



## Annual General Meeting

7.00pm on Tuesday 23 October 2018 at

Southside Community Centre

### Minutes:

Present: Stuart McKenzie (**SMcK**)(Inverleith) Chairman; Dave Roberts (**DR**) (Telferton/Craigentenny) Treasurer; John Grace (**JG**) (Midmar) Allotment Show Secretary; Liz Grace (**EG**) (Midmar) Secretary; Paul Kerr (**PK**) (Redhall) Minutes; Ernie Watt (**EW**) (Cambridge Ave) (Newsletter); Neiria McClure (**NMC**)(Claremont Park) (Maintenance List); Maureen Edwards (**ME**)(Lady Road); Alison Hewitt (**AH**) (Warriston) Planning; Alice Bain (**AB**)(Warriston); Rosina Weightman (**RW**) (Saughton Mains); Gilbert Clark (**GC**) (Midmar) Muriel Horsburgh (Lady Road); Brian Horsburgh (Lady Road); Chris Hughes (Warriston); Diana Hughes (Warriston); Phil Dickson (Northfield Drive); Nancy Fancott (Leith Links); Sheila Hutchison (Inverleith); Lorraine Corbett (Ferry Road); Lorna Henderson (Carricknowe); Ian Hall (Greendykes); Carmen Hall (Greendykes); Wendy Hebard (Inverleith); Jane Robinson (West Mains); P Baillie Strong (Claremont Gardens); H. Baillie Strong (Claremont Gardens); S McKenzie; A.Black (West Mains); John Nisbet (Craigentenny/Telferton); Lai F. Russell (Stenhouse); Alan Wilson (Stenhouse); Edith Wilson (Stenhouse); John Barclay (Pilrig); Kathleen White (Duddingston Community Garden); Brian Thomson (Midmar); Jake Booth (Carricknowe); David Morrice (Restalrig); Lynn Grattege (Saughton)

There were two **guest speakers**, each of whom made a presentation prior to the business of the AGM

The first was **Tom Forster** from Summerhall,

the second was **Ian Woolard**, City of Edinburgh Council(CEC) Allotments Officer

## **Guest speaker 1**

**Tom Foster** who is arts director at Summerhall gave a very interesting talk on vertical gardening. Summerhall which is based in the former Dick Vet Hospital buildings is Europe's largest privately owned Arts Centre and is home to 150 'residents', 10 exhibition spaces and 8 multipurpose performance venues.

They have 1000 visitors per day and 200,000 during the Festival in August.

Their vision is to be at the heart of the cultural life of Edinburgh. They have a lot of unused, well lit wall space at Summerhall and are aware that there is a very high demand on City Of Edinburgh Council's allotment sites, with 10 year waiting lists. Summerhall is in one of Edinburgh's most densely populated post codes. It is asset rich but cash poor. Their site is open to the public and they like to think of themselves as a resource to be used by the public. They are aiming to apply for Heritage Lottery Funding in the New year which includes a pitch to turn the roofs of Summerhall into public allotment growing spaces. If vertical allotments are already in place and prove popular, this will help to sell the idea. What can ploholders, FEDAGA and the public do? Write to your MP/Councillor.

Summerhall already have written interest from Councillor Karen Doran, Edinburgh City Vision 2050 and the SW Trust. They are looking for volunteers for when the project gets off the ground.

They are also looking at using the flat roof areas of which there are several. It was mentioned by one of the attendees that Napier University are currently doing this and that they could be contacted for advice.

## **Guest Speaker 2**

**Ian Woolard** the Council's Allotment Officer gave a report on the current position with allotment sites in Edinburgh.

Allotment applications are online since Saturday, 20th October and 24 new applications have already been received through the site. So far, since 2018 82 new people have been allocated plots. This will probably be nearer 100 by the end of the year. There is usually 6-7% turnover per annum. The standard of plots is generally good. There are a couple of new sites coming online in the future – Newcraighall

which will be 20 plots built by Barratts with a water supply onsite. This will be coming online in 2020 and Leith Links which will be online by 2021.

The bad news is that there will be allotment rent increases in 2019 with bills up by 4% to £115 (approx.) Ian visited a 40 plot allotment site in Glenrothes, Fife earlier in the year where he met Peter Duncan and was shown new "Ecoloos" which work very well and cost around £1000 each. He would like to trial one of the Ecoloos at a site in Edinburgh. He has been attending a lot of meetings this year including the Tripartite??explanation group. The allotment site waiting list is currently around 2,750 by far the largest waiting list in Scotland.

