



THE FEDERATION OF  
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT  
ALLOTMENTS AND  
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

## Minutes of Management Committee Meeting, 7pm on 11th June 2019 at Southside Community Centre

**Present:** Dave Roberts (Craigentinny Telferton) (Treasurer, Acting Chair) (**DR**); Maureen Edwards (Lady Road) (**ME**); Alison Hewitt (Warriston) (**AH**); Neiria MacClure (Claremont Park) (**NMcC**); Ernie Watt (Cambridge Avenue) (**EW**); Peter Wright (Lady Road) (**PW**); Observers: Yvonne Dawe (Saughton Mains) (**YD**); Heather McPherson (Northfield) (**HMCP**); David Morrice (Restalrig) (**DM**); Stuart Swarbrick (Ferry Road) (**SS**).

**1. Apologies:** Alice Bain (Warriston) (**AB**); Gilbert Clark (Midmar) (**GC**); John Grace (Midmar) (**JG**); Liz Grace (Midmar) (**LG**); Stuart McKenzie (Inverleith) (**SMcK**); John Nisbet (Craigentinny Telferton) (**JN**); Rosina Weightman (Saughton Mains) (**RW**).

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:** The Minutes of the meeting on 9th April were proposed by **AH** and seconded by **EW**. The Meeting on 14th May was inquorate at 7pm so it was decided that notes rather than official Minutes be taken which are appended to these Minutes.

**3. Matters Arising:** **LG** was tasked to advise independent affiliated sites Portobello East Junction and Dean of opportunities to access grant money for site improvements. The Neighbourhood Partnerships that administered these have now been superseded by Neighbourhood Networks. Information can be sought from local Community Councils. **ACTION - LG.**

**4. Site Reports:** **HMCP** said that there had been no further incidences of vandalism at **Northfield**. The site is nearly full with only 1 plot vacant. Everyone is working hard on their plots. The promised water supply is still not in place but she is hopeful that it will be attended to this year. The matter is in the hands of the Council and Scottish Water and they will work together to identify a start date. In the meantime plotholders have developed a community area and are growing wildflowers there.

**SS** said that volunteers had cleared a pile of debris from the area behind the gate at **Ferry Road** only to find the remains of a demolished shed dumped there a few days later. He described a big compost and manure delivery. Due to the restricted size of the gate on this site it is not possible to drive in on anything larger than a transit van. Consequently, Caledonian Horticulture (FRM) bulk compost deliveries cannot be facilitated. Instead, a van was hired from

Enterprise and orders of 40 litre bags were picked up from the depot at Braehead. A team of volunteers borrowed the bags around the site and delivered to plots. Manure and spent mushroom compost was ordered from Garden Solutions and similarly distributed.

**YD** reported on a successful AGM and scarecrow competition at **Saughton Mains**. The standard of scarecrow design was really high and the scarecrows are now doing their job on the plots.

**PW** and **ME** said the Action Day at **Lady Road** to tackle the Giant Hogweed was rained off. Instead, work to clear up the entrance and communal areas took place despite the inclement weather. The Hogweed herbicide spraying has been rescheduled for the end of the month to be followed by a BBQ.

**AH** reported on further break-ins to plots in the southern triangular exclave at **Warriston**. This area is vulnerable as it is secluded, separated from the main site by a walkway. Intruders have gained access by descending from a public path down a steep slope and through a gap in a fence. The Allotment Officer has quoted £20K for complete renewal of the fencing for this area.

**DM** said **Restalrig** has welcomed new ploholders recently. However, a ploholder suffered a stroke recently and there was a delay in the ambulance attending as it apparently could not find the allotments. GPS location coordinates have now been posted on the noticeboard along with details of a local doctors' surgery and a first aid kit is available. This has highlighted a potential issue for ploholders and the matter will be taken up with Council officials at the next Strategy meeting. It will be recommended that there should be a plan of action for such emergencies and that each site should identify their GPS location to aid ambulance crew. **ACTION - DR**. There was further discussion about what first aid material was available on sites and it varied with some aware of the nearest defibrillator and in possession of antihistamine pens for those allergic to bee stings. Most had a supply of plasters for superficial cuts. A further issue is how accessible such material is and general awareness among members.

**DR** spoke of a visit by the Environment Secretary to **Craigintinny Telferton** to mark the receipt of a £2K Growing Scotland grant. She was very impressed with the site. The money will be used to develop a better path to a sensory garden.

There was a general discussion on how sites managed access paths between plots. The general consensus was that this was a big problem as many individuals seemed reluctant to keep grass and weeds down adjacent to their plot. Some sites, such as Craigintinny Telferton were well organised but the system only works where volunteers step forward to look after larger areas, such as at Warriston. There was also a further discussion about how sites managed

and serviced communal equipment such as strimmers and lawnmowers. It was suggested that Livingston Garden Machinery was a good company providing service and repair for a wide range of models at reasonable prices. Also, the Edinburgh Tool Library may be worth investigating.

