

Baildon Horticultural Society

Minutes of Meeting dated 9 August 2021 held at Baildon Golf Club

PRESENT - John Turner (JT), Dawn Tinsley (DT), Richard Nottidge (RN), Peter Linley (PL), Louise Mallinson (LM), Eric Waterworth (EW)

1. Apologies – Mike Webster MW, Claire Waterworth CW, Charlotte Martin CM, Ian Helyar IH, Sue Wheatley SW, Robin Weedon RW

2. Chairs opening remarks

JT welcomed everyone back in person after 15 months of Zoom meetings

3. Actions from previous Zoom Meetings:

- Let tenants know how to turn water back on (action for winter)
- Society Membership - (SW) - defer to next meeting
- Health and Safety Inspection at Thompson Lane (IH and LM) - see attached notes from IH
- Tabards for Show - RW felt it would be more appropriate to move away from the idea of tabards and concentrate on T Shirts
- BHS Clothing (RW) - put on hold
- Email and Letter about weeds (SW) - circulated
- Shrub at entrance - (JT) JT had been to cut it down and somebody had already done so but it has started to overhang again. JT to monitor **(Action JT)**
- Community plot (SW) - see below
- Meeting with local accountant (JT/DT) - see below
- Building at Thompson Lane (MW) - see below

4. Members Issues - nothing to report

5. REPORTS

Allotment Officers:

Charlestown - DT reported that there are 20 people on the list. 4 people on the smallholder list. One tenant has been evicted and a few warning letters to go out. Inspection will take place this week and will go hand in hand with the letter about bindweed. JT suggested that Plot 6 South becomes a communal fruit plot and wildlife haven. Dale has offered to do the plot up.

Thompson Lane - LM reported that there are 19 people on the waiting list and no vacant plots. Work had recently been carried out by the Northern Power to make the fencing around the substation next to the allotments more secure. This work had been requested by LM last year following several break-ins when it was felt that the allotments could be accessed via the fence.

Treasurers Report - see below

JT informed the meeting that there is £8,600 in both the current and the reserve account

Secretary Report - Nothing to report

Health and Safety - see attached from IH

Show Secretary Report - DT reported that all in hand. All volunteers in place. Concern that not enough tables available. Banner needs to go up.

6 PROJECTS

Telephone Boxes - see attached report from RW

Electricity at Charlestown - JT thanked RN for all the work at both sites. RN reported that the solar panels and electricity is now up and working and the lights are in place. To price up an inverter to be able to charge 24 volts etc for strimmers. JT to check that if we make a charge we may be liable but if we just lend power tools to people we can ask for a donation? **(Action JT)**

7 Community Plot

The beds should be used as a trial and tenants not offered a proper plot unless they have satisfied the committee that they will be able to keep up with the maintenance. To get something in writing for them to sign to say if they fail to keep up to the plot then they should lose their place on the waiting list. To ask IH to draft an agreement which would include the fact that its probation/trial.

Action IH

8 Communal Greenhouse at Thompson Lane

JT - MW - EW - AT (Alan Terry) and LM had met on site to make a discuss what to do at the entrance. After much discussion Thompson Lane has been offered a conservatory (by one of the tenants who is a builder) to be taken off a house and to use as a communal greenhouse. We would have to build a back wall or a wooden structure at the back and put another side against the shop. The measurements fit. Approx cost is £1,500 for the hardcore, building of walls and other materials and labour to be done by volunteers. The glass to be kept in the shop prior to it going up. Need to do some kind of soakaway for the manure. JT had contacted the Planning Department but had got mixed messages about whether we would need it.

Proposal to go ahead - providing the cost does not exceed £2,000 - passed unanimously. **Action EW, MW and AT to obtain quotes for the base etc**

9 Gate Opening at Charlestown

PL said somebody closing gate had padlocked the gate rather than the chain. Person responsible has bought a new one and welded it into place. Discussion about now we have CCTV in place, do we allow the gate to be left open providing there are cars in car park or kept locked at all times?

RN suggested a large sign on the gate. Suggest a survey asking if people prefer open during day, locked at all times. JT to ask the smallholder plots and DT to send an email round to others or letters to people. If inconclusive the committee or allotment officer will make the decision. **Action**

JT/DT

10 Show Volunteers

DT said that she now has enough volunteers.

11 Treasurers Position

JT and DT had met with Sarah Oddy Associates (Farmers market book keeper) to ask for help or advice as the temporary arrangements are not acceptable because too many people are in the chain.

JT proposed the following: to employ Sarah Oddy to maintain the spreadsheets then provide for us a monthly short report to say what the monthly outgoings were and half yearly report then a final year end report for the AGM done by an accountant. The Treasurers role would change to a liaison between the accountant and the committee. The Treasurer would still do the bookkeeping. Clive still happy to do the banking and deposit into bank account. The show should do its own accounting and DT happy to do that. A new system of accounting to be used.

Proposal: the committee resolves to hire Sarah Oddy associate to maintain a record of all BHS transactions to be paid £35 per month to be reviewed after three months then reviewed six monthly.

