



THE FEDERATION OF  
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT  
ALLOTMENTS AND  
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

## ***Minutes of Management Committee Meeting 7pm Tuesday 10th May 2022 - Virtual Meeting via Zoom***

**Present:** Liz Grace (**LG**) Secretary, Acting Chair (Midmar); Dave Roberts (**DR**) Treasurer (Craigentinny Telferton); Jan Bradbury (**JB**) (Saughton Mains); John Grace (**JG**) (Midmar); Alison Hewitt (**AH**) (Warriston); Stuart Swarbrick (**SS**) (Ferry Road); Alex Taylor (**AT**) (Portobello East Junction); Nils Tomes (**NT**) (West Mains); Ernie Watt (**EW**) (Cambridge Avenue); Margaret Williamson (**MW**) (Stenhouse).

**1. Apologies:** Alice Bain (**AB**) (Warriston); Alan Gordon (**AG**) (West Mains); Paul Kerr (**PK**) (Redhall); Alison Leslie (**AL**) (Lady Road); Neiria MacClure (**NMacC**) (Claremont Park); Stuart McKenzie (**SMcK**) (Inverleith); Heather MacPherson (**HMacP**) (Northfield).

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:** The minutes were proposed by **DR** and seconded by **AH**.

**3. Matters Arising:** **LG** has again asked Ian Woolard for names and e-mail addresses of new ploholders which he agreed to provide 6 months ago. He said he would provide this to **SMcK** instead. **JB** similarly has asked for new ploholders' details for Saughton Mains, but none had been forthcoming. **NT** and **AH** reported that they had received first names of new ploholders for West Mains and Warriston. It was **AGREED** that as **SMcK** is away, **LG** get back to Ian Woolard and ask again for the promised information so that FEDAGA can communicate with its members. **ACTION - LG**.

**4. Site Reports:** **AH** gave a report from Warriston. The fence on the southside is now completed. This substantial project by the Council is a welcome upgrade. The old fence was very dilapidated and in several places not fit for purpose.

A dead fox wrapped in wire was found on a plot in April. The SSPCA was called and confirmed it was a home-made snare and it had died a prolonged and painful death over several days. The snare had been cut but it is not clear where it was set, or how the fox came to be on the allotment. There was a suspicious fox death on site last autumn which the SSPCA suspect was due to poison. The case is under investigation by their Special Investigations Unit (SIU) and they wish to be notified of any fox or raptors deaths onsite and they will remove and examine the body. The SSPCA, the council and the committee have warned against using poisons of any sort to protect our wildlife. Birds of prey can be killed by ingesting poisoned rodents. It was **AGREED** that a message in the

Newsletter to remind members that wildlife is protected in law and shouldn't be harmed in any way. If animals that have been snared or poisoned are found the SSPCA should be contacted. **DR** recommended that food harvested from the plot should not be stored in sheds as this encourages rats, etc.

**5. President's Report:** **LG** spoke to a report prepared by **SMcK**. There are two meetings with the Scottish Government coming up on May 16th and 24th. The first will be to look into how the Community Empowerment Act is being implemented in relation to allotment provision and the second will be alongside the Glasgow Allotment Forum to discuss communication with those on allotment waiting lists with a view to more pro active creation of allotment opportunities. There will also be visits to allotments at Inverleith, Lauriston Castle Farm and a community garden. **SMcK** and **LG** will represent FEDAGA.

**6. Secretary's Report:** **LG** is in receipt of a notice from the Dandelion Harvest Grants Programme which is offering support to community groups. **MW** will investigate the project to see if it can be of use to the allotment community, but the deadline is 20th May. **ACTION - MW**. **MW** also reported on an RHS grant of £50K for the creation of new allotment sites which has now closed but may be repeated next year. She suggested we should be prepared to take better advantage of this next year if it is available.

**7. Treasurer's Report:** **DR** said that as at the end of April there was a balance of £12,516.21. The outstanding payment to Drumbrae has been made, leaving £67.99 owed to sites.

Payments by the Gilbert Clark Foundation totalling £384 to Carrick Knowe and West Mains are still outstanding as they have yet to submit their invoices. All other applicants have received their grants. FEDAGA will pay out £2K with site contributions amounting to £2300. The scheme will be relaunched in August. Decision time will be in December and grants next year should be paid out by May. **MW** said progress on the Stenhouse wildlife garden had stalled and she would chase the contractor up. **JB** said stories about improvements to sites under the scheme should be included in a future Newsletter. **SS** will drop the stencil off to Midmar so their wheelbarrows can be marked. **ACTION - SS**.

**DR** confirmed with **JG** that he will soon be available to examine the accounts with **NMacC**.

#### **8. Other Reports:**

**Maintenance:** **NMacC** has prepared a spreadsheet detailing sites' requests which is with Ian Woolard. It was noted Ian Woolard has now got an electric hedge trimmer and is using it on sites around the city. **LG** noted appreciation of what Ian Woolard does as Allotment Officer.

**Planning:** **AH** said she has not seen any applications that might affect sites. **NT** said that it has gone all quiet at West Mains after the rejection of the application for the St. Crispin's site. The allotment association is now working with West Savile Residents Association and is anticipating the developer's next move.

**Show:** **JG** said that our contacts in the Council have moved on since the local elections. However, he has been in touch with Vivienne Swan, the Edinburgh Sustainable Food Places Co-ordinator, and has suggested a large event with Edible Edinburgh involving food producing and aspirant food producing people that could include the Allotment Show and would give us a bigger stage from where we could reach out to the general public. It was **AGREED** to pursue this. **JG** will meet with Vivienne Swan later this week and will try to get a date in early September so that FEDAGA can start publicising this to our members with a view to maximising participation. **ACTION - JG.**

**Trading:** **AH** said leeks will be delivered in early June. Once she has a date she will get back. Volunteers are required to help transport the leeks from the supplier, near Carnwath. **DR** said a site visit would be of interest. **JB** and **JG** said they would be interested in helping out. **ACTION - JB and JG.**

**Food Growing Strategy:** **MW** has read a report for Brighton and Hove Council which detailed the economic value to the community of each allotment plot and suggested that it may provide a basis for a similar study in Edinburgh to bolster the argument to provide more allotment opportunities. **JB** agreed and said that particularly now with growing food poverty this would help make the political case. **MW** gave further details of the study, the headline figure being a benefit of £166 per plot to the Council in terms of carbon reduction, health benefits, ecological benefits and waste reduction and will circulate the report to the committee. **ACTION - MW.**

**JG** said there is a similar Sheffield University study on Leicester which he can circulate. He said ecological economics is a debatable area but can be of use when decisions on health, etc. are being made. It would be helpful to gather relevant information supporting the case for allotments being beneficial to society to support the case for more provision. It was suggested that the findings of the report could be used to provide a basis for a comparison with Edinburgh to see if a similar report of local relevance could be compiled. **DR** suggested that as this would come with a cost attached FEDAGA should look to work with a post graduate researcher who would be able to access a grant.

**9. Any Other Competent Business:** **NT** asked if the Council's new policy on hut, greenhouse or polytunnel erection is being implemented, if they have rejected any applications and if so, on what grounds. It was **AGREED** to ask, perhaps at the next Strategy Meeting. **EW** pointed out that this is now overdue. It was **AGREED** to ask for a meeting soon. **DR** said that FEDAGA would provide

the Council with an agenda detailing points to be discussed. **DR** also said he has asked twice for membership subscriptions, but has not received a reply. **LG** will liaise with **SMcK** about setting up a Strategy Meeting.

**10. Date of Next Meeting:** 14th June.