CEC are investing in a community project at Warriston to create a bog garden which will start after the tree felling work and clearance has been completed. There has been a lot of interest in the site at Letham Park, which is the Old Boys Brigade playing fields. The intention is for the ground to be developed as allotments and the Boys Brigade, who still own the ground already have a waiting list of 130 people. Ian is pleased with the tree cutting work on allotments this year. There is still a lot to do and they have the budget for this.

They will shortly be doing a validation exercise where they send out a mailshot to around 1800 people on the current allotment site waiting list and ask if they still wish to remain on the waiting list.

The Allotment Strategy Group has assessed forty new sites which are to be evaluated for suitability as allotment sites. Some have already been rejected as they are on common good land. Parks and Greenspaces asked the Scottish Government for £2 million to create new allotment sites to meet the demand but this was rejected.

Ian was then asked questions regarding what common good land meant and regarding the lack of water supply at Northfield allotments. Generally common good land is land which the local authority cannot disposed of or appropriate for another use. The lack of water supply at Northfield Allotments has been taken up by one of the Neighbourhood Partnerships to see if they can fund the provision of water. They can potentially receive up to £2,000 towards the cost.

## **AGM business**

1. **Apologies:** Peter Wright (**PW**); Carolynne Doig; Yvonne Dawes; Stuart Swarbrick; Willie Aitken

2. **Approval of Minutes of Previous 2017 AGM:**

**Proposed by** Neiria McClure, **Seconded by** John Grace

3. **President's Review of the Year 2017-2018**

**Stuart McKenzie** commented on another allotment year gone by and hoped that the Federation could continue to both help improve sites and make allotmenting more enjoyable for all plotheholders new and old.

Before going onto his review of the year he reflected on Tony Stanton ,a stalwart of Edinburgh's allotments who had sadly passed away earlier this year. Tony Stanton of Saughton Mains had been active in the Federation for many years. He understood the value of allotments, kept a very productive one himself and expected everyone else to do likewise. Stuart had been delighted recently when Tony had told him that he still read the minutes from each month's committee meeting and that he felt we were moving in the right direction.

Stuart thanked Ernie Watt for his excellent work with the monthly FEDAGA Newsletter which can be read on the FEDAGA website. He also mentioned that orders are being taken again for Rockdust however we need orders for three pallet loads before we qualify for the discount.

The full text of his report can be read in the Appendices to these Minutes

4. **Treasurer's Report**

**David Roberts** presented the accounts

## FEDAGA summary Financial Account 2017 -18

Bank Balance brought forward 28 July 2017		£10,429.27
Income	£7,424.60	
expenditure	£7,663.16	
Profit/loss after costs	-£ 238.56	
Bank balance 28 July 2017	£10,429.27	
Bank balance 27 July 2018	£9981.95	
Committed cost( including previous years unpaid.)	£752.15	
funds minus committed funds	£9,229.80	
Bond(1) INT PAID @ 0.25% = £12.79 5/4/18	£4,543.77	
Total Assets 27 July 2018		£ 13,773.57

### Reserves Balance Summary

	2015 - 16	2016 - 17	2017 - 18
Bank balance at start of year	£10,652.96	£ 12,519.74	£ 14,012.13
Cash in hand	£0.00	£ -	
Deduct: loss for the year	£0.00	£ -	-£ 238.56
Add: profit for the year	£1,866.78	£ 1,492.39	
Add or deduct; credits or debits from previous year	£0.00	£ -	
<b>Current reserves year end</b>	<b>£12,519.74</b>	<b>£ 14,012.13</b>	<b>£ 13,773.57</b>

Signed: Neiria McClure. I have checked the accounts and confirm them to be a true statement of the finances of the Association.

Date

Signed: Prof John Grace I have checked the accounts and confirm them to be a true statement of the finances of the Association.

Date

Completed by Dave Roberts Treasurer FEDAGA

## 5. Annual Show Secretary's Report

John Grace reported on the Show.

There were 65 exhibitors and 464 entries (up by 31% on 2017). The record number was in 2006 with 600 exhibits. Of the exhibitors, 25 were male, 32 female, 6 joint male-female and two 'not specified's.

We were fortunate to have the Lord Provost Frank Ross to present the prizes. The full text of the show secretary's report can be found in the appendices.

