



THE FEDERATION OF
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT
ALLOTMENTS AND
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

Management Team Meeting - 7.15pm on Tuesday 13th March 2018 - Southside Community Centre

Present: Stuart McKenzie (**SMcK**) (Inverleith) President : Liz Grace (**LG**) (Midmar) Secretary : Ernie Watt (**EW**) (Cambridge Avenue) : Neiria MacClure (**NMcC**) (Claremont Park) : Gilbert Clark (**GC**) (Midmar) : Maureen Edwards (**ME**) (Lady Road) : Alison Hewitt (**AH**) (Warriston) : David Morrice (**DM**) (Restalrig) : Mary Simpson (**MS**) (Saughton Mains) : Alice Bain (**AB**) (Warriston) : Peter Wright (**PW**) (Lady Road); Observers: Margaret McLennan (**MM**) (Bridgend) : John McKinlay (**JMcK**) (Craigentiny) : Alexis MacKay (**AMcK**) (Ferry Road) : Ian Woolard (**IW**) (Allotment Officer, City of Edinburgh Council).

1. Apologies: Dave Roberts (**DR**) (Craigentiny Telferton) Treasurer, Rosina Weightman (**RW**) (Saughton Mains), Paul Kerr (**PK**) (Redhall), Stuart Swarbrick (**SS**) (Ferry Road), John Grace (**JG**) (Midmar).

2. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting: The Minutes were proposed by **EW** and seconded by **NMcC**.

3. Matters Arising: **SMcK** said 45 members had volunteered to participate in the SASA Heritage Potato Club. The deadline is 16th March. Potatoes will be issued late this year due to the very wet weather.

4. Allotment Officer: **IW** gave the following report:
The next Allotment Strategy meeting will be held late April or early May.

Letham Park may be the next site. It will be a privately managed site, run by the owners, the Boys' Brigade. The Council and SAGS will advise on how to set it up. It is estimated that there will be 150 half plots, or 75 full plots. There are 600 on the Waiting List living in the Leith area demonstrating a strong local demand. It is hoped the site will open in 2019.

Most allotment bills have been paid. Around 5% of allotment holders have decided not to pay their subscriptions to FEDAGA and Site Associations. **SMcK** suggested that the money returned to sites from the FEDAGA-administered Kings Seeds trading scheme could be retained to balance the shortfall. **IW** said he has just approved the subscriptions payment so it should be actioned shortly.

The water supply will be turned on in the first week of April. A few burst pipes are anticipated. **IW** had to attend an emergency call-out at 10pm recently to try to stem a burst pipe in the West Mains toilets.

The Trade Waste Bins are generally being uplifted properly after a few glitches over the winter. He emphasised that he requires missed uplifts to be reported to him so he can take it up with the contractor. **MS** said that Saughton Mains, being such a large site, should be provided with an extra bin, but she was told this wouldn't happen as there is constant pressure to reduce the waste uplift service. **MMcL** noted that Bridgend does not have a Trade Waste service and ploholders arrange a spring and autumn site clear up themselves.

Pathways have been prepared for the coming year at Carrick Knowe, Stenhouse, West Mains, Craigentenny and Restalrig. Additional work at Northfield Drive, Drumbrae and Kirkliston is required.

The Northfield Drive water harvesting project has not made progress as the owner of the adjoining building has yet to respond.

Many site noticeboards have reached the end of their life but it is proving difficult to source affordable replacements. An alternative solution will be tried.

When the tree squad resource becomes available attention will be focussed on Craigentenny, Midmar and Warriston. Wood chips will be left on site.

New Data Protection advice will prevent the Allotment Officer sharing any details of new ploholders with site representatives. This will stop the agreed introduction arrangements. **SMcK** suggested that a welcoming letter containing contact details of site reps should be prepared and handed to new ploholders. Alternatively, this can be left on their plot. This was **AGREED**.

On quitting their plot, ploholders are required to return their key. Recently, many of the returned keys are not the original ASSA key, but copies. These numbered keys are only supposed to be copied with official authorisation. The copies are not of good quality and are damaging padlocks. This is adding to maintenance costs.

GC asked if the proposed allotment site on the former school site at Southhouse will be taken forward. **IW** said it is on the list and will be evaluated. One of the criteria is demand and this is noted to be highest in Leith, Morningside and Stockbridge. The Council is likely to be looking soon at adapting disused bowling greens for allotment use, as was done at Victoria Park.

