

# Baildon Horticultural Society

## Minutes of Zoom Meeting 8 February 2021

### TAKING PART

John Turner JT (Chair)  
Robin Weedon RW  
Charlotte Martin CM  
Sue Wheatley SW  
Ian Helyar IH  
Dawn Tinsley DT  
Louise Mallinson LM  
Richard Nottidge RN  
Claire Waterworth CW  
Eric Warerworth EW  
Peter Linley PL  
John Cole JC

### 1. Apologies – Mike Webster MW

**2. Chairs opening remarks** – JT explained that the Agenda had been adjusted to enable the President to present his two papers ( see attached).

**3. President's Papers** – JC thanked the chair for putting his papers at the start of the Agenda and hoped that they had been received in the spirit intended. He noted that the Committee had achieved a lot in the last two years and advised that he didn't expect an answer straight away but suggested that the items be brought back to the March meeting for a decision.

In relation to rents, he advised that he was concerned about unfairness at the margin if plot rents were not charged by the square yard. He indicated that it shouldn't be too onerous to work out the charge for each plot using a spreadsheet and that he would be happy to do the work. LM and CM highlighted that there were issues regarding the precise sizes of each plot and if we were to revert to using the square yardage of each plot for rents then they would all need to be remeasured. JC commented that if plot measurements were not thought to be accurate then they ought to be re-measured "as a matter of good housekeeping" and that if plots were designated into one of two categories then if measurements were not accurate there was a danger of mis-designation.

JT advised that he fundamentally disagreed. JT highlighted that the change from square yardage had been implemented following the AGM in 2019 and that this change had actually been proposed by JC. JC noted that with the previous arrangement there had been more plot sizes rather than just small and large. JT informed the meeting that there were 120 plot holders and that only 2 complaints had been received.

In his other paper, JC proposed that a 3 year time horizon be considered for capital projects. In his view, if the site was capable of being run with low rents there was no justification for putting them up. Any projects needed to be assessed on the basis of value for money and the benefits deriving to plot holders. He also suggested discretionary discounts for parts of a plot that were unworkable.

There was a discussion regarding how the suggestions should be progressed. JC requested a further discussion, in a few month time, and it was noted that JC could raise the matter at the AGM if he wished to do so.

JC then left the meeting.

CW asked when were rents last put up; what was the issue of plot sizes at the margins; and also about the formal complaints. It was clarified that they hadn't been put up for years; that whilst the system had been changed last year the rents hadn't really been put up. JT confirmed that one of the complaints was to be discussed later in the Agenda.

#### 4.Actions from previous Zoom Meeting:

New website – RW confirmed that this was progressing. ( **Action -RW**)

Telephone box locks – RW confirmed that the locks had been removed. Matter resolved.

Charlestown Shop Door – Simon will fix in the Spring (**Action - Simon**)

Membership Cards – RW has distributed. Matter resolved.

All other actions discussed later in the Agenda.

#### 5. Members Issues – to be discussed under AOB.

**6. Water for Winter** – JT advised that there had been a burst pipe at Charlestown and that he had spoken to Don Butterfield, who had confirmed that in the past the water had been turned off at the mains. After a discussion about the need for access to water for the hens it was noted that there were ponds that could be used. It was therefore agreed to turn the water off at the weekend and that an e-mail would be circulated to advise (**Action - DT**). LM indicated that she would need to speak to MW about the water at Thompson Lane.

**7. Shop** – Elizabete is due to finish in February. The Committee wanted to thank Eizabete and agreed to the purchase of a present to the value of £20. (**Action - DT/CM to purchase and PL to present it to her and pass on the Committee's thanks for her hard work over the last few years.**). There are quite a few volunteers who are happy to help run the shop in the future. DT and Steve will do it initially and will then draw up a rota. ( **Action DT**)

**8. Confidential Matter** – last year's Treasurer has now provided account details and paid the outstanding bills and banked the cheques received. The cash account balance is £6,752.74 and reserves £8,169.77. It is hoped that the role of Treasurer can be handed over in the next week.

