



COTTONMILL AND NUNNERY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** held on Sunday 28th April 2019 at 11am in the Sub-Aqua Club, Cottonmill Lane, St Albans

Attendees: K.Reynolds; T.Beckett; J.Wyatt; J.Ridge; M.Mackenzie; C.J.Boden; H. Littlewood; P. Littlewood; A.Watts; S. Bailey; E. Weindorf; W. Beckett; J.-Foukes; M. Foukes; V. Langford; A.McGlynn; I.Jacobson; H. Heine; J. Heine; J. Stephens; M. Roberts; D. Roberts; G. Anderson; L. Lawrence; G. Lang; G. Grieg; E. Howarth; A. Shipperlee; L.Penton; J. Corrigan; A. Veisz; Brenda Gilson; Brian Gilson; L.Jacob; D. Spruce; C.Spruce; S.Mallardo; K. Cheshire; D. Bushnell; B. Spriggs; K. Howard; J. Bowie; B. Rands; Y. Goto.

1. **Apologies:** I. Lees; L. Clarke.; D. Green.
2. Minutes of AGM held on 13 May 2018 were agreed by the meeting, proposed by Terry Beckett and seconded by Jane Ridge.

3. Chairman's Welcome, Review of the Past Year and Forward Plans

The Chairman welcomed members to the meeting and gave an overview of the events and achievements of 2018/2019. Allotmenters enjoyed another year of discounted seeds, compost ordered from Aylett's and delivered directly to plots and deliveries of compost from Council yards. He thanked Michelle MacKenzie for helping to make both the Summer Show and Autumn Social a success and to Aylett's for hosting the presentation of the Ryder Cup to Erica Weindorf and Scott Bailey, the 2018 Show champions. He thanked Jane Fookes for four informative Newsletters over the year, to Michelle MacKenzie for organising the food bank and to all members who made generous donations to the boxes.

The events of the previous year are likely to carry forward and additionally the Chairman hoped to emulate the success of the BBQ held on Nunnery and organised by a plot holder at the other sites. There will be work parties organised as, particularly on Cottonmill, the river bank needs some work. Finally, CNA is exploring getting a speaker over the winter-time to address an audience at the Sub-aqua Club.

Before handing over to the Treasurer the Chairman thanked Alison Shipperlee and Scott Bailey for examining the CNA accounts.

4. Treasurer's Report

A copy of the accounts, signed off by Alison Shipperlee and Scott Bailey, were provided at this meeting.

Breakdown of the accounts:

Balance at the start of the year was £1830.89

Income through the year was £3582.40 in the form of membership fees, donations, Summer Show entry fees, Compost and seed sales.

Expenditure during the year was £3342.50 comprising membership fees for RHS and NAS, insurance, stationary, hire of Sub-aqua Club and purchase of compost, seeds and items for the Summer Show.

Net income of £239.90

Balance of funds at the end of the year to carry forward of £2070.79

The Treasurer explained that there was a small difference between the income and expenditure for the seed order as there is an additional discount applied to the consolidated order for early ordering and this amount is therefore an income to CNA.

The accounts for 2019 were accepted as proposed by John Boden and seconded by Michelle MacKenzie.

5. Election of Management Committee Members for 2019/2020

The Secretary explained that the Constitution allowed for Officers and Committee Members to remain in their role for three years and then they need to stand down and if they wish, to be nominated for re-election. The Secretary identified that the following positions were therefore not vacant as the current holders are willing to continue.

Secretary, Treasurer, Project Officer, Newsletter Editor, Sopwell Plot Officer, Cottonmill Plot Officer.

Vacant positions

Chair - Keith Reynolds is standing for re-election and has been formally nominated. Proposed by Janet Wyatt, seconded by Terry Beckett.

Facebook Administrator - Michelle MacKenzie is standing for re-election and has been formally nominated. Proposed by Wendy Beckett, seconded by Terry Beckett.

Nunnery Plot Officer/Site Representative- Jane Ridge is standing for re-election to Nunnery 2 and has been formally nominated. Proposed by Janet Wyatt, seconded by Terry Beckett.

Website Administrator - **No nomination**- Jane Ridge is currently standing-in to make sure that items are being added. If anyone comes forward during the year the Constitution allows for them to be co-opted onto the Committee pending formal nomination at the next AGM. The Committee thanked Juliet Foxwell for her work in creating the website and maintaining it up to 2019.

New positions

Assistant Plot Officer Cottonmill - replacing Cottonmill Site Representative and incorporating these duties. Nomination received for Paul Littlewood. Proposed by Terry Beckett, seconded by Michelle MacKenzie.

