



THE FEDERATION OF
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT
ALLOTMENTS AND
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

Minutes of FEDAGA Management Committee Meeting 7pm Tuesday 10 November 2020 - Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

Present

Stuart McKenzie (SMcK)(Inverleith)(President); Dave Roberts (DR) (Telferton; Craigentenny)(Treasurer); Liz Grace (EG) (Midmar)(Secretary); John Grace (JG)(Midmar)(Allotment Show); Neiria McClure (NMCC) (Claremont Park); Alison Hewitt (AH) (Warriston); Paul Kerr (PK)(Redhall) (Minutes); Jan Bradbury(JB) (Saughton Mains); John Nesbit (JN)(Telferton/Craigentenny);Heather MacPherson (HMacP)(Northfield); Alice Bain(AB)(Warriston); Margaret Williamson (MW)(Stenhouse); Stuart Swarbrick (SS) (Ferry Road); Alan Gordon(AG)(West Mains); Tana Holmes (TH)(Portobello East Jn.); Maureen Edwards(ME) (Lady Road).

1. Apologies

Ernie Watt (EW) (Cambridge Ave), Peter Wright(PW (Lady Road), Pamela McKay(PMcK) (Lethem Park), Alison Leslie (AL)(Lady road), Lorna Henderson(LH)(Carrick Knowe)

2. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

The Minutes of the last Management Committee meeting held on Tuesday 13th October2020 were proposed by DR and seconded by NMCC.

3 Matters/Actions Arising

SMcK commented on the issue of site bonfires and the benefits of chipping waste. AB commented that the Fire Brigade had visited Warriston two Sundays ago in response to a bonfire complaint which was resolved amicably. Plot holders at Warriston are allowed to have bonfires only on Sunday (not Saturday as this would cause nuisance to the visitors to the Crematorium) and after 6pm weekdays(see site report). Claremont not allowed bonfires. Inverleith hired a chipper for the weekend at a cost of £140 (incl.VAT) It was very popular and worked very well. From the number of ploholders using it they had donations of £70(SMcK). JN commented that his site had hired a chipper which quickly became blocked and had to be returned as it couldn't be used. It was then hired a second time and unfortunately blocked again. JB asked if SMcK could share details of the chipper used by Inverleith. This information is contained in the Presidents report.

4. Site Reports

Ferry Road (SS)

We have put in a bid for the Climate Change Emergency Asset fund to get a chipper/shredder and a set of ramps to make it easier to load into a van. Waiting to hear back - probably December. I've been updating the Ferry Road website, to include a booking form for our tools - the leaf blower will be added to this soon, for now it's blocked out for a week to let us get to know how to use it, etc.

[https://ferryrdallotments.wordpress.com/site-tools/.](https://ferryrdallotments.wordpress.com/site-tools/) We have purchased our wheelbarrows and leaf blower from the Small Grants Scheme - just need to tag the barrows and they will be out for use.

West Mains (AG)

The water supplies at allotment sites will soon be getting turned off for the Winter. West Mains have purchased a supply of hand sanitiser for plot holder use, which is high in alcohol.

Inverleith (SMcK)

A communal compost bin emptying day was held complete with social distancing. We asked people to book 15 minute time slots to help themselves to, or take away, the new release 'Inverleith Gold'. This emptied two of the three bins.

We then hired a chipper to chop up tree wood and green waste which went onto paths and back into the compost bins. Again, all distanced by people reserving time slots. A great success. We've now realised how we could remove any need for bonfires by helping ploholders dispose of waste in this way.

Saughton Mains(JB)

Our zoo poo weekend at the end of October went very well, with over 80 ploholders lining up, socially distanced of course, with their wheelbarrows. We covered our costs and made up for losses we incurred the previous year (different contractor, larger lorries). The following week we hired a skip to help ploholders get rid of rubbish in a bid to tidy up sites, so no more excuses for rubbish left lying about !

Ploholders are getting done to the business of covering and mulching their plots for winter while continuing harvesting leeks, potatoes, beetroot and brassicas.

In the midst of good news it is sad to report the theft of a number of dahlia plants. There were no other reports of damage or vandalism and it was clear whoever took knew what they doing. It would be useful to know whether this is an isolated incidence or whether other sites / plots have been targeted. Please keep your eyes and ears open and report any incidence of people offering dahlia tubers for sale !

Social distancing and other Covid 19 requirements are still in place, toilets, chalet and other communal facilities closed. Ploholders are very glad to be able to access their allotments during any shutdowns and other restrictions.

Some plots that have not been cultivated all year are becoming seriously overgrown. Decisions need to be made people on the future of these plots so that they can be brought back to a reasonable state over the winter months.

Warriston(AB)

Stone wall repaired along main path. Looks great and is now safe.

Bonfire complaints transpired to belong to a single serial complainer. Both the fire service and council have inspected the site and given us their full support to continue burning within our guidelines. Ian is handling all communications with the complainant and considers the matter closed for now.

