



THE FEDERATION OF  
EDINBURGH AND DISTRICT  
ALLOTMENTS AND  
GARDENS ASSOCIATIONS

## Minutes of FEDAGA Management Committee Meeting 7pm Tuesday 12 October 2021 - Virtual Meeting Via Zoom

### Present

Stuart McKenzie (SMcK)(Inverleith)(President); Liz Grace (EG) (Midmar)(Secretary); John Grace(JG)(Show Convenor)(Midmar);Ernie Watt(EW)(Cambridge Ave)(Newsletter); Alison Hewitt (AH) (Warriston)(Planning); Paul Kerr (PK)(Redhall) (Minutes); Neiria McClure NMCC (Claremont); Jan Bradbury(JB)( Saughton Mains); Margaret Williamson(MW)(Stenhouse); Alice Bain(AB)(Warriston); Nils Tomes(NT) (West Mains);Willie Aitken(WA); Pamela MacKay(PMacK) (Lethem Park); John Nisbet(JN)(Telferton;Craigentenny)Tana Holmes(TH)( Portobello); Philip Dickson (Northfield), Stuart Swarbrick (SS)(Ferry Road);Chris McKinnell(CMcK) (Lady Road);Craig (Portobello East)

### 1. Apologies

Apologies – David Roberts; Lorna Henderson

### 2. Adoption of Minutes of Previous Meeting

Proposed – JG. Seconded – NMCC

### 3. Matters Arising/Action Points from previous meeting –

EG has been in contact with the Southside Community Centre (SSCC) to inform them that we won't be returning until next Spring at the earliest. SSCC are fine with this.

SMcK – the Gilbert Clark Foundation is now up and running. EW – there is link in the current Newsletter and a page on the FEDAGA website.

SS – has been in contact with DR regarding making a stencil for any tools/equipment purchased through the Gilbert Clark Foundation. DR has a stencil cutting machine and is going to do this.

**Action Point** -DR Proposals on how to best use the unexpected additional funding of £10,000 from CEC - covered in AOCB

### 4. Allotment Officers Report (IW)

We had a very nice Summer after a cold start. Site conflicts were much lower than normal, however water problems were on average more difficult to resolve on the new sites.

My autumn purge is ongoing, although vacancies are occurring, they are not as prevalent as in some years at this moment.

There is a 10k additional spend for allotments to be spent by next Spring. These must be for Shredders and rainwater harvesting. Still meeting with Neiria to organise allotment spend, including fencing at Inverleith/ Midmar. There may additional money to spend and I am current obtaining quotes for new fencing at Warriston.

Water repairs on existing sites were okay this year, although there were problems at the new site and Northfield Drive should be connected within the next month.

Two new sites at Newcraighall/Peirshill Square are now open and operational. Hoping to open further sites next year with Victoria Park phase 2 and maybe Prestonfield.

Ongoing flooding issues were reported Lady Road, looking to order material to assist and meeting Chris McKinnell on site to discuss..

Two wildlife project will occur this Winter at Baronscourt and Stenhouse. Glendale Contactors are being used.

Starting to input the 2022 allotment bills. There will be a slight cost increase.

Fires are permitted again after a successful suspension over the Summer months.

Pest control issues were ongoing this year. Water will be turned off at the end of the month.

Bin uplifts over the summer were good.

The new Allotment Regulations are complete and will be sent out soon.

The next Allotment Strategy meeting is to take place soon.

Site Association fees have been refunded.

MW enquired about the wildlife projects as they have a grant which is time limited and must be used by the end of the year.

NT enquired how many new plots there would be next year. IW – 16 at Victoria Park, 16 at Piersfield

Possibly some at Gypsy Brae

JG enquired about current waiting list numbers .IW – around 4,700 on the waiting list.

NT enquired about the review of the waiting list in past years that reduced it considerably, but it has grown since then.

WA enquired about the Pansy Walk site. IW not sure what the current position is.

SMcK- requested that IW provide an update at the next Strategy Meeting.

NT enquired if there would be increases to the site allotment fees in the next year and year after. IW –

Fees will increase from £126 to £132 in 2022( a £6 cost of living increase).

