



THE FEDERATION OF  
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT  
ALLOTMENTS AND  
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

### **Management Committee Meeting**

**7.15pm on 13th September 2016 at Southside Community Centre**

**Present:** Committee: Peter Wright - Lady Road (**PW**) (President) : Ernie Watt - Cambridge Avenue (**EW**) (Secretary) : Dave Roberts - Restalrig (**DR**) (Treasurer) : Neira McClure - Claremont Park (**NMcC**) : Maureen Edwards - Lady Road (**ME**) : Paul Kerr - Redhall (**PK**); Observers: Alison Hewitt - Warriston (**AH**) : Alexis McKay - Ferry Road (**AMcK**) : Diane Hughes - Warriston : Chris Hughes - Warriston (**CH**) : Jenny McKenzie - Dumbryden (**JMcK**) : Mary Simpson - Saughton Mains (**MS**) : Alice Bain - Warriston (**AB**) : Barbara Seel - Leith Links (**BS**) : Moira Warren - Bridgend (**MW**) : Margaret McLennan - Bridgend (**MMcL**) : Lai Fun Russell - Stenhouse (**LFR**) : Maxine Brunt - Stenhouse : Margaret Williamson - Stenhouse : Joanne Liu - Stenhouse : Jenny Liu - Stenhouse.

**1. Apologies:** Stuart McKenzie - Inverleith (**SMcK**) : Brian Bleakley - Midmar (**BB**) : John McKinlay - Craigentenny.

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting:** The Minutes of the 13th July meeting were proposed by **PK** and seconded by **DR**.

**3. Matters Arising - Allotments on TV - PW** introduced **MW** who will this week start presenting a 5 minute slot about allotments on the STV Edinburgh show Live At 5. Filming commences tomorrow at Bridgend with the first piece to be broadcast on Friday. **MW** is keen to hear from other allotment holders across Edinburgh and asks that they get in touch with her at [\*\*moira.warren@hotmail.com\*\*](mailto:moira.warren@hotmail.com)

**Allotment Show:** **PW** referred to a report on the Show prepared by **SMcK**. There were fewer entries this year, but this was in part because there were no homecraft classes which always attracted a large number. **LFR** suggested that there is currently renewed interest in baking and breadmaking so this should perhaps be reinstated. **MW** said she thought the Show was brilliant. It was **AGREED** to go ahead with another Show next year as long as the tasks were shared out amongst as many people as possible. The possibility of a winter event for homecrafts and socialising was discussed. **MS** asked how much the Show cost. Expenditure has been reduced from £1500 to £800 by switching venues and tightening up the staging process. **EW** suggested that there could be a bucket for donations. It was **AGREED** that the Show be led by **SMcK**, but there must be a strong team to support him and ensure that the show does not depend entirely on one person.

**Council Allotment Strategy:** **PW** and **DR** reported on a meeting held last week at which the Allotment Strategy was worked through. A draft document will be shared with FEDAGA before going out for consultation. **PW** said that there is no funding

for capital expenditure, therefore no funding to create any new allotment sites. Any that may arise will be dependent on housing budgets and will probably be small raised bed-style community gardens. The only way to create new allotment sites is through people on the waiting list identifying land and applying for grants to make it happen themselves. The Council will give assistance in this procedure and charge a peppercorn rent. **PW** will recirculate a flowchart demonstrating how DIY sites can get up and running to the Management Committee as it appeared not everyone had received this. **ACTION - PW.**

**AGM - EW** has sent out AGM papers to all sites for which he has notification of a representative. He will post these papers on the website to ensure the widest possible distribution. **ACTION - EW.** It was **AGREED** to offer travel expenses to Dr. Brian Boag who will be the guest speaker. **ACTION - EW.**

**Apple Press - DR** said the Apple Press is available for sites to borrow. Restalrig has already booked it for the weekend of 1st and 2nd October. **EW** will contact site representatives and make arrangements for the loan of the equipment. There will also be publicity for this in the Newsletter. **ACTION - EW.**

**Leith Links - BS** reported on fresh proposals for a housing development by Teague Homes on the land to the north of this site. The implications for plots on the east and west sides, which will be removed to make way for pathways and trees are obvious, but equally worrying has been the absence of communication between the Allotment Officer and ploholders on the issue. The matter is complicated by the presence of 15th century "plague pit" graves in the area. A working group for the site has been formed and has arranged a meeting next week with the Council, developer, archaeologist and architect to discuss concerns. It is hoped a Section 75 agreement can be used to benefit the allotment site. Plans show a small area to the north may be available for relocation of the removed plots, but it is hoped the site could use the project as an opportunity to expand to meet the huge demand. Advice on how to proceed was given and support from FEDAGA will be available if required. **PW** reminded the meeting that FEDAGA still has no volunteer to take up the planning brief to monitor proposals that may have an implication for allotments. While this continues the allotment community is restricted to reacting to developments once they are announced.