## 6. Election of Management Committee

Nominations were received from the following allotment sites:

Carrick Knowe (CK) ; Bridgend (B); Craigentenny /Telferton (CT) ; Warriston (W);

Lady Road (LR) ; Leith Links (LL) ; Stenhouse (S)

The nominations for Office Bearers were as follows:

**President** - Stuart McKenzie (nominated by LL, LR, CT, B,CK)

**Secretary** - Liz Grace (nominated by LL, LR, CT, B, CK)

**Treasurer** - Dave Roberts (nominated by LL, LR, CT, B, CK)

**Trading Secretary** - Brian Bleakley (nominated by LR, LR, CT, B, CK)

**Show Secretary** – John Grace (LL, LR, CT, B, CK)

**Committee Members** - (nominated by LL, LR, CT, B, CK)

Gilbert Clark ; Maureen Edwards ; Paul Kerr ; Neiria McClure; Mary Simpson ;

Rosina Weightman ; Peter Wright ; Alison Hewitt ; Paul Kerr; Ernie Watt

(nominated by LR); Alice Bain ; Alison Hewitt (nominated by W)

Mary Simpson stepped down from the committee. Peter Shaw not re-elected.

Nominations from the floor- John Nisbet elected to the committee (CT)

Yvonne Dawes nominated but cannot fulfil this role; she remains a site representative

All Proposed by **DR** and seconded by **SMcK**

Accordingly the Management Committee comprising of the following was duly elected:

President: Stuart MacKenzie

Secretary: Liz Grace

Treasurer: Dave Roberts

Trading Secretary: Brain Bleakley

Management Committee: John Grace (Annual Show Secretary); Paul Kerr (Minutes Secretary); Ernie Watt (Newsletter); Alice Bain; Gilbert Clark; Alison Hewitt; Neiria McClure; Peter Wright; Mary Simpson; Rosina Weightman; Maureen Edwards

## 7. Motions to Annual General Meeting

None received

## 8. AOCB

Due to the success of the Dundee Flower Show visit in September, it was proposed that there is a return visit in 2019. There was second proposal was that there is a visit to the Ayr Flower Show in 2019 and a return to Dundee in 2020. However it was decided that we should visit Dundee in 2019. Muriel Horsburgh was congratulated on her organisational skills in arranging the 2018 visit and was presented with a bouquet of flowers in appreciation of a job well done. When asked, she agreed to organise a trip to the Dundee Flower show in 2019.

**IW** was asked about the number of plots given up each year (approximately 100) and the waiting times for allotment plots as depending on how this was calculated it could be anything between 10 years and 27 years.

**JG** enquired about courses for new allotment plotters and suggested that an introductory course would be a good way of getting them up to speed.

**IW** was asked about the number of empty plots. There are currently 11.

It was commented that not enough was being done to address the issue of 'dirty plots' and that it was unfair on people who had been waiting a long time for a plot .

## 9. Date of next AGM

Tuesday 22 October 2019

### Appendices:

#### Full Text the President's(SMcK) Report:

Another year gone by. I do hope the Federation can continue to both help improve your site and also make allotmenting more enjoyable for you.

Before I get going on my review of the year I must remember a stalwart of Edinburgh's allotments who has sadly passed away this year. Tony Stanton of Saughton Mains had been active in the Federation for many years. He understood the value of allotments, kept a very productive one himself and expected everyone else to do likewise. I was recently delighted when he told me he still read the minutes from each month's committee meeting and that he felt we were moving in the right direction. I'll certainly miss his straightforwardness and dry humour. Rest in Peace Tony.

We've held our monthly Management Meetings here at the Southside Community Centre all year. The meetings have been well attended and feel worthwhile to discuss issues that sites are having together with liaison with the Council Allotment Service.

Thanks are due to the Community Centre for setting out the room and keeping the costs to a reasonable level. Worth mentioning that the Council has introduced rules about overtime payments to the janitorial staff. We need to finish before 8.45pm or we will get thrown out.

Even bigger thanks are due to our Management Committee. A fine set of individuals all very knowledgeable and keen to improve their own sites to make the allotment experience better for everyone.

Our relationship with the Allotment Service is good. Ian Woolard now attends a couple of meetings a year which he manages to work around his golf.

Thanks for the support of our membership - but I just wish we knew who you are. The issue of handing over plotholders details remains outstanding. We'd love to communicate with our entire membership but Data Protection hurdles at Edinburgh Council remain in our way. I do hope some sense can prevail now that the strategy meetings are about to restart.

The Council allotment service have been taken up with evaluating what they need to do to implement the Scottish Government Community Empowerment Act. Essentially what they can do about the huge waiting list in Edinburgh.

I did go along to a recent Council meeting and made a speech asking for a full review of the list to discover exactly what people did want. I really don't expect everyone on the list actually wants a full plot, or even a half one

I also asked about my old site in Balgreen and asked that it could become an allotment site again once the tram rails are laid down to Leith. But don't hold your breath!

