



THE FEDERATION OF
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT
ALLOTMENTS AND
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

Minutes of FEDAGA Management Committee Meeting 7pm Tuesday 10 August 2021 - Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Present

Stuart McKenzie (SMcK)(Inverleith)(President); Liz Grace (EG) (Midmar)(Secretary); Ernie Watt(EW) (Cambridge Ave)(Newsletter); Alison Hewitt (AH) (Warriston)(Planning); Paul Kerr (PK)(Redhall) (Minutes); Jan Bradbury(JB)(Saughton Mains); Lorna Henderson(LH) (Carrickknowe); Sue Soutar (SSR)(Baronscourt); Margaret Williamson(MW)(Stenhouse); Steve Mathieson(SM)(Leith Links)

1. Apologies

Dave Roberts; Alan Gordon, Neiria McClure, John Grace, Pamela McKay, Stuart Swarbrick, Maureen Edwards; Alice Bain

2. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Please note that the last meeting by internet conferencing on Tuesday 13th July was purely a social event and no official business was discussed or minuted.

The Minutes of the last Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday 8 June had previously been circulated and were proposed by AH and seconded by EW.

3. Matters/Actions Arising

The small grants scheme has now officially been renamed the Gilbert Clark Foundation with the blessing of Gilbert's family(SMcK). See more in the Presidents report.

Community Organisations and Charities can apply for grants up to £1500 through the Tesco Community Grant fund (MW). An outline of how to apply for a Tesco is described in Appendix 1

EW enquired if anyone had seen the new Allotment Regulations yet as they did not appear to be online. SMcK checked the Council's website during the meeting and the new Regulations are attached at the end of a Committee report Tuesday 15 June 2021.

4. Site Reports

Leith links (SM)

The plots are looking lush. Harvesting has begun. The first courgette of the season has been placed on our share-table. Still no word from the developers on the new fencing once the old fencing comes down to make a path from the new flats to the links.

West Mains (AG)

Ian Woolard has trimmed the long line of vegetation growing through the fence on Blackford Road. The portacabin has been repainted by a team of ploholders.

There is a large tin of green paint for applying to metal and would cover 50 square metres available if an allotment is interested.

West Mains planning Issue -

With the help of the FEDAGA committee there are already a total of 45 objection to the proposed

Development of the vacated St Crispin's School site adjacent to West Mains. This ensures the full Planning Committee will examine the plans in detail. There is already a flooding problem at the allotments. Water flows naturally from a spring within West Mains to and then through St Crispins. The proposed long line of flats on the other side of the boundary fence would block the drainage so increase the flooding. AG and others have that asked adequate drainage be added to the design.

Ian Woolard has been made aware of the planning application and planned to contact the Planning Department re this.

West Mains heard about the planning application from the local Residents' Association and not directly as we are not a Statutory Body.

If we had not been told of this we would have had an even worse flooding problem. AG talked to a lawyer who lives next to the school and is an expert on planning law. The planning laws are decided by the Scottish Parliament not the local authority so it would need amendment of the law. I suggest this is more an issue for SAGS to pursue. This is certainly a good example of where a significant problem might have affected a neighbour of a development and where notification rules should be improved.

AG plans to contact Daniel Johnson MSP re this.

Baronscourt (SSR)

The flooding issues have been mostly resolved by sacrificing the two worst affected plots. The plotholders concerned are now working on much drier ones and Ian Woolard has arranged for the affected area is to be made into a wild wetland with pond and appropriate planting. This has been offered for free by a local company keen to do some community work. We are hoping the work will begin soon and we plan to build a communal compost area alongside it.

Work on the container, with individual compartments for potholders' tools, is yet to start.

Inverleith (SMCK)

Plots are looking well tended across the site.

An extension water tap has been installed as a prototype paid for from site funds. Plotholders bought blue water pipe and dug it from an existing tap towards the SW corner of the site where a post and soak away were installed. Ian W. arranged the water connection and tap to be installed.

Now others are planning similar projects which will reduce the need for long hosepipes to plots near to the boundary fence. They will contribute themselves to pay for pipe etc. Cost per extension is around £100 plus installation.

Northfield

We still don't have water, there have been a series of delays and still have not been given a final date. The ibcs can no longer be filled due to the water connection for the allotment taking up the entrance space. The plotholders have struggled to water crops for many weeks now. Other than that all is well.

Midmar (JG)

The electronic newsletter was launched. It brought news of such things as the newly installed urinal, an outbreak of rabbits, someone installing a comfy armchair in his plot and a request to keep paths clear of overhanging vegetation. The dissemination via Mad Mimi worked well, but it has revealed that some plot-holders are missing from the e-mail address list. It seems we have many more plotholders than people with emails on the list. We sent out to 108 addressed, 105 we 'accepted' (i.e. the addresses do exist). However, we believe we have circa 150 actual plotholders.

5. President's Report (SMcK)

It had previously been agreed by the Committee that the small grant scheme should be renamed as The Gilbert Clark Foundation subject to the family being consulted and agreeing to the proposal.

I emailed the family who replied...

'I have communicated with my brother and we both are touched by this proposal, which is rather beautifully aligned with his views on things. As my brother said, " Sounds like a lovely idea and, as they say, in keeping with his view of the world." Thank you for honouring my father in this way, I am certain he would be delighted to be associated with the provision of practical items for communal use and seats for the weary allotmenters to rest and chat over their sandwiches.'

So it's a big yes, the small grants scheme is now the **Gilbert Clark Foundation**, launching for 2022 soon. First thanks to Brian Thomson (Midmar Secretary) who has completed the archival of Gilbert Clarks

papers. From the long list of file names it was a very large job. I know history will remember Gilbert fondly. All thanks to Brian, who, he tells me, worked at my old site in Pansy Walk when it was a council nursery.