PD enquired if the £10,000 additional site funding could be used for anything else in addition to shredders and rain water harvesting. There was discussion about how the £10,000 windfall would be allocated. IW was fairly adamant this would be spent on shredders/chippers for Warriston and Midmar and water harvesting for communal building roofs. There are claims for fruit trees for Northfield and wheelbarrows, generally. IW will liaise with NMCC .SMcK said that there is a need for insurance, training, PPE, maintenance and fuel for shredders. It was agreed that these expenses should be met out of site funds. There was also a discussion on how to move shredders from site to site. This may not be possible. IW will survey communal sheds and get an estimate on costs for water harvesting.

There was a discussion about toilet provision initiated by JG. The composting system is not up to the task and the case for a flushing toilet plumbed in to the sewer was made. PK disagreed, but SMcK said this is a matter of human dignity. JG cited other Council services where toilets are provided. The matter must be taken to a higher level. Ian Woolard spoke about Leith Links where the developer will provide a new facility as the existing toilet will be demolished to make way for a path.

## 5. Site Reports

### Inverleith (SMcK)

An inspection of paths took place to fix issues that were easy to fix. A list of more challenging problems has

been passed to Ian W. to consider on his next site inspection.

- We held our Apple Pressing Day on Sunday and produced an estimated 25 litres of juice. We tasted it, took it home and the rest went to produce cider ready for our Tattie Boiling next year. At one point we had three wheelbarrow loads of apples in the queue. The animals at Gorgie farm are now working their way through the resulting pulp.

- A water leak has been detected in the joint of the recently installed pipe extension to the SW of the site. Ian W. informed.

### **Ferry Road (SS)**

- It feels like things are winding down at Ferry Road - fewer faces about, even on the nice days.
- The leaves are starting to fall, and the Small Grants Scheme Leaf blower is coming in very handy - hoping to build another leaf mould bin in the next week or so. I bought a new metal bladed snow shovel for the site at B&Q a couple of months ago - not for the winter, but for scooping the piles of blown leaves. Find the plastic ones wear down with scraping on the tarmac. Got a look off the woman on the till like I was daft, for buying a snow shovel in August.
- We ran our Autumn Compost/Manure bulk buy, where we get a delivery from Garden Solutions and collect sacks of compost from Caledonian Horticulture. The deliveries are based on what individuals order in advance. No one is shouting that we've missed their order, so I counting this as a success. We'll run it again in the Spring all being well.
- I think there have only been a couple of fires since the start of October and the lifting of the ban. We've had a lot of Tomato and Potato blight this year, so it will interesting to see what happens the next few weeks, if it goes in the compost or if folk try to burn it. (Charles Dowding says you can compost blighted material).
- Tom, our trading rep, has been busy drumming up business for the FEDAGA seed scheme.

### **West Mains (NT)**

West Mains Allotment Association held its Annual General Meeting on October 2nd 2021. Alan Gordon (convenor) and Colin Mackenzie (treasurer) stood down after three years service and their replacements were elected. The 2021-2 committee is Phil Denning, Alasdair Friend, Maggie Hyne, Mick Kadlubowski, Pauline Platt, Lyndsey Rowlands (treasurer), Nils Tomes (convenor), and Jan Urquhart (secretary).

Planning permission has been applied for by CALA to develop the St Crispins School site adjacent to West Mains allotments (21/03813/FUL). This application will be reviewed in committee. Representatives from CALA made a site visit to West Mains on 7th October 2021 to look at issues of water drainage and flooding.

### **Leith Links**

The plot holders are very concerned, rightly so, that the developers are not offering to put up an adequately high enough fence. The ground on the other side of the wall is now much higher than on the plot side. The level is so high, that the workmen, on the other side of the wall, can be seen from mid-chest height upwards. The developers have offered to reinstall the old 3 strands of wire fencing. Clearly, this will not provide any security to the people working their plots nor the allotment site. Plot holders are now emailing Ian Woolard regarding the matter.

### **Midmar Report (JG)**

Autumn newsletter has been circulated via Mad Mimi – featuring report of: good harvests, welcome to new plot-holders who have been waiting for 13 years, reminder to get orders of potatoes etc., alert about dangerous paths, prompt for zoo-poo or other aminopyralid-free animal excreta, note about recent thefts, notice re the Gilbert Clark Foundation, reminder to subscribe to FEDAGA Newsletter.

