

Boniface Allotments Association

Committee meeting

Minutes of the meeting held on 11th February 2008 at 19.30 in the Council Chambers

Present: Mr Alan Bellamy (chairman), Mrs Sandra Chalton, Ms Gudrun Ley, Mr Bill Parr. Mrs Maggie Stewart, Anne Sweetman, Ms Penni Tearle

1. Apologies: Mrs Dee Lawrence-Szabo

2. Minutes of the meeting on 19th November 2007 were approved and signed.

3. Matters arising

- a) **Seed scheme:** It was reported that Richard Adams had been approached to see if Adams would like to be part of the BAA seed scheme, but as yet no response had been received. Mole Avon had not yet been asked. As Tuckers are seed merchants, and had already agreed to offer BAA members a discount on seed purchases, it was felt they would be the main partner in the scheme. It was agreed that the detail of how it would operate needed to be confirmed. The need for membership cards to go out in the April mailing was noted (discussed further under item 6).

Action: to approach Mole Avon (Treasurer).

- b) **Noticeboards:** It was reported that the specification for allotment noticeboards had been sent directly to two local craftsmen, both of whom had expressed interest in the job. Both confirmed they had received copies of the specification, but to date no quotes had been received. A copy of the specification had also been sent to the Town Council offices to they could pass it on to interested parties with whom they had contact. Again, no quotes had been received. *Action: to contact Mr Limon and Mr Williams again, and find out who else has been asked to quote for the work (Secretary).*

4. Numbering of plots.

The Chairman noted that a year after initially discussing this plan, and some 4 months after he and the Assistant Town Clerk had visited local outlets to get a quote for posts and other materials for this job, it still had not happened and no date was set. The Committee unanimously voiced their disappointment and 'displeasure' with the current situation, recording three specific concerns:

- i. The serious delay in getting any action on this matter, particularly in the last few months when it was understood everything had been in place for a late Autumn/Winter action plan,
- ii. despite much discussion on materials, timescale and the process for marking allotment plots, this had been altered without any reference back to the Allotment Association, but with an assumption that the Association would be willing/able to help implement the changed plan,
- iii. The use of plastic numbers had been approved, when the Committee had specifically recommended paint. It was unclear why this change had been made and several members of the committee were unhappy with the environmental impact of this decision.

5. Tree planting on the Barnfield site.

Sandra Chalton reported on progress regarding tree planting at the top of the Barnfield site. The idea was growing in momentum and the reaction of those with whom it had been discussed had been positive. There was some discussion about types of trees, and it was agreed that relatively small trees, (perhaps less than 3m anticipated height in 10 years), and probably some combination of fruit and small indigenous trees would be appropriate. The cost of the trees was discussed, and it was suggested that it might be possible to plant the whole area at no cost if we were quite flexible about what trees we wanted, For specific types, especially with a requirement for particular rootstock, there would be a cost. Various ways of funding this were discussed, such as local businesses 'sponsoring' a tree and having this signed on the tree. There was some concern

whether planting fruit trees may exacerbate an existing problem of children climbing onto the allotment from the neighbouring play area. The next steps were identified as:

- i. To discuss the idea with those who had nearby allotments as well as residents of the immediate area.
- ii. To dig some exploratory holes in the proposed planting area, and ask a local expert to come and advise on the feasibility of planting here, and more generally on the whole site.

Action: To talk to people whose gardens overlooked the proposed site, and who had the allotment next to it. (Maggie Stewart). To maintain contact/identify someone to turn to for expert advice and to consider appropriate planting ideas (Sandra Chalton)

6. Allotment invoices: April 2008

Invoices for 6 months costs would be sent to allotment holders in early April. The Committee was asked to consider what other papers they wanted to enclose. It was agreed that:

- i. A Newsletter would be included. This would take the same format as last year and the secretary would make a first draft and send to the treasurer for comment prior to printing. *Action: Draft to be drawn up (Secretary) feedback (Treasurer), printing (Town Council)*
- ii. A membership card was needed. This would be generated from the existing database as previously agreed. It should be kept simple, but prior to printing it was noted that the uniformity of names in the database should be checked, so people received cards in a standard and acceptable format. *Action: To discuss and agree detail with Town Council (Secretary)*

7. Fund raising and priorities

Various ideas for raising small amounts of money were suggested, but it was also noted that there were a number of ongoing projects which should really be finished before embarking on new ideas. Some issues directly and indirectly linked to this matter were:

- i. The AGM could be in a different format and have something like a gardening quiz, or similar activity rather than a visiting speaker. This would offer a change, may be more interactive and would not necessarily need a budget. *Action: agenda item at future meeting (Secretary)*
- ii. Some of the current projects may be of interest to funders. Eg local businesses may be willing to sponsor a tree, which could then be labeled accordingly.
- iii. Noticeboards may also be something a business or even a grant might fund. Again these could be marked accordingly.
- iv. The Treasurer noted that although money had been transferred in accordance with the amount requested, it was now evident that this would not cover the year's costs. The insurance had gone up more than the estimated amount and there were more allotment holders than last year, so NSALG membership costs had increased not just by a percentage, but also to pay for additional members. The amount transferred to the Association was currently £50 lower than last year. The problem could be solved by asking for this additional amount. It was felt this should not present a major difficulty. *Action: Treasurer to present updated estimate to Town Council.*

8. Any other business

- a) **Representation of Boniface Allotment Association at Council meetings:** It was again suggested that members of the committee might want to attend relevant Council meetings. It was recognised there would be restrictions about how an Association member could make an input to the meeting. *Action: to contact the Town Clerk again and try and set this up (Secretary).*

9. Date of next committee meeting was set for Monday 12th May 2008.

Action: To book the Council Chambers (Secretary).

The meeting closed at 21.00