**5 and 6. Presidents and Secretary's Reports:** No reports.

**7. Treasurer's Report:** **DR** said that the Council's subscription returns of £3420 has been paid. Also, Killandean Community Allotments and Duddingston Village Community Garden have affiliated (£68 and £6 respectively). Cash from the FEDAGA shop (£221) and a rebate from Kings Seeds (£681) has also been taken so the finances are healthy. The Cooperative Bank Bond has been transferred to the main current account. The balance now stands at £16,933.61.

Expenses for the Allotment Show and the Dundee trip will soon need to be paid. The Treasurer is open to suggestions for spending some of the money FEDAGA holds for its member sites. Two strong contenders were supplying communal equipment such as a strimmer to each site and helping with removal of rubbish. These will be considered but it was **AGREED** that members' funds should not be spent on services that should be supplied by the Council and have already have been paid for in plot rent.

**8. Maintenance Report:** **NMacC** said there was nothing to report.

**Planning Report:** **AH** said there were no planning applications affecting allotments that she was aware of.

**Trading Report:** No report.

**Show Report:** **EW** said there was a delay in the preparation of the publicity poster but it is hoped this can be addressed soon. **NMacC** said many actions were on target. However, it was **AGREED** a meeting of the Show subcommittee be convened soon. **ACTION - JG.**

**9. Any Other Business:** **AH** asked if the new FEDAGA "mission statement" was available. This will be referred to the Secretary. **ACTION - LG.** She also asked if 3 broken noticeboards could be looked at for repair. **DR** undertook to visit to inspect the noticeboards at the end of the month. He also noted broken noticeboards at Claremont Park and Cambridge Avenue. **ACTION - DR.**

**10. Date of Next Meeting:** 9th July. Note: no meeting in August.

## **Note of items discussed at Management Committee Meeting, 14th May 2019 at Southside Community Centre.**

Present: Stuart McKenzie (Inverleith, President) (**SMcK**); Liz Grace (Midmar, Secretary) (**LG**); Dave Roberts (Craigentiny Telferton, Treasurer) (**DR**); Alice Bain (Warriston) (**AB**); Neiria MacClure (Claremont Park) (**NMacC**); Ernie Watt (Cambridge Avenue) (**EW**); Rosina Weightman (Saughton Mains) (**RW**); Peter Wright (Lady Road) (**PW**).

[Statement to Committee Members issued by **LG** after the Meeting:  
Unfortunately this meeting was inquorate with 6 members present at 7pm when **SMcK** opened proceedings. It was decided to make the discussions informal so no minutes were taken. Instead, **EW** made these notes. The actions attributed to individual people from the minutes of 9th April will be carried forward to the next meeting on 11th June.]

**1. Apologies:** John Nisbet (Craigentiny Telferton) (**JN**); Jane Robinson (West Mains) (**JR**); Alison Hewitt (Warriston) (**AH**).

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:** To be approved at the next Meeting.

**3. Matters Arising:** **EW** suggested that it would be more appropriate for the Secretary rather than himself to contact Portobello East Junction and Dean about accessing Neighbourhood Grants. **ACTION - LG**. All other actions from 9th April will roll over to 11th June. **SMcK** anticipates that there will be a meeting with the Allotment Officer to report back on by then.

**4. Site Reports:** **AB** reported on a very successful Plant Sale at **Warriston**. There was also tea, coffee and home baking on sale to raise money for site funds and provide an opportunity for allotment holders to socialise. The newly developed communal area with grass and fruit trees was officially opened. There are plans to clear out and open the tunnel under the walkway to join up the plots on the south side to make access to the main site easier and improve community cohesion. Also, it is hoped to provide bike racks in the car park. It was suggested that a grant application to Sustrans be made. However, there had been some break-ins through gaps in the fence. It is hoped these gaps will finally be secured. Incident reports have been lodged with the Police.

**NMacC** said there had been concern at **Claremont Park** recently when an intruder, clearly high on drugs, came in over the wall and then made his exit by clambering over a greenhouse. Fortunately he came to no harm.

**EW** said access to **Cambridge Avenue** has again been impeded by an inconsiderately parked vehicle across the gate. This site is on a private lane and

there is apparently very little that can be done about such incidents. The leaking tap had been fixed and he complimented the Allotment Officer and **NMacC** for arranging this so swiftly.

**RW** said there will soon be a meeting to take things forward at **Saughton Mains**. A plot holder has volunteered to run a scarecrow competition. A charity with a plot will be running an Open Day and there is talk of a site-wide Open Day. Unfortunately there have been a few break-ins with intruders coming in through a gap in a hedge despite plot holders efforts to block it up with barbed wire, etc. It seemed that little had been taken but considerable damage was done. Again, incident reports were lodged with the Police.

**PW** told of an imminent Action Day at **Lady Road** to clear invasive Giant Hogweed that encroaches from the Pow Burn and adjoining railway line. Network Rail will only tackle a narrow strip along the line leaving an infested banking next to the site.