And the issue of adequate and appropriate provision toilets again:- we experience difficulties in getting volunteers to empty the residues of the composting toilet. The recent installation of the urinal has been useful (not as much liquid excreta in the residues). At Midmar we regard the provision of toilets as crucial. The nearest public toilet is far away, many plot-holders do not have the privacy of a shed, and there are many females and elderly folk to consider. We think the long term solution might be to have normal flushing toilet connected to the nearby public sewer just as they do at Council-run golf-clubs and bowling clubs. We acknowledge the limited funding available for allotments but we believe this must change.

## **Saughton Mains (JB)**

Harvesting on site is continuing with plenty of leeks, squash, pumpkins as well as carrots, dahlias and cosmos are still flowering so many plots look good.

The green composting bins have been very well used, both are now pretty full, and while the level subsides as material rots, it is clear we need additional capacity. The SMAA committee has agreed to get construct another 2 bays with site volunteers, and propose to bid for small grant from the Gilbert Clark Foundation to help towards the material costs.

We had our annual delivery of zoo poo at the beginning of October, it's a popular an event ploholders enjoy as the manure is great for the soil and it's an opportunity to catch up with people.

The Chalet roof has been repaired ( thank you Ian ) but the veranda still needs to be secured back to the chalet. Once this has been done we need to treat the wooden decking, it would be good to get this done before winter. Some plots have not been cultivated much this year, possibly because people are self isolating, possibly because it proved too much to bring them back after not doing much last year. Either way, it is a good opportunity to reduce the waiting list and welcome new ploholders to the site.

The Committee itself is under resourced. There hasn't been a chair for over a year and the position of secretary has become vacant as from the end of September. Thoughts on how best to get ploholders to do some of the tasks the committee has to do would be welcome. It isn't an issue of getting people to do specific physical tasks, it's more the administration surrounding the actual committee itself.

## **Redhall (PKE)**

An open air Committee meeting was held on site on Saturday 2 October.

## **6. President's Report (SMcK)**

A strategy meeting with the Council was expected in September but nothing was arranged. We should hold One before the weather turns, especially if we're to be outside.

I visited Lauriston Farm where a huge amount of space is available for growing. They plan about 40-50 allotment plots as well as community gardens, orchards, wild life areas and a lot of cereal cropping. With the waiting list so long, I wonder if more allotment plots could be planned.

Scottish Allotments (SAGS) have co-opted three of the people previously removed from as Officer holders back onto the board.

We await their plans for the future.

## **7. Secretary's report (EG)**

### **Correspondence**

Enquiry re Trading scheme from a West Mains ploholder- last year the site did not join in the scheme. A decision to be taken at their AGM on 2<sup>nd</sup> October.

### **Report**

It should be noted Alan Gordon (West Mains) has stepped down from FEDAGA committee; Nils Tomes is now Convener for West Mains and will take over the representation of West Mains on the FEDAGA committee.

Peter Wright (Chair) and Maureen Edwards have both stepped down as officers on the management committee at Lady Road. Peter has written to formally resign from the FEDAGA management committee. The representation of Lady Road on the FEDAGA committee will be Chris McKinnell (Chair) and/or Alison Leslie (Secretary).

*It should be made clear that any changes in the composition of the FEDAGA committee need to be announced and ratified at an AGM. We hope that we can hold an in person FEDAGA AGM in Spring 2022.*

EG asked NT to pass on the thanks of FEDAGA to AG for his time on the FEDAGA committee.

JB enquired if there was a shortage of people to do the work on site committee(s) whether the organisation could be slimmed down.

### **8. Treasurer's Report (DR)**

Details of all the returns of monies to sites in regards to orders from the bulk orders of onions, potatoes and leeks and also from plot holders' individual orders from Kings seeds had previously been circulated by DR.

DR to reissue the list of site returns with an explanatory note for clarification.

### **9. Maintenance (NMCC)**

Ongoing with IW

### **10. Planning (AH)**

No new planning applications found which affect allotment sites other than those we are already aware of.

AH and EW are registered with the online Planning Applications notification service. EG attempted to register but was not successful on the first attempt.

AL and JB volunteered to assist with the 10-12 planning applications affecting neighbouring allotment sites still to be allocated.

NT- Cala Homes have submitted a Planning application for a site next to West Mains. The developer visited the site recently to see how the development may impact on the allotment site.

### **11. Annual Allotment Show (JG)**

There were 59 entries this year with 24 exhibitors. We hope to return to a real show next year which will be more fun and people friendly.