**4. Allotment Officer - NMCC** had a brief report from the Allotment Officer on progress. Tasks completed include the refelting of the chalet roof at Saughton Mains, repairs to the fence and fitting out of the container at Dumbryden and servicing of the water pump at Bridgend following a breakdown. He is still waiting for quotes for the following: extension to the water supply at Warriston, green netting on a fence at Claremont Park, new gates at Lady Road and a fence repair at West Mains. **NMCC** confirmed that the previous £20K budget for ongoing maintenance will be continued. It was **AGREED** FEDAGA's spending priorities will remain security and health and safety issues.

**5. Consideration of Reports - Secretary's Report:** **EW** had circulated this prior to the meeting. He drew attention to the Council's Open Space Strategy 20021, currently open for consultation. The closing date for this is 21st October. Allotments are incorporated and it seems likely that the Allotment Strategy will feed into it. He will encourage members to look at this and make comments in a Newsletter piece. **ACTION - EW.** **EW** has been contacted by a member of an unaffiliated independent site, Wester Hailes, regarding the Kings Seeds scheme which brought to light the fact that this site still benefits from the FEDAGA Trading Scheme despite no longer paying affiliation fees. He recommended that FEDAGA should be aware of such anomalous situations especially as from next year the Council will allow ploholders to opt out from paying their individual membership fees. It was **AGREED** to monitor the situation and take action if there is a substantial fall off in income. **DR** asked site representatives to encourage members to opt in so that they can support their representative bodies and take advantage of membership benefits.

**Treasurer's Report:** **DR** presented a full statement to 27th July, which shows a profit of £1800. However, against this the expenditure on the Show should be taken into account, reducing the figure by about half. The Council has at last paid members subscriptions to FEDAGA. It was **AGREED** to pay the Southside Community Centre £20 membership fee which entitles FEDAGA to use of the premises. **ACTION - DR.**

**Trading:** **EW** reported that **BB** had advised him that he is in receipt of Kings potato and onion lists and will issue papers for the annual site orders soon. **ACTION - BB.**

**SAGS Report:** **JMcK** reported on a couple of SAGS meetings she has attended, as well as the Annual Conference in the summer at which she met with Fife Allotment Officer Peter Duncan, who has been seconded by the Scottish Government to work on implementation of the Community Empowerment Act as it relates to allotments. She was hugely impressed with him and how he worked and proposed that FEDAGA invite him to attend a future meeting. It was **AGREED** to pursue this. **ACTION - EW.** **JMcK** referred to the recent Allotment Forum in Fife and proposed that this should be a longterm objective for FEDAGA which could benefit Edinburgh allotments.

**Site Reports:** **LFR** and her colleagues from Stenhouse reported that the new extension is becoming established and they claim it is already looking better than the main site. The ground is very rocky and a lot of work is being done to improve it.

**MMcL** reported on the bee hives recently established at Bridgend. The TV filming tomorrow will focus on this. The implementation of this project has been well handled with widespread consultation and appropriate training provided. A report will be made in a year's time. She also said a successful community clean-up operation has greatly improved the general amenity of the site, which had been getting a bit neglected.

**ME** said that Lady Road will hold their AGM at the end of the month at which a proposal will be made to levy £20 from each plot holder to pay for someone to look after the entrance and communal areas. This is because it is always the same few volunteers who respond to action days to maintain the site.

**CH** said that the new security fence on the south side of Warriston is a great improvement but there remains a problem with a lot of large trees that should be taken down as they cast a lot of shade. **AH** and **AB** said there was a well attended AGM at the weekend and Warriston now has a full complement on the committee.

**JMcK** reported on the fitting out of the communal container at Dumbryden. This was required as there are no huts allowed here and people require a space to store their tools. Space has been compartmentalised to reduce the risk of accidental removal of someone else's belongings, but a breakdown in communication has resulted in 36 spaces for 44 plot holders. It's also very dark at the far end.

**MS** told of more vandalism and theft at Saughton Mains. Bolt cutters were used to gain access through the fence and the intruders concentrated on stealing produce from plots. Sheds were damaged as they looked for items to steal. It appeared that what they were interested in were power tools.

**AMcK** said that Ferry Road had an AGM although a formal committee was not constituted. A major issue is that the composting toilet no longer works. The meeting agreed a communal approach to get improvements made so that the load was taken off the regular few volunteers.

**NMcC** reported thefts at Claremont Park. Again, the intruders seemed mainly interested in stealing produce, this time fruit. Members seemed apathetic about raising this with the Police. It was **AGREED** that each incident must be reported to the Police and an incident number obtained. Only then, if this contributes to the number of unsolved crimes reported, will it become an issue for the Police to address at a higher level. Also, the same individuals may be linked with other crimes elsewhere and it is helpful if a pattern of their activity can be established.

**DR** said the composting toilet at Restalrig is broken and the Allotment Officer has been informed. As plot holders have regularly been filling the trade waste bin with compostable material a compost area has been built. Unfortunately, neighbouring plot holders from Prospect Bank have used it to dispose of unwanted material from a dirty plot on that site, which has caused annoyance. It was **AGREED** that the Allotment Officer should not let out dirty plots in an unfit condition for cultivation to new plot holders, a skip should be provided for waste disposal and previous negligent plot holders should be billed for this work - but it was sadly acknowledged that this never happens.

**6. Any Other Business:** There was no further business.

**7. Date of Next Meeting:** 11th October.