#### 9. Reports

- Allotment Officers:

Charlestown – CM reported that there were 16 on the waiting list and 3 vacant plots. All rents paid except one who has e-mailed and arranged to pay at the shop on Sunday.

Thompson Lane - LM reported that there are 19 on the waiting list and no spare plots. Rent is still outstanding from one tenant.

- Treasurer Report – see above

- Secretary – advised that due to a problem with the delivery of her new printer ink she hadn't been able to send the warning letter that had been requested.
- Health and Safety – No issues. CM queried where gas bottles could be disposed.
- Show Secretary – DT advised that she was waiting for the school to re-open and that she would then speak to the Headteacher. (**Action -DT**) The possibility of asking whether the Methodist Church Hall could be used was also discussed. If necessary, JT can follow this up. (**possible action – JT**).
- The open gardens were discussed. LM advised that she had heard nothing and would let the Committee know if she did. (**Action – LM**)

#### 10. Telephone Boxes

RW has been able to gain access to the telephone boxes. They will need to be secured with a surface mounted mortice lock for which he is obtaining quotes. He is also looking into suppliers for glass and paint. It is planned to undertake the renovation work before spring, after which time involvement will

be required from other Society Members. RW advised that he hadn't been able to speak to the pub about the box near The Junction as it was closed but that the PO was interested in the Station Road box. **(Action RW, EW, KS)**

JT advised that invoices should be submitted to the Town Council for payment. **(Action -RW)**

## **11. Electricity for huts**

RN had attended the Environment Committee of the Town Council and they have approved funding of £3,500 for solar panels at both sites. JT proposed that work would be carried out at Thompson Lane first using £3,000 of the monies from the Town Council and £500 from the Society. It was further noted that before work could be carried out repairs would be required to the shop fascia. It was estimated that this could cost £500 (although quotes would need to be obtained **(Action EW)**).

RW advised that KS had investigated other sources of grants in addition to the one from the Town Council. The National Allotment Garden Trust provides grants of up to £2,000 and this needs to be investigated further. **(Action – RW to ask KS to look into)**

IH queried whether spending most of the Town Council money at Thompson Lane, would commit the Society to funding the solar panels at Charlestown. It was agreed that this would be the case but that it was hoped that alternative sources of funding would be forthcoming. SW asked whether there was a need for solar panels at Charlestown.

The Committee resolved to spend £3,000 of the £3,500 from the Town Council on solar panels for Thompson Lane and to contribute £500 from Society funds for the solar panels and £500 for the fascia repair work.

Under this item EW mentioned that he had been looking at other possible improvements to Thompson Lane, including an upgrade to the shop, the track, a base for the manure heap and a fence. These matters will need to be considered at a later meeting. **(Action – EW)**

## **12. Community/Communal Plot.**

The Committee agreed the proposals included in the paper submitted by IH.

One/two of the beds and part of one of the greenhouses would be offered to the tenant who had complained about the rent rise for his small plot which he uses to grow plants for the Baildon Community Garden. To be rent free if used for growing plants for the Community Garden. **(Action - JT and CM to speak to tenant).**

## **13. AOB**

DT left the meeting to ensure that her presence did not prejudice the discussion.

A request had been received from 2 tenants, with plots adjacent to the railway, to have a small chicken coop on each plot. JT advised that he had concerns as it had taken a lot of work to allocate the smallholder plots. He also wondered whether it would be permissible under the terms of the agreement with the Town Council and would need to check. Reference was also made to the 1950 Allotment Act. He further wondered whether it was a safe location for chickens as they could be at risk from the foxes which use the railway land. He thought that if chickens were to be allowed on the plots they would need to be designated as smallholder plots. Members of the Committee thought that the safety of the chickens was a matter for the tenants.

The Committee agreed to defer consideration of the request and ask that the tenants produce a paper setting out their request, to include how much land they wanted to use and the number of chickens to be kept. **(Action CM)**

There followed a discussion about whether it was appropriate to have smallholder plots that didn't keep livestock.

**13. Date of Next Meeting:**

Zoom 8 March 19:00