

***Minutes of FEDAGA Management Committee Meeting 7pm  
Tuesday 12 March 2019 At Southside Community Centre***

**Present:** Stuart McKenzie (Inverleith) (President) (SMcK); David Roberts (Craigentinny/Telferton) (Treasurer)(DR); Ernie Watt (Cambridge Ave)(Newsletter)(EW); John Grace (Midmar)(Show Secretary)(JG); Liz Grace(Midmar) (Secretary) (EG); Brian Bleakley(Midmar)(Trading)(BB); Paul Kerr(Redhall)(Minutes)(PK); Peter Wright (Lady Road)(PW); Alice Bain(Warriston)(AB); David Morrice (Restalrig)(DM); John Nisbet(Craigentinny/Telferton)(JN); Yvonne Dawe(Saughton Mains)(YD)

**Invited Guests:** Ian Woolard, Council Allotments Officer

**1 Apologies:** Maureen Edwards (ME), Stuart Swarbrick (SS), Alison Hewitt (AH), Rosina Weightman (RW), Gilbert Clark (GC), Jane Robinson (West Mains) (JR) Neiria McClure (NMCC)

**2 Minutes of Previous Meeting**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on Tuesday 12 February 2019 were proposed by EG and seconded by JN

**3 Matters Arising :** John Grace reported that he had made contact with Screen Edinburgh with a view to progressing the instructional video proposal. This will cost money and John intends to apply for a Community Growing Fund grant. He believes that their criteria can be satisfied. It is intended that original videos as well as links to other videos identified as useful will be added to a revamped Gardening Advice section of the FED-AGA website. It was AGREED that John proceed with his plans as outlined.

.....ACTION - John Grace.

**4 Site Reports**

Inverleith – a skip has been ordered at a cost of £170 to take away rubbish from the site. The pest controller dealing with the ongoing rabbit issue has been observed on the site recently (SMcK).

Craigentinny /Telferton – a grant application submitted to Willowbrae Community Council for the cost of removing asbestos from the site and two dangerous trees has been approved and a grant of £1800 awarded (JN).

Saughton Mains- nothing new to report (YD).

Midmar – BB asked when the water was due to be turned back on at sites. This should be back on by the end of March (IW). JG:-a volunteer who is on the waiting list would like to help out someone with a plot. He has pointed her in the direction of GC. IW commented that some tree cutting work has recently been carried out at Midmar.

Restalrig – the waste bins have not been emptied for a couple of months (DM). This will be followed up on by IW.

Cambridge Avenue – nothing new to report (EW)

Warriston – there are a few new people on the site which is encouraging(AB).

Lady Road – there has been a report of someone from CEC checking trees near the site and in the adjoining cemetery. There are two new plot holders on the site (PW).

Craigentinny/Telferton- local primary 3 school kids at Craigentinny Primary School are doing a project on growing. They have been invited along to Craigentinny/Telferton allotments to see vegetables being grown in practice.

Inverleith – SMcK commented that he had recently found some evidence of rat activity in his shed.

Redhall – nothing new to report

## **5 Allotment Officers Report- Ian Woolard**

There have been a record number of new plotholders this year following the mild winter weather. The number is approximately 54 since early December. A lot of sites have been receiving woodchip deliveries. Generally satisfied with the maintenance work carried out so far this year. The Northfield allotments water supply work has been approved at a cost of £8000. This money has been granted from the Local Neighbourhood Partnership

and will not come out of the allotment maintenance budget. It is hoped that the work will be carried out and piped water on the site by the end of May.

There has been progress with the proposed new allotments at Letham Park site owned by the Boys Brigade. The site will comprise of approximately 80x ½ - sized plots. Each plot will cost approximately £150 per annum to rent. The site hopes to open by Autumn 2019 and there is already a large waiting list of around 150 people interested in renting a plot.

Since the online registration system for Council allotments was set up there has been a large increase in interest from the public. Since January this year there have been 200 new applications to join the waiting list. This brings the total waiting list to just over 3,000 people.

Letters will be going out all of those people currently on the Council allotment site waiting list next week to ask if they i) wish to remain on the waiting list ii) what size of plot do they want iii) which site do they wish to have a plot on iv) are they interested in setting up a new allotment site with other interested people in their locality. In line with the Community Empowerment Bill the Council needs to reduce the waiting list to around 750. Parks & Greenspace asked the Scottish Government for £4 million to build new allotment sites but were unsuccessful in obtaining this funding. The question was asked whether *common good land* could be used for new allotment sites however IW explained that the process for a legal change of the land use had to go through Court procedure and would be very expensive.

The two huts which were burned down recently following an arson attack at Bridgend allotments are to be replaced by the Council.

There will be an allotment plot rent increase in 2020. A full plot will increase to £120 and the Concession rate to £60. A raised bed will be £28.

The repairs budget is being cut from £20,000 to £15,000. DR asked for the monies due to FEDAGA from the site Association fees (collected by CEC, alongside the rental fees) to be paid by the end of March and preferably to be broken down by individual sites. Payments from some smaller sites could be bundled together to avoid breach of privacy and Data Protection Act. IW is to speak to his line manager, Bob McAllister regarding this matter.

IW enquired if FEDAGA had any projects which they would like to progress. DR commented that they had an ongoing project to repair/refurbish site Notice Boards and sites were invited to contact FEDAGA if they were interested.

JG asked IW why allotment fees in Edinburgh were much higher than in Glasgow. PW explained that the allotment sites in Glasgow were mainly self managed by site committees and did not involve the Council. This arrangement means that the administration cost is much lower.

The question was raised as to why the fencing at Northfield allotments had cost so much and had involved a firm from the Borders (JN). IW explained that they(CEC) had an approved list of contractors which they had to use.

## **6 President's Report**

There is still no Allotment strategy meeting date arranged. This is to be arranged with Bob McAllistair.....**ACTION - IW**

The planned bus trip to Killendean Allotments in Livingston on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> March is nearly fully subscribed. It is proposed to go for a curry in Edinburgh afterwards at 5.30pm and all Committee members are welcome (SMcK).

## **7 Secretary's Report**

SS has informed FEDAGA that Decathlon Sports in Edinburgh sell large bales of wood shavings which can be used in the allotment composting toilets. The bales cost £7 each. SS also enquiring about their site bank account and the best way to get internet banking. Advice to SS is that some Banks will approve this however it is necessary to arrange a meeting with the Bank and explain why an Internet Account is necessary (avoids need to write and bank cheques etc)..... **ACTION - EG**

## **8 Treasurer's Report**

As of 28 February the Account Balance stands at £9644.82.

There is an amount of £620.11 available to sites which currently have no active bank account (DR).

## **9 Maintenance**

NMcC has requested information from sites on whether any maintenance work is required on their sites. This can be added to the annual maintenance list and works prioritised.

## **10 Planning Applications**

No applications of interest received (AH)

## **11 Trading**

BB reported that despite the mistake by Kings in not fulfilling the potato order on delivery day everything had worked out okay in the end. A big thank you to SMcK for travelling up to Perth at short notice to make sure that the site orders were ready for collection from Inverleith.

## **12 Annual Show**

No report (JG)

## **13 AOCB**

The Newsletter will be coming out in the next week (EW)

## **14 Date of Next Meeting:**

Tuesday April 9<sup>th</sup> at 7pm, Southside Community Centre.