Plot Officer/Site Representative position for Nunnery 1 - Nomination received for Brian Gilson. Proposed by Jane Ridge, seconded by Michelle MacKenzie.

As there was only one nomination for each vacancy and new position a block vote was agreed and the election of the above Committee Members proposed by Alison Shipperlee and seconded by Dave Gore. The Committee for 2019/2020 was duly elected.

6. AOB

- A vote of thanks was offered to SADC for providing compost to the sites and the Plot Officers will request further deliveries if they are available.
- St Albans Sustainability is running from 11th May and on 12th May the allotments will welcome visitors to show what we do, on 28th May there is a walk-through for the Ver Project and on 29th May AECOM are hosting a session entitled Creating More Sustainable Infrastructure.
- The recent activity on Cottonmill using glass to deter foxes has been condemned by CNAAs as unlawful and cruel. CNAAs has displayed notices to this effect and re-states that it is fully supportive of maintaining a diversity of wildlife on the sites. Terry Beckett re-iterated that SADC would evict anyone found to be acting unlawfully.
- It is a requirement of having a plot to display the plot number clearly and Brian Gilson can be contacted to supply purpose-made metal number plates.

7. Revitalising the River Project

The Chairman reminded members that two years had passed since the first letters setting out the SADC and Environment Agency plans for revitalising the River Ver and the CNAA position remains the same as it was at the beginning; it is positive about bringing about improvements to the lake and the health of the River but holds the view that the plans for Reach 4 that affect the Cottonmill site have not been well thought through. Over the past year CNAA has continued to engage with SADC Councillors and leaders of the Project, including presenting at the SADC Scrutiny Committee in October 2018, directly contacting Simon Grover to take issues forward. Visits by Councillors to the Cottonmill site to continue to raise awareness of the issues have been arranged, with assistance from Irene Jacobson. A wider audience has been reached through the Herts Advertiser and Radio Verulam, and contact maintained with the National Allotment Society. One marked success was the reversal of the SADC decision to suspend letting plots on Cottonmill and vacant plots are now being let to new plot holders.

The final proposals for the Feasibility Study have been published on the SADC website recently and the plan for Reach 4 now routes the River around the Cottonmill site, not through the lowest part of the site but along the southern side and then a sharp turn to go under Cottonmill Bridge. CNAA's view is that this new route fails to deliver the original objective of dealing with emerging groundwater at the lowest part of the site. There is a red box on the SADC website below the launch button for the plan that is inviting comments and CNAA urges all members to take a look and use this facility, also to take any opportunity to lobby Councillors. CNAA will be continuing to set out its position through media outlets and also, now that the formal proposal has been published, will be pressing NAS for advice and guidance.

The Chairman reported that he had a meeting with the SADC Project leads for an update to present at this AGM and highlighted the main points. The Project has now been separated into two phases. Phase one will cover Reaches 1,2 and 3 and phase two will cover Reaches 4, 5 and 6. There is no clarity on where the funding is to come from for the Project. SADC confirmed that notices to quit would not be issued before autumn 2020. There is to be an exploration at the Cottonmill site, a borehole is to be drilled and a signal test will be carried out which is where water abstraction pumps are turned off and the resulting effect on groundwater measured. The Feasibility Study proposals identify a number of areas where technical considerations will be investigated further and this seems to be one area for which concrete plans have been made. CNAA will press SADC for advance notice of these tests. SADC plans to send out letters outlining the Feasibility Study proposals to those plot holders impacted by the Project at the end of May. In response to questions from the floor clarity was given on the reality of the Cottonmill site during and after major construction work: no-one would be allowed to remain on site, new plots would be created

with re-distributed or imported soil and then plots would have to be re-allocated. The outcome of the survey about moving to a new site was a resounding rejection by those who responded. It was suggested that maybe Affinity Water should also be targeted for questions and members were directed to the current development of Affinity's Water Resources Management Plan.

Whilst the Chairman's impression from the meeting he attended was that Reach 4 has "gone off the boil" he urged that CNAA and members continue to keep up the pressure by challenging the proposals and raising awareness with as many groups and individuals as possible. The Chairman concluded by setting out the CNAA strategy.

- We will continue to press for answers and to probe for clarity and adequate responses to the unanswered questions.
- We will continue to network with other interested parties and to present the arguments for NOT interfering with this site, at such a great environmental and financial expense, for so little in return.
- We support the same 'in channel improvements' being promoted for all other Reaches, ...the less disruptive and more affordable option.

The Chairman concluded by asking members if they had comments on this strategy and it was endorsed.

Closing Remarks

The Chairman extended his thanks to CNAA members for attending the AGM and raising many important issues and to Committee Members for their support and work during the year. The Chairman closed the meeting at 12-30.