



THE FEDERATION OF
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT
ALLOTMENTS AND
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

Minutes of FEDAGA Management Committee Meeting At 7pm On Tuesday 10 March 2020 at Southside Community Centre

Present

Stuart McKenzie (**SMcK**)(Inverleith)(President); Ernie Watt(**EW**)(Cambridge Ave)(Newsletter); Liz Grace (**EG**) (Midmar) (Secretary) ; Neiria McClure(**NMcC**) (Claremont Park); Edward Irvine (EI)(Saughton Mains); Alan Gordon (AG) (West Mains); Lorna Henderson (LH) (Carrick Knowe); Alison Hewit (**AH**) (Warriston); Paul Kerr (**PK**) (Redhall) (Minutes) ; Heather McPherson (**HMcP**) (Northfield); David Morrice (**DM**) (Restalrig); Margaret Williamson (MW)(Stenhouse)

Invited Guest: Ian Woolard (IW), Council Allotments Officer

1. Apologies

Peter Wright(**PW**)(Lady Road); Dave Roberts (**DR**)(Telferton/Craigentenny)(Treasurer); John Grace(**JG**)(Midmar)(Allotment Show); Jan Bradbury(JB)(Saughton Mains); Yvonne Dawe (YD)(Saughton Mains); Alice Bain (**AB**)(Warriston); Maureen Edwards (**ME**) (Lady Road); Jane Robinson(JR)

2. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

the Minutes of the last Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday February 11 were proposed by EW and seconded by AH

3. Matters/Actions Arising

The FEDAGA small grants scheme is to be discussed further at the next meeting when JB will be present.

The fee for SAMH to join FEDAGA is to be discussed at the next meeting

4. Council Allotment Officers Annual Report (IW)

Ian Woolard (IW) , Council Allotment Officer's Annual Report

The consultation on the allotment Regulations is on the CEC Consultation Hub and this closes on 27 March. A good response has been received so far with 181 replies. IW would encourage all site reps to put this on their Site Noticeboards. IW will also check site noticeboards when he is on his routine visits.

The annual allotment charge Invoices now contain additional straplines and information will be shared with FEDAGA in April. Approximately 108 people have opted out of the FEDAGA subscription.

Two new sites will open shortly . A new 20 plot site at Newcraighall built by Barratts Homes and a CEC built site at Piershill Square west about 8 quarter plots, wide paths to be DDA compliant.

Mains water will be switched on at towards the end of March or earlier.

It has been a very wet winter and this has had a big impact on plot allocations city wide. Now that the weather has improved , plot allocations are back in full swing again. The number of plots being vacated is low so far this year. There are still about 21 Vacancies and these should be filled fairly quickly . Many plots given up were ones which were catching the eye of IW last year.

It has been a fairly quiet Winter apart from some vandalism at Warriston. A new fence has been erected. There has also been some flooding at Baronscourt . Bags of topsoil were ordered and delivered to the site from Forth Resource Management.

The Winter works are slightly behind schedule .and IW is hoping to have them completed by mid April.The work is mainly tree pruning.

Allotment maintenance works for the year ahead are being discussed. There were a few priorities such as the roof of the pumphouse at Bridgend and the wall at Restalrig. Where there are loose bricks.

There is still some rabbit activity at Carricknowe and Bridgend allotments. Rabbits at Carricknowe are stripping back the bark on some fruit trees.

There are currently, approximately 3400 people on the Council's allotment site waiting list. This went down to 1,300 at one point last year but increased again to 2,500 and now stands at 3,400. There are around 800-900 people joining the online waiting list each year. AG enquired if the waiting time for individual sites was detailed on the website. IW is to check on this.

Many sites are still requesting woodchip for paths etc.

There have been reports of missed trade waste collections from some sites. This has been taken up by IW and trade waste collections from sites should now be back on track .

5. Site Reports

Restalrig (DM)

They still have some flooding on part of the site. They are looking to encourage hedgehogs on the site.

