JS offered to use his trailer to dispose of rubbish or else a van could be borrowed to take rubbish to St Neots where it is free of charge.</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>TM</p> <p>TM</p> <p>JS</p>
<p>7 Community Allotment</p> <p>This has not yet been shut down. Meeting with Gina is needed following her resignation as there is still money left in the account.</p> <p>Possible future plans for the plots were discussed including:</p> <p>Before any new tenants are shown the sites, they need to be improved and tidied, possibly by the Community Payback team.</p> <p>CA suggested splitting them in half with one half being used for long term and the other for more vulnerable groups, under MRALGA.</p>	

	<p>MP asked if the previous suggestion of giving it to veterans had been investigated. DH said that the British Legion had not replied following MRALGA's offer but they could be contacted again.</p> <p>JS suggested the 2 plots be turned into micro-plots as they would be more accessible for less able people. A number of tenants would be interested. Use of polytunnel and greenhouse to be discussed. A meeting of interested committee members will take place and a plan will be decided. Those interested at present are JS, DH and MP.</p> <p>CA asked if the plots would be free. DH replied that they would need to pay the £3 membership fee.</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>JS, DH, MP</p>
<p>8</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>The sign on the front gate should include a primary contact number so purchase of basic mobile phone to be investigated. This would also reduce the cost of MRALGA calls made by committee members from their personal phones. A letter to be sent to the Council with the new contact details.</p> <p>Internet access at the huts would be beneficial for emailing, record keeping and backing-up of data. CA & MA back up the records every week. TF to investigate all details and costs of wifi access.</p> <p>MRALGA email to be used instead of personal emails.</p> <p>TM stated that the above 3 suggestions would standardise any changes to future committees.</p> <p>Handbook: needs attention.</p> <p>Website: There was no written contract with the designer of the MRALGA website, MrWise, and he is unwilling to give access to his design. AGREED to pay up to £100/year for hosting a new website.</p> <p>Money to other charities: Proceeds from shop or main events not to be given to other charities or good causes. Can be raised by other smaller events eg quiz nights with advanced publicity on posters showing the charity or good cause. AGREED</p> <p>Greenhouse in the green room: A tenant has offered £50 for it. AGREED to sell it to the tenant as it is a special case.</p> <p>Future sales of equipment will be made public and open to offers.</p> <p>Generator: Interest from 2 parties – possibly £500. This will go to funds for a project, not general funds for maintenance. AGREED</p> <p>Apple orchard: At present, the orchard is not being used properly. JS offered to donate and plant willow for a willow wood for coppicing. He will prune it carefully and check the number of trees that need replacing (possibly 6). He would like to put forward a plan for an extra 20 metres for possible nut trees, a wildlife area, structures, greenery and a pathway. A decision need to be made soon as the ground needs levelling now. Plan for next meeting AGREED</p> <p>Greenhouse staging: JS has offered to build 2-tiered staging for the greenhouse. Materials would cost £200-300 (mainly the cost of plywood). TM said that it would pay for itself within a year because of the profit from plant sales. AGREED. All agreed more plants for sale were needed. DH suggested an automatic watering system be installed.</p> <p>End hut: Defective so cannot use it until work is done.</p> <p>Timber: Need to publicise it for sale but JS to look at it first for work on greenhouse.</p> <p>Break-in on plot 234.1: Plot holder possibly being targeted as a further break-in happened between Thursday and Saturday. Nothing stolen but timber thrown at his ducks. A temporary security camera needs to be put on his site. New batteries to be brought on Saturday.</p> <p>Barrels: About 30 steel barrels have been delivered to the site. Further 100 coming</p>	<p>DH</p> <p>DH</p> <p>TF</p> <p>DH</p> <p>JS</p> <p>JS</p> <p>JS</p> <p>MP</p> <p>DH</p>

<p>and also 100 blue plastic barrels. All free. The oil drums would be fine for fire-pits. If prepared (holes in sides and bottom, top taken off) they could be sold to tenants for £5. JS offered to cut the tops off if his discs were paid for.</p> <p>Woodburner: Committee members were concerned about its safety following the incident last week. CA to contact regulator to check if installation was carried out correctly.</p> <p>Site logbook: Any issues, queries or incidents must be written in the logbook. It is to be kept with the accident book and checked before all future meetings.</p> <p>Quotes for work: Anything above £50 needs to be agreed at a committee meeting or, if an emergency, by a quorum. 3 quotes must be provided where possible and where not, a reason must be given. 2 quotes must always be given or else it goes to a meeting.</p> <p>Committee members' plots: These must be maintained well as trustees must be seen to uphold the rules and set an example.</p> <p>High fences: Plots with high fences to be discussed at next meeting.</p> <p>All meetings, both open and closed, will be held on the first Tuesday of every month. AGREED</p>	<p>CA</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>10 Next meeting Tuesday 6th December at 7pm</p>	

The meeting closed at 21.40