**LG** reported on the **Midmar** AGM which was very well attended but failed to generate any new committee members. As one of those present was not an official plot holder there was discussion about the legitimacy of such individuals getting involved in site business. It was established that if people are not paying money to sublet a plot, which is not permitted, they can be considered to be cultivators who are assisting a leaseholder. Cultivators should register with the Allotment Officer to secure their interest. **PW** said that this was apparently the practice being followed by the Council and had been in the draft regulations FEDAGA discussed a few years ago. However, these proposals have not yet been adopted. **LG** also said a student photographer is making portraits of plot holders with a view to displaying them on site. The Kirkpatrick Medallion, which has been awarded since the 1930s to plot holders contributing to wellbeing has posthumously been awarded to Charles Passmore to honour his many positive contributions to the Midmar community. It was decided to improve the communal site and stage a Pop Up Shop that will provide a seed swap and sell plants in June. The issue of an oak tree inside the site shading a plot will be directed to an arboriculturalist as the Allotment Officer has declined to take action. Rosemary beetles have been reported on site. Finally, there is increasing concern about the state of steep access paths. This is partly due to deterioration of the paths and drops to adjoining plots but also due to the ageing member profile. In discussion about who is responsible for path safety **SMcK** said that any local site rules should be adopted and enforced by the Council. It was agreed that path improvements at Midmar will go on the Repair and Maintenance list. **ACTION - NMacC**.

**DR** said that the communal plot at **Craigentenny Telferton** has been improved by the provision of a new shed and pipes providing a water supply and a sink.

**DR** also reported on a visit to **Findlay Avenue** which was in response to a plotholder concerned about the state of the site. A few plots are unusable due to past constructions which have now fallen into disrepair. Pleas for action from the Allotment Officer have not been successful. Neighbouring residents have complained about the burning of rubbish and the Fire Brigade have been called. It was **AGREED** to arrange a site visit with the Allotment Officer and encourage the concerned plotholders to contact local Councillors. **ACTION - SMcK and DR.**

**SMcK** said that the skip provided at **Inverleith** was successfully filled with debris and also the rabbit problem might be resolved. With the increase in parking charges some plotholders have started parking their vehicles on park land by the site entrance. It was **AGREED** that the FEDAGA Apple Press, held at Midmar, will be provided for use on 13th October. The AGM will be held this weekend. A new plotholder reports that he was on the waiting list for 13 years. Is this a record?

**5. President's Report: SMcK** said he has been involved in the Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation application by SAGS. He has also been organising the SAGS Gathering on 13th June, which he encourages all to attend. Gardening Scotland takes place at Ingliston on 31st May and 1st and 2nd June. Volunteers are required to staff the SAGS stand.

**SMcK** attended Edible Edinburgh's Food Strategy meeting and suggested they establish a link between those on allotment waiting lists and food growing projects at care homes. This may get aspirant growers active earlier and provide much-needed volunteers.

The Kings Seeds commission has increased this year by £100 to £680 on a total sale of £6800. Saughton Mains narrowly beat Inverleith as the top participant, each site benefitting by close to £100.

On a more concerning note he said that it has come to light that once a Council plotholder has opted not to pay their FEDAGA subscription the option to rejoin will not be repeated in following years. This is not what was indicated would happen and will be taken up with the Council.

Enquiries will be made through the Scottish Community Alliance to establish how FEDAGA can tell which Council plotholders are paid-up members and eligible for benefits and which are not. **ACTION - SMcK.**

**6. Secretary's Report: LG** said there will be a Plant Sale at the Inch Park on 18th and 25th May. This notice also suggested that the Plant Sale will be collecting tools for refurbishment by inmates at Edinburgh Prison. However, this contradicts information received by **RW** which is that the project has ceased. She will investigate this. **ACTION - LG.**

**7. Treasurer's Report: DR** spoke to the Financial Statement detailing income for the Killandean visit (£430) and expenditure of £250 to Killandean, £866.09 to

Kings Seeds for the potato order, £75 for the SAGS subscription and £180 for bus hire to Killandean. Total assets stand at £12,627.39.

**8. Maintenance Report: NMacC** said she had recently had a meeting with the Allotment Officer where they collated their action lists. A great many tasks appear to have already been completed.

**Planning Report: AH** indicated no planning applications affecting allotments.

**Trading Report:** No report, but see reference to Kings Seeds under President's Report.

**Show Report: NMacC** said the tables have been booked and a judge for Plot to Plate secured. **EW** said that publicity should be arranged and undertook to do this. **ACTION - EW.**

**9. Any Other Business: PW** said that the Cooperative Bank had issued a cheque to himself and Brian Bleakley for reimbursement of the Bond. This cannot be cashed so he will endeavour to have that cancelled and a fresh cheque to FEDAGA issued. **ACTION - PW. LG** said that no volunteers had come forward to be filmed for the proposed advice podcasts so the invitation to ploholders will be reissued. **ACTION - LG.**

**10. Date of Next Meeting:** 11th June.