West Mains (AG)

Nothing of interest to report

Cambridge Ave (EW)

There is an ongoing dispute regarding contractor access to the allotment site and who should give them keys. Contractors have caused damage to different plots when accessing the site to carry out work at the rear of houses on Cambridge Avenue. IW agreed that he would be the point of contact for Contractors who needed keys for access.

Claremont (NMCC)

Nothing of interest to report

Warriston (AH)

A large tree has been blown down and has damaged perimeter fence panels.

Stenhouse (MW)

A good night out was had with the Scottish Vegetable Society who gave a presentation on growing Prize Winning vegetables. Thirty people attended and enjoyed tea and cakes afterwards. They would like to turn half of the large plot near the gate into a communal area with a pond where people could relax and eat lunch. They would also like to move the position of the main gate to make the site more accessible to ploholders on all parts of the large site.

Carrick Knowe (LH)

There is rat, rabbit and squirrel activity on the site. Fruit trees have been barked possibly by squirrels and rabbits. There has been no recent flooding on the site. LH enquired if IW was planning to do anything about the condition of the paths on the site. IW is to provide some large bags of whin dust for the paths. LH mentioned that cycle racks are available to install at other sites – like those recently installed at Warriston allotments. If other sites are interested then they should contact Lorna Henderson - lorna.henderson@edinburgh.gov.uk

Saughton Mains (EI)

They are looking at having communal composting facility on the site. They are also planning to have a plant swap – social event later in the year.

Lady Road

Northfield Drive (HMCP)

Checked with NMcC that the site path is included on the FEDAGA maintenance wish list . IW said that he could provide bags of whin dust for the path . the planned three bay composting facility hasn't happened yet. The planned wildlife area has been rotovated. Free trees are being delivered by the Conservation Volunteers .They are going to plant Hawthorn and black-thorn bushes on the perimeter of the site.

Redhall (PK) – nothing of interest to report. Would like some hardcore to fill the potholes at the Redhall allotments site access road.

Midmar (EG)

The top path has become dangerous. A discussion followed about what could be done to make it safer and heavy duty reinforced plastic matting was suggested.

Inverleith (SMcK)

The paths are very soggy at the moment after all the heavy rain.They still have a problem with rabbits on the site.

6. President's Report (SMcK)

Main points from the Allotment Strategy Meeting held on 6 March 2020 – Action List -

Annual rent invoices have changed to enable FEDAGA to use member details. Thank you to Ian Woolard (IW) .The list of paid members will be passed FEDAGA by end of April. There will be no sharing with sites at present until the GDPR implications are understood.

Water charges information – not done but expect to get something to site notice board by the end of April

Northfield Drive – there has been no progress on the new water supply. IW will pass the details of SL who is responsible to FEDAGA to see if the matter can be expedited.

Arco First Aid Kits – most have been distributed already to allotment sites. IW will complete this by the end of March.

Location codes for Scottish Ambulance Service c- this has now been completed. Scottish Allotments (SAGS) will feature this in the next Newsletter asking other sites to be pro-active.

Revised Regulations – out for consultation . 181 responses have been received so far . They are in general agreement but the detail needs to be analysed. The Consultation ends on 27 March, after 6 weeks. This will be reviewed at the next meeting.

New Allotment Site – a shortlist is in progress which stands at 5 potential sites for a community led initiative. Edinburgh and Lothian Greenspace Trust (ELGT) will help organise this. The Final site selection is expected in late April when this can start.

Attended a SAGS meeting on Saturday where the Tools Project was on the agenda. There are seven sites in Edinburgh which would be likely to succeed in getting a grant and could benefit from this scheme including Stenhouse

There will be a tripartite Group meeting again in a couple of weeks. One of the main items on the agenda is Dispute Resolution.

SMcK is making a four minute movie on the work and history of SAGS for Gardening Scotland.

SASA will provide potato trial potatoes again this year. If you are interested please contact SMcK.