(JT pointed out that the Treasurer is entitled to £150 per year so if we took that into account and we normally employ an auditor so we'll save on that. Therefore in real terms it would cost very little). Proposal passed unanimously. JT to contact Sarah Oddy. **Action JT**

12 AOB

Garden Trip (JT) discussed a trip to Breezy Knees Gardens- near York on a coach for £8.00 as something we could consider in the future

Show Presentations of Trophies (DT) Discussed how the speeches could be shortened to make it more simple and streamlined. The trophies have been cut from 30 to 14 so it should not take as long and the certificates will be left on the table for people to collect which will make it more covid secure. At the end of the show people could take the produce and leave a donation rather than having an auction.

DT thanked the judges of the allotment competition.

13 Date of Next Meeting - Monday 13 September, Baildon Golf Club?

NOTES FROM SW AND IH

1 The Changing Role of Allotments Paper:

Response to questions:

- to respond to the new way of gardening (more leisure orientated) we should consider having a number of smaller plots to fit in with busy lifestyles, Community Plots and also work towards tenants having no more than one plot.
- Whilst personally we think it's important to garden organically we appreciate that not everyone thinks the same way and it would be wrong to be too prescriptive. However, as a Society we should encourage an environmentally sustainable use of the site.
- We should work with other organisations in the town where possible. However, we do not consider the Society needs to have a role with schools. It raises issues such as safeguarding. Schools have their own grounds and this should be their responsibility.
- We think that the Society should arrange talks and other educational activities such as garden visits for our Members.
- We don't think that we should dictate what is grown on the plots. However, it is important to ensure that they are cultivated (the current 75% seems fine) and don't impact upon other ploholders by allowing the spread of invasive weeds.
- Our view is that the objectives are sufficiently wide to enable the Society to do the work it needs to do and therefore it seems reasonably fit for purpose.

2 Development Possibilities

We have no objection to a communal greenhouse although we do have some concerns about how it will work practically as the Community Plot has shown that individuals seem not to be interested in taking responsibility for communal areas. Also, the large plots have plenty of space for a greenhouse and lots of ploholders have them already.

The Newsletter already provides a lot of useful advice and providing education for Members through talks and visits should be a priority, however, we are not convinced that the Society needs a building on site to do this. Indeed, it is important that the Society supports venues in the village which need the revenue. Having a building on site would be a significant maintenance and cost burden.

3 Commercial Opportunities

The purpose of the shop needs to be considered. In our view, it to benefit the members by providing items at a reduced price through bulk buying. It is not to create a profit.

4 Finance, to what purpose, the classic three streams

We need an analysis carried out of how much it actually costs to run the allotments so that the rents can be set at an appropriate level. This needs to consider day to day costs as well as longer term maintenance requirements. We should not be seeking to generate a significant surplus and we don't see any justification for a fund for an education building.

5 The Committee Structure Review

Seems ok currently although it would be good to have someone with responsibility for arranging talks and garden visits.

6 The Show, Update

This is an important role for the Society and where we come into contact with local businesses and local people. It is important for our profile.

7 AOB

The Society should operate mainly for the allotment holders and our other members and we need to prioritise what they want so we need to seek their views rather than make assumptions. This coming year should be one of consolidation after the issues which have been experienced with Covid.

Sue and Ian

Health and Safety Notes from IH

I have inspected both sites, thanks to Louise for the tour and keeping me safe from her bees. Whilst Thompson Lane has collected a small amount of asbestos for disposal there is no need for a general amnesty at either site as no evidence of plot holders using this material. At Thompson Lane the compost heap needs to be sorted out to ensure waste material isn't allowed to drain off into the water system . I understand this is in hand. The only observation is that some sheds , particularly at Thompson Lane are built from recycled material and owners need to check them regularly to make sure they are safe. I don't think there is a risk to other plot holders but we still don't want sheds collapsing on their owners.

Community Plot

Imogen has moved off and been replaced by Adrian.

We need to address weed control and keeping the shared areas tidy.

At some point we will want to review the approach to the community plot with the whole committee to see if any refinement of the rules are needed.

Ian Helyar.

Telephone Boxes (Notes from RW)

- The Junction box is almost complete.
- I have sourced a life size image for the interior of the box which I have had printed.
- I have a dusk to dawn solar light to light the box up.
- The box now is locked with 2 mortice ratchet key locks
- Raised beds are now covered with weed membrane and bark chips ready for planting.
- Planting for the site- I have a most of this which I am growing on in my greenhouse at present.
- I need to finalise costs for this and submit to the council, this will be under their budget for the project so considering asking for the rest of the budget to be put aside for ongoing planting and maintenance .

- I hope to make a start on the Station Road box at the end of this month, this should be easier from what I the learned from working the box at the Junction, and the access is easier.

Away Day - Brief Notes - JT

Changing Role of Allotments and our Response

- Encourage rather than enforce.
- Ascertain if there is a lead from the Allotment Society or from the Town Council
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Development Opportunities

- Got a new website
- What is the most important priority
- Do we have the capacity
- Over the next year we should see what takes priority
- Evicting people quicker
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Commercial Opportunities

- charities add 40 per cent - should we be more than 10 per cent?
- Suggest an annual review of prices in shop for comparison
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Finance -

- charity you have:
 - Grants - vary
 - Sales - break even
 - Membership - how we offer something
 - Reserve and current account also a building fund so we can have some substantial changes
- Need to look at 10 year thinking