In other news, next strategy meeting is likely to be in September. The council approved the new Regulations with a couple of amendments. We're waiting for how and when they will be implemented. FEDAGA has implemented a pilot project at Midmar allowing them to produce a newsletter from our membership information. John Grace produced edition one after a demonstration over zoom. The plan is to convince the allotment service the data is safe before opening up to all sites.

No new membership database yet so new plot holders won't be getting the newsletter. Apologies but if you pass on details we can add people quickly.

Dave has paid site subscriptions along with seed commissions. A couple of queries are outstanding regarding membership numbers for Midmar and Bridgend. Dave is on the case. We also discovered why the delay, we have to raise an invoice. We now know for next year.

No word from parks regarding use of their chipper equipment at sites to save them buying and running their own kit.

6. Secretary's report (EG)

Enquiries have been received regarding how to get in touch with Portobello allotment site.

Another enquiry regarding the rules concerning the erection of poly tunnels on allotment plots.

A dead fox has been reported at Warriston, raising some concerns about the use of slug pellets etc on site however the animal may have died from natural causes or had an accident.

One enquiry has been received regarding the rules on site bonfires. One appeal received from a person on the waiting list enquiring if anyone would like a helper. Finally, an item to be discussed in AOCB asking for participation in a research project on soils. EG will supply more details on request).

7. Treasurer's Report (DR)

DR had previously circulated a spreadsheet to Committee members. It gives details of payments made from FEDAGA to the individual allotment sites for payment of CEC FEDAGA Subs, return of discounts from the purchase of potato's Onions, leeks and Kings seeds. All site names that have been highlighted in yellow on the spreadsheet have been paid into the individual sites accounts.

Two missing payments from CEC still to be resolved are Midmar and Bridgend, and Ian Woolard is dealing with this issue.

Site Treasurers to be advised that that the payment is titled CEC, PO & Kings.

EW – it is intended to open up the ‘small grants scheme’ again in October however the budget will need to be discussed. Deferred until the next meeting.

8. Maintenance (NMCC)

Ongoing with IW

9. Planning (AH)

No new planning applications found which affect allotments.

The Willowbrae development which affected the Northfield allotments appears to have gone to appeal and has been unsuccessful.

The St Crispin’s application by Cala Homes which may affect flooding at West Mains has now closed for comments. There were nearly 100 comments made about the development. Local residents had a strong campaign organised with their concerns. There was a report about drainage which said flooding on the proposed building site was not a problem. Plot holders remain very concerned. Alan Gordon has been instrumental in raising their points to the planners and councillors.

The log in to the Planning Portal seems to work well and alerts have been received about saved search results and tracked applications. The problem with this is only 10 of these can be saved by an individual. FEDAGA needs a couple more people to sign up for the remaining sites. AH will list the sites which need covered and provide information to EG. **Action AH and EG**

10. Show Convenor’s Report - Annual Allotment Show (JG)

Everything is in place for the on-line show, following the same procedure as last year. The judge is happy about the arrangements. The show is advertised on FEDAGA’s Newsletter, and instructions can be seen on FEDAGA’s web site. However, we need committee members to use ‘word-of-mouth’ to encourage submissions. Committee members and site reps have been emailed with this message and we included the PDF poster with a request to display it at allotment site gates.

11. Trading (AH)

FEDAGA is waiting for confirmation of varieties and prices from Clydeside Trading and ordering information will be sent out when this is received. Garlic can be ordered this autumn for delivery next autumn. Site reps will receive an individual order form (which can be printed out as a paper copy), a site order form for them to collate and return to FEDAGA. Written guidelines for site reps, and poster and variety information for notice boards.

Action Point – SMcK requested AH chase up Clydeside Trading for detail.

12. AOCB

SMcK enquired about the latest position with Food Group Strategy. MW – no new news to report.

SMcK asked if there were any comments on having an AGM (see later).

EG had been contacted by a member of Southside Community Centre management, enquiring whether FEDAGA wanted to restart committee meetings in the Centre. SMcK asked if anyone wanted a physical meeting at this time.

EW -Zoom meetings work fairly well; additionally. EW proposed postponing an AGM until Spring 2022.

EG enquired about the position with members who wanted to join the FEDAGA Committee. EG to put together a proposal to be placed in the Newsletter explaining our position in regard to holding an AGM and asking for suggestions from FEDAGA members. **Action EG**

We decided that we will not have physical meetings until next year; EG will report back to the Southside Community Centre to inform her. **Action EG**

Steve (SM) asked for advice regarding Keysafes at the entrance to allotment sites; at Leith Links a group have a plot but there are only 1 or 2 keys. They had suggested installing a Keysafe at the gate. Many in the committee raised doubts about security of a Keysafe and suggested that it would be better to speak to IW about the possibility of obtaining extra keys.

EG - an enquiry has been received from a PhD student at Sheffield University researching soil Biomes on Allotment sites in Edinburgh. She needs plot holders to volunteer information. Her proposal will be included in the next Newsletter.

EW – the COVID Advice on the FEDAGA website has been removed now that we are in Level Zero. Details of how people can contact FEDAGA is now on the website.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 14th September 2021

Please note-

All further meetings in person are cancelled until further notice due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Future meetings will be held by internet conferencing using Zoom.

Appendix 1

Tesco Community Grants procedure

It is administered by Groundwork who are working with greenspace Scotland to support successful projects in Scotland - see <https://tescocommunitygrants.org.uk>

Step1- read the Guidance and FAQ's for more details on the grants and eligibility

Step2- enter your projects postcode into the store locator on the Tesco website. You need this information for your application form

Step 3- complete the eligibility checker. A short quiz will check that your project meets the basic requirements for funding. If it does then you will then be given a link to the application form.