Food Growing Strategy - the draft has been produced which will be issued at the end of March for consultation.

Leith Links Bowling Greens – they have both been badly vandalised and the clubhouse has been torched and will need to be demolished. The space has the potential for a community garden using self-built raised beds /builders bags of soil. The feasibility of this will be investigated by (BMcA).

The Next Allotment Strategy Meeting will be held on April 9th 10am -12.

7. Secretary's report (EG)

Nothing of interest to report

8. Treasurer's Report (DR)

The Financial Statement to the end of December 19 had previously been circulated. The balance at 27th December 2019 was £12251.40. The FEDAGA cheque book is held by **EW** until **DR** returns from abroad.

9. Maintenance (NMcC)

NMcC has updated the maintenance wish list spreadsheet and include new requests.

10. Planning (AH)

nothing of interest to note in recent planning applications

11. Trading (BB)

The potato order was delivered to Inverleith Allotments on Tuesday morning, 3 March and site orders were prepared by volunteers. Thank you to all who gave up their time to help with this.

The shop at Inverleith Allotments will open again for a second time on Sunday 15th March 2pm-3.30pm. There are many varieties of seed potato and onion/shallot sets still available.

12. Annual Show (JG)

Allotment Show report (JG) – given by EG.

Several other options have been considered for the allotment show venue this year

i) Summerhall, east of the Meadows, which has a superb main hall (16.9m x 8.5m) and would have been ideal but is not available on our date of 12 September. They do have another hall called the TechCube (17mx 7m) but it is less attractive with a low ceiling and fluorescent light tubes.

ii) Leith Theatre at 30 Ferry Road has a very good venue in the Thomas Morton Hall. It is big enough but unfortunately not available on our date.

iii) Appleton tower Concourse (University of Edinburgh), George Square. This is an extremely large space (560m²) with easy access and good services. JG has an enquiry being processed.

iv) Edinburgh international Conference Centre (EICC) – JG met with Councillor George Gordon on 4 March. Councillor Gordon thinks he may be able to assist FEDAGA in getting a suitable space in the EICC and help us to organise the show. As a joint venture with Edible Edinburgh and other similar initiatives, with support from Sustainable Cities, the Soil Association and various other organisations. He also mentioned possible Church of Scotland venues; he thought there were 'many'. He also thought that the New College (the Mound) was a possibility.

Other Considerations – trestle tables are not normally provided at these venues.

13. AOCB

AG enquired if there was a way for people who had no internet to comment on the new allotment Regulations. Yes, this is possible through the Consultation Hub.

AG -Comments regarding who has the final say on the new allotment Regulations after the consultation period has ended and comments have been received from ploholders.

EW proposed that we have a serious discussion about the new Regulations at the next meeting.

EW has received communications from Gustavo at Artisan Roast and May at Findhorn.org regarding the use of used coffee grounds on allotment sites. Potentially 700Kg+ of used coffee grounds can be recycled as a soil improver in Edinburgh Allotments.

EW is arranging a meeting with the interested parties on a date after 18 March .

Post script addendum-the following

notes were made by Alan Gordon regarding the new Allotment Regulations; the meeting was out of time leaving insufficient time for full discussion(EG)

“There is mainly good in the proposals but other parts are not a good- leaving a legacy with poor or absent definitions, plain errors or unreasonable restrictions.

By these proposals you have to remove all sheds, greenhouses or polytunnels when you stop renting even if you inherited them!

There are many huge loopholes that an unreasonable plothead or Allotment Officer (after Ian Woolard retires) could use inappropriately.

The number of errors is sufficient that further scrutiny by the Full FEDAGA committee is required after the Steering Group have modified the proposals.

Ernie Watt stated that modified proposals could go straight to Edinburgh Council for approval after the public consultation finishes. This is unacceptable.”

Date of Next Meeting

Please note-

All further meetings are cancelled until further notice due to the Covid 19 epidemic;

Please also note the SSCC is closed.