Our committee meetings continue to align our meeting agenda to our constitution. As I've said before, our constitution has quite simple objectives:

*The co-ordination of Allotment Associations, the protection of their interests and the improvement of their conditions.*

So, the first thing we discuss is site reports. What problems are being encountered, can we help, are there precedents? Anyone gets a say, but most importantly there is time to try to seek resolutions.

One site we've tried to help is Northfield. The site was built about 5 years ago by the local Neighbourhood Partnership. Sadly, the project never quite managed to connect



the stand pipes to the mains water. Most ploholders have given up and those remaining have had to cart water in containers over the A1 at Duddingston to keep their plants alive. Not an easy task this year. We're hopeful that some money can be found so that the situation can be improved and the site filled with ploholders instead of vandals.

Our constitution continues -

*To stimulate interest in and to encourage a commitment towards horticulture in allotments*

I'm delighted at the success of the SASA (Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture) 'landrace' potato trials we've been involved with. Even if some people ended up with an almost inedible crop of strange looking – and worst tasting – potatoes, they have given those three tubers a chance to come out of their cold storage and impress. Many have. Indeed, some comments make you wonder why anyone grows the common varieties now. 'The best potato I've ever tasted' is quite common in the feedback questionnaires you leave.

We didn't manage a trip to the SASA premises out in Gogar this time but did enjoy growing another 60 varieties this year. We had over 20 varieties on display at the Allotment Show in an exhibit there.

The Allotment Show was a resounding success. We filled a large hall full of excellent examples of our produce and many of you turned out to visit and have a chat and meet old pals. I know John will be presenting his report later so I'll leave it at that, suffice to say a huge vote of thanks to his team of helpers.

Finally, on the stimulating interest topic – we made it to the Dundee Flower Show. We'll I didn't, I was in Africa, but know the trip went well. This is due to the fantastic organisational skills of Muriel Horsburgh who even provided a horticultural quiz on the bus. Many thanks Muriel.

Finally, our constitution has as its last objective -

*To purchase, on a co-operative basis, supplies for the use of the members of the Federation*

I hope everyone takes advantage of our seed scheme which is generously provided by Kings Seeds. This year we made orders valued at almost £6,000. Our ploholders only

paid 55% of that and another 10% was returned to sites as an additional commission. Please encourage all your members to take part – it's a very worthwhile offer.

On top of this, we also order a pallet load of seed potatoes and onions from Kings. Again, it's generally a 50% savings over buying them from the DIY stores or online. Now is the time to order, you should hear from your site rep very soon.

Another thank you to all the volunteers, especially Willie Aitken, that unloaded the pallet, sorted potatoes and bagged up onions. It really was an incredible effort that was rewarded in saving to you and commissions to site funds.

We've also had confirmation of the extension of an excellent deal enabling sites to order a pallet-load of Rock Dust. The price ends up at less than half of the recommended retail price. Are any sites pulling together an order? Should we buy plenty and stock the shop?

As I mentioned earlier, FEDAGA helps Edinburgh Council define and implement its Allotment Strategy. Our role is of experienced consultants helping the Council fulfil its obligations to provide more allotments, manage them, improve the experience for ploholders.

The strategy group hasn't met all year but a meeting is scheduled this Friday. If you'd like to get involved please see me after the meeting. All help very welcome.

That's all I have to say. 2018 has been a good year for both growing crops and bringing together the ploholders of Edinburgh. I look forward to 2019 and continuing to enjoy allotmenting with you all.

### **Full Text of Treasurer's Report (DR):**

FEDAGA accounts remain strong despite trying to spend extra this year

Income was £7,437.39 expenditure £7,676.95

This represented a loss of £238.56... This was expected with the return of funds to sites of £2 per plot. Also the continued running of the Allotment Show took a considerable amount out of the funds. The bank account started with a sum of £10,429.27 and the account ended with a balance of £9981.95

With Committed costs of £752.15 still to be paid the notational loss was £238.56.

A large number of sites this year were paid by BACS, now in the banking system this simplifies the payments for the future.

Shop sales increased to £376 an increase of £83 on the previous year.

Trading contributed £584.5 to the funds down just under £160

A total of £3527.50 was returned to sites. The brake down is as follows £2828.00 return of CEC Subs

£587.98 return from Kings Seeds an increase of £149.78

The sites without accounts have grown as predicted and with new sites being added and older sites continuing to add to the growing total It now stands at £752.15. representing about 5% of funds

Internet banking is now full operational and the bulk of money returned to site was done by BACS this year. I would encourage all sites to embrace the new technology.

We need to do something about this situation of sites with no accounts:- suggestions please on a SAE.

The committee intention this year is to clear the outstanding costs. Here are some suggestions

Buy compost for each site have it delivered and the site can deal with distribution.