5. Site Reports: **ME** noted the proposal to have Lady Road ploholders clear debris from the grill over the Pow Burn where the water enters a culvert. Concern was raised about whether this was properly thought through. Safe access would

have to be provided and a risk assessment conducted. It is unlikely that volunteers will be insured. It was **AGREED** that **IW** seek clarification on the issues of concern.

DM said the composting toilet at Restalrig is no longer usable. It was **AGREED** these toilets are nearing the end of their lives and were never designed for the number of users they have. **SMcK** said the existing blocks could be reconditioned to allow the installation of more suitable toilets. **IW** said he could investigate but the purchase of one would blow the annual budget. **DM** also reported flytipping of rubble and bricks at Restalrig.

LG said the noticeboard on Field 1 at Midmar had a broken hinge and investigations into an on-site repair are being conducted. A flooded path was repaired by digging a ditch and installing drainage tubes.

SMcK said the entrance to Inverleith continued to be excessively muddy and enquired of **IW** if any woodchip was available. It was not. **SMcK** said arrangements had been made to have a private company drop woodchip at the site. Stuttering, then failing Trade Waste uplifts had caused such problems that the Friends of Inverleith Park were complaining. Something must be done. The rabbit population, quiet over the winter, has suddenly exploded and again the situation is desperate. Culling measures are in hand for the near future.

EW reported a successful FRM compost delivery to Cambridge Avenue before the prices went up.

JMcK said a recent outbreak of rats at Craigentiny has been successfully dealt with. This site also received a FRM compost delivery but after complaints were lodged about excessive plastic and metal the company offered two extra bags free.

MMcL said the community farmhouse at Bridgend will be opened in style on 24th March. She invited all interested allotment holders to attend. Bridgend has recently organised a site spring clean day.

MS reported a setback to the beehive proposal at Saughton Mains. One plot holder objected as her husband has a bee sting allergy.

AB said the Trade Waste uplifts seem to have ceased at Warriston and the resultant overflow is causing problems.

LG read **SS's** report for Ferry Road requesting repairs and painting for the main gate and noting a mystery intruder seen leaving the site via adjoining gardens.

6. President's Report: **SMcK** said a SAGS meeting he was due to attend was postponed.

7. Secretary's Report: **LG** had information on a SRUC Garden Design course due to run from April to June. This will be publicised to members.

Information on the Resilient Allotment Communities Grant will be issued detailing how sites in the top 20% of disadvantaged areas can apply for £1000-worth of tools and equipment.

Jill Edmonson has agreed to attend the 12th June meeting to talk about her research project into growing food crops on allotments. It was **AGREED** to open this up to members.

8. Treasurer's Report:

DR is still on holiday and so no report is available.

9. Maintenance, Planning, Trading and Show Reports:

NMcC has recently met with **IW** and an updated spread sheet detailing current projects across all sites has been issued. It was noted the communal compost bins at Bridgend are outstanding and the feedback on the newly completed bins at Warriston is that they are excellent. **IW** said he expects to start making progress on identified areas of work.

AH said she had not seen any planning applications that appear to affect allotments. There was a discussion on the Council's intention to have community gardens or allotments included in each new housing development. **IW** said that Barratt are due to provide a 20 plot allotment at Newcraighall by 2020. A development at Leith Links will allow that site to expand the same year. **IW** said he had met with Scottish Government officials to discuss this provision.

SMcK reported takings of £152.70 from the sale of seed potatoes and onion sets in the Shop. 4 bags of potatoes and 99 bags of onions and shallots are left. It was **AGREED** to reopen the Shop from 2 to 3pm on Sunday 25th March to sell off the remainder at half price. This will be publicised to members. **IW** undertook to alert new ploholders of this opportunity. There had been complaints that some of the onions were not top quality and replacements will be available if required. **AMcK** volunteered to investigate the possibility of distributing or selling onions at the rescheduled Gorgie City Farm Seed Swap. It was noted that some orders were unfulfilled as discipline appeared to break down on the delivery day and distribution descended into a free for all. It was **AGREED** that next year the system will have to be more strongly enforced.

LG gave a report of the Show subcommittee meeting chaired by **JG**. The date and venue have been settled, judges invited and Cllr. Lesley Macinnes will again award prizes. Unpopular classes were reviewed and it is proposed that members be encouraged to enter these as they may have a better chance of winning. The possibility of having display tables for those wanting to show their produce but not compete was put forward. There will be display tables for SASA Heritage potatoes and named variety apples. The Apple Press will be provided for a demonstration of how to make juice. It is hoped the SRUC plant clinic can be repeated.

10. Any Other Business: None.

11. Date of Next Meeting: 10th April.