See appendix 1 for more details

### **12. Trading (AH)**

A reminder to all sites that orders for this year must be received by FEDAGA by Friday 29 October 2021. This means that you must ensure your orders are received by your site rep. by 22 October as they also need to collate the order for their individual site before sending on to FEDAGA.

It was noted that some sites have had no trading information on their site notice boards.

EG enquired if the onions were to be in paper bags again. SMcK – yes but stronger paper bags with handles are to be used.

### **13. AOCB**

Members were asked what they would like for their respective sites using the additional unexpected Funding this year from CEC . - JB- water harvesting facilities. Northfield – fruit trees of their choice MW – it has gone all quiet with regards to the Food Growing Strategy.

Alison Leslie has replaced Maureen as the secretary of Lady Road.

NT enquired if there were any education/training workshops in the coming year under FEDAGA and if there was any money set aside for this. SMcK commented that this was in the allotment strategy.

EW mentioned that there used to be Winter pruning workshops and JB mentioned that there were

gardening classes at the Botanic Gardens. SMcK commented that anyone with any details of free gardening courses should send them to EW.

SS mentioned that he had received an email from a friend of a plotholder who works for the Homeware Charity/ Woman Zone – they have a garden space in the old town and are looking for assistance. SS to pass the details to EW.

#### 14. Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 9 November 2021

**Please note-**

**All further meetings in person are cancelled until further notice due to the Covid 19 pandemic. Future meetings will be held by internet conferencing using Zoom.**

#### Appendix 1

##### 2021 Show Report- the second year of the 'virtual' Show

As for last year, the Show was 'virtual' with entries submitted on-line and a restricted number of classes (just 10, all vegetable classes). There were 59 entries, fewer than last year's 94 entries, coming from 24 plot-holders representing 11 sites. Class 3, Tomatoes, was heavily subscribed, as were potatoes, cucumbers and courgettes. Strangely, onions had only two entries whereas in previous years it has been a popular class. Anonymised entries were sent to the NVS Judge.

| year   | entries | exhibitors |
|--|---------|------------|
| 2019 (real show, 83 classes of which 46 are 'veg') | 320     | 51         |
| 2020 (on-line show, 10 classes, all 'veg')         | 94      | 39         |
| 2021 (on-line show, 10 classes, all 'veg')         | 59      | 24         |

The results are presented in a separate table. The Best Exhibit was Lai Fun Russell (Stenhouse), courgettes. She presented two superb and well-matched yellow globe courgettes. Most points were (again) for Liz Grace with three Firsts.

It is hoped that COVID 19 will have receded sufficiently by next year, so that we can have a 'normal' show.

## Table of Results

|                            | 1st                         | 2nd                         | 3rd                           |
|----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Class 1, Onions            | Edith Wilson, Stenhouse     | Kate Hughes, Ferry Road     |                               |
| Class 2, Peas              | Liz Grace, Midmar           | Antonia Reeve, Stenhouse    | Heidi Oguntke, Claremont      |
| Class 3, Tomatoes          | Keith Gifford, Lady Road    | Andrew Cook, Stenhouse      | Antonia Reeve, Bridgend       |
| Class 4, Carrots           | Liz Grace, Midmar           | Edith Wilson, Stenhouse     | Nick Bennetts, Bridgend       |
| Class 5, Cucumbers         | Keith Gifford, Lady Road    | Liz Grace, Midmar           | Stuart McKenzie, Inverleith   |
| Class 6, Courgettes        | Lai Fun Russell, Stenhouse  | Liz Grace, Midmar           | Morag Black, Inverleith       |
| Class 7, Beetroot          | Liz Grace, Midmar           | Maggie Rodan, Camb. Av.     | Fiona Brown, Restalrig        |
| Class 8, Potatoes          | Morag Black, Inverleith     | Lai Fun Russell, Stenhouse  | Janet Martindale, Claremont   |
| Class 9, Runner Beans      | Maggie Rodan, Camb. Av.     | Janet Martindale, Claremont | Liz Grace, Midmar             |
| Class 10, Juniors, any two | Kathleen Hunt, Lady Road    | Alex Faraday, Midmar        | Alexander Robertson, Warrist. |
| Class 10, Highly Commended | Anya Robertson, Warriston   | Victoria Faraday, Midmar    | Summerside Kindergarten       |
| Best Exhibit               | Lai Fun Russell, courgettes |                             |                               |
| Most points                | Liz Grace                   |                             |                               |