Give the proceeds to charity!

Create a default position, where after 6 months, of funds being allocated failure to have a working account for a site cancel all costs and add to FEDAGA funds (profit)

The committee will be discussing this over the next couple of months and decide the action to take.

**Action Points** – Ian Woolard to come back with accurate figures on the number of allotment site plots by the end of February 2019.

Stenhouse are recorded as having only 35 plots but there are actually 71

Dave Roberts, Treasurer

### **Full Text of Show Secretary's Report (JG): FEDAGA Vegetable and Flower Show, Report 2018**

The 2018 show was held on Saturday 8th September in the Methodist Church Hall, one week later than usual. The later date was used to avoid a clash with the Dundee Flower and Food Festival.

The show succeeded in its aim of bringing together the Edinburgh allotment community, thanks to a high level of publicity and the tactic of appointing committee members as advocates of the show, thus 'spreading the word' and encouraging plotholders to exhibit their produce. Ian Woolard (Edinburgh City Council) assisted the publicity by emailing plot-holders.

	<b>2012</b>	<b>2016</b>	<b>2017</b>	<b>2018</b>
<b>Exhibitors</b>	43	26	66	65
<b>Entries</b>	343	162	354	464

Entries were submitted from 17 sites, the most coming from Lady Road (8) with significant numbers coming from Claremont (7), Saughton (6) Inverleith (6) and Stenhouse (6). An analysis of the gender-balance of competitors showed that 25 were male and 32 were female, with 6 entries coming from male+female partners and a few giving their initial only and thus of unknown gender.

Entries were dominated by vegetable classes, and this year we saw large numbers of entries in beans, tomatoes, potatoes, and many good-quality apples reflecting the favourable summer weather.

**Flowers 50**

**Vegetables 253**

**Fruit 73**

**Plot to Plate 75**

**Children's section 13**

### **Changes in the classes from last year**

In 2017 we increased the children's classes from 4 to 9 and tried to make them more 'fun', attempting to make the show more of a family event. However, in 2017 we had rather few children's entries, and therefore we reduced the classes for 2018. Perversely, more children came, and some parents complained that runner-up medals were not awarded this year.

Similarly, one member complained that the chutney class that had been undersubscribed in 2017 had been deleted this year, rendering his chutney-making efforts of no avail.

Probably, it is best not to make many changes from year-to-year, as it can cause disappointment.

We introduced a bench of not-for-competition items, billed as 'Interesting and Peculiar'. It attracted several entries, including historical documents, old tools, and malformed fruit. A scarecrow appeared from Midmar, occupying a somewhat theatrical position next to the Church Organ.

### **Support from the staff of the Methodist Hall**

The Hall staff, and especially the janitors, supported us well, helping with the assembly and dismantling of the tables, providing the sound system. We used the Church's café for refreshments.

### **Support from local horticultural agencies**

SASA (Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture) provided posters on potato diseases and a collection of SASA's heritage potatoes, a feature that attracted much interest. We were fortunate to be joined again by Mark Hocart, Dean of the Edinburgh Centre of Scotland's Rural College (SRUC), and an expert on plant diseases, who was on hand to give advice to gardeners. We exhibited the apple press and ran an apple-tasting.

### **Thanks to the judges**

The judges (John Dyce, vegetables; Muriel Pate, plot to plate) discharged their duties admirably, managing to complete the judging in the short time available. John announced his retiral from judging and we are seeking a replacement; Muriel is busy with other matters next year. Thus, we seek new judges. In the last few days we have heard that Jim Mercer may be available for 2019 to replace John Dyce.

### **Support from the Edinburgh Council**

Prizes were awarded by The Lord Provost of Edinburgh, Frank Ross. Afterwards he made encouraging remarks about Edinburgh allotments, and indicated his willingness to help us where necessary regarding Council matters.

### **Costs**

Entry to the Hall was free to all and no charge was made for competing. The cost was £1064.94 which is equivalent to £16.14 per entrant and £2.15 per exhibit. The largest items of expenditure were engraving of the trophies (£283) and hire of the hall (£225). See appendix for breakdown of costs.

### **Possible dates of next year's show**

If we are to avoid a clash with the Dundee Flower and Food Festival, we should hold our Show on 14th September or 31st August.

### **Thanks**

It was my second year as Show Secretary. The success of the show is the result of excellent teamwork by a willing Committee: Neiria McClure, Alison Hewitt, Ernie Watt, Alice Bain, Dave Roberts, Peter Wright, Paul Kerr, Rosina Weightman, Maureen Edwards, Gilbert Clark, Stuart McKenzie. I thank them all.

John Grace, October 2018