Midmar (JG)

There have been on-going issues regarding overhanging woody vegetation encroaching on paths.

Associated with this, there is at least one case where a tall tree has been allowed to grow next to a path (it should be removed).

In one instance, on Field 1, this has led to unpleasant exchanges between plot-holders and long-running hostility manifest in ways which ought never to happen among civilised people.

I am unsure how to proceed. There are clear breaches of the regulations (I'm working from the new draft Regs, but the cases are covered, albeit less well, by the old rules too).

SMcK confirmed that as the new Regulations had not been approved the old Regulations and so the older version of the rules were still in place and should be used.

AG commented that if it is a tree on someone else's plot that is causing the problem then Ian Woolard should be involved and speak with the plot holder concerned. SMcK confirmed that JG should raise the matter with IW.

Lady Road (AL)

Nothing to report apart from the Armageddon Flood with the thunder and lightning storm which ruined the crops growing low down above ground.

Dumbryden (Kate Main)

Nothing to report except some recent theft from the site.

Findlay Avenue (Philip Glennie)

Awaiting a new lock on the front gate from Ian Woolard and we are also organising a plan to clear the Communal potting shed which is full of rubbish and had foxes living there. The space has been inaccessible for 4/5 years and it's still a challenge.

As an aside, would it be possible to put notifications of these meetings on whatsapp too? Another plot holder gets the email notification. **ACTION EG**

5. President's Report (SMcK)

SAGS has sent out a request to vote on existing and new members of their board. Why this is necessary is not known especially as just two of the existing Board are up for election whilst two others on the Board have never been elected. Glasgow Allotment Forum have tried to get clarity on what is going on and have ended up making a formal complaint to OSCR (the charities regulator) about the SAGS conduct in changing the constitution and the method adopted to do so.

This committee agreed to support Andrew Reid, the Treasurer, but no others. **Action DAVE** - as the official contact please reply with this voting.

Rents would rise next year by the standard 5% being adopted by Council services. A full plot would be £126, concession £63, half plot £63 and a half plot with concession £31.50. In 2022 it may be possible to make rents fairer by charging a fixed administration charge across the board plus a (reduced) plot rental component. This was only a 'heads up' as much discussion was needed ahead of formal adoption. JB commented that ploholders should be encouraged to take a half plot where they could not manage a full one.

Pansy Walk Allotments - Stuart joined the Murrayfield Community Council meeting over Zoom immediately after the meeting. The MCC meeting agreed it would be desirable to the local communities for the old site to again become allotments. Cllr Frank Ross led the discussions and would contact the local Councillors and school to raise the prospect that this could happen. I explained no Council funding was likely but a community led initiative had become the new model. Stuart will contact the Allotment service to find out how we might analyse the waiting lists to identify who lives nearby in order that we hold a meeting to introduce the concept. **Action – SMcK**

The link to the Inverleith chipper video is here - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d_fv107Wlv8&feature=youtu.be

You'll see it is an amazing machine that either chips tree wood for paths or green waste for the compost bin.

The model and the hire company we used are Eliot Major 4S available at Basically Tool Hire 0131 663 9563

6. Secretary's report (EG)

I asked the grower who supplied our leek plants to send me a list of all vegetable plants they are intending to offer for sale in the coming season.

We need to discuss whether we would offer to facilitate sales to our members; it would be of financial benefit to them but may involve a lot of effort and time for those volunteering to organise such sales.

A provisional list of available vegetables has been provided but this is still to be agreed with Liz Orr, who is our contact person.

Alan Gordon(AG)West Mains and Pamela McKay PMcK)Lethem Park are welcome new additions to the Management Committee.

7. Treasurer's Report (DR)

The Financial Statement had been circulated prior to the meeting. The current balance is £12595.34

Small Grants Scheme

Progress has been made and the following sites have now purchased their goods:-

Baronscourt - 15 Trolleys ; Ferry Road -2 wheel barrows and a leaf blower, Findlay Avenue -2 Trolleys;
Lady Road - large trolley ;

The sites agreed in principle awaiting spend –

Saughton Mains - Composting bins; Stenhouse - willdlife area; Victoria Park – water storage ; Lethem Park - composting bins ; Restalrig - trolley

Sites still to finalise revised Plan/spending agreement:-

Northfield Drive -communal area; Portobello East Jcn- Path Upgrades

Sites withdrawn Grant request.

Saughton Mains - Tools

The current spend is £1700 which has pretty much used up the small grant funds for this year.

8. Maintenance (NMCC)

Nothing new of interest to report.

9. Planning (AH)

No recent planning matters of interest to report.

10. Trading

No report. The deadline for orders through the FEDAGA potato/onion/shallot/leek scheme has now passed (7th November 2020).

11. AOCB

Date of Next Meeting: Tuesday 10 December 2020 at 7pm using internet conferencing.

Please note-

All further meetings in person are cancelled until further notice due to the Covid 19 pandemic.

Please also note the SSCC is closed. Future meetings will be held by internet conferencing using Zoom.