

COTTONMILL AND NUNNERY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the Committee Meeting on

Thursday 12th January 2023

Held at The White Lion, Sopwell Lane, St Albans.

PRESENT:

Keith Reynolds (Chairman)

Terry Beckett (Treasurer)

Janet Wyatt (Secretary)

Louise Wiseman (Newsletter Editor)

Michelle Mackenzie (Facebook Administrator)

Margaret Harris (Cottonmill Plot Officer)

Paul Littlewood (Assistant Plot Officer, Cottonmill)

Jane Ridge (Nunnery 2 Plot Officer)

Clare Norman (Sopwell Mill Plot Officer)

1. APOLOGIES:

Erica Weindorf (Project Officer)

2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting on 6th October 2022 were agreed as an accurate record. These will now be placed on the CNAA website. **Action** JR

3. ACTION UPDATE and MATTERS ARISING

JR still not receiving web messages consistently. Juliet Foxwell says she doesn't know why this is still happening but is happy to continue to forward the few she receives.

Bank repair-Contact with the Environment Agency has not been productive.
Action KR/MH/PL will try another route.

Fence repair on Cottonmill- to be replaced by planting blackthorn, hawthorn and holly as part of the Environmental Project.

Risk Policy-KR to forward Ver Valley Society versions to JW. **Action** KR

4. TREASURER'S REPORT AND MEMBERSHIP

The Treasurer's report is attached and was agreed by the meeting. As at 20th December 2022 Net income to this date was £1085. Current membership is 105 (Cottonmill=51; Nunnery 1=18; Nunnery 2=24; Sopwell Mill =12). Affinity Water donation balance is £526. A payment has subsequently gone out to NAS.

A suggestion was put to the Committee that some of the residual AW funding might be used to remove rubbish from Cottonmill in an attempt to re-let plots and assist existing plots holders. This suggestion was not supported by all of the Committee as it was argued that it is a Council responsibility and the cost should be carried by the Council. Further efforts to get the Council to provide rubbish removal are to be made and the request for use of this AW funding was not supported. It was agreed that some of the AW funding is to be set aside for fuel for the pump.

TB has identified an inexpensive metal shed that might serve as communal sheds for each of the three sites but the general view was that it was too small. In principle it was agreed that CNAA could fund some additional storage for communal tools.

5. SITE REPORTS

Cottonmill

The water table is currently 6 inches below the surface. AW is to be asked if the data gathered automatically can be shared with CNAA. **Action** MH/PL

Waiting list is around 50 but no offers have been made since May 2022 with around 50 vacant plots. The letters drafted to help Phil Bruce-Green to inform existing plot holders and those on the waiting list about the flood risk have not yet been sent out. KR had met with PB-G and suggested an open day for everyone on the waiting list to try to move some of the vacant plots on and whilst PB-G seemed positive this has not been arranged yet. MH and KR to meet on site with him on 13th January. PL requested that as Assistant Plot Officer he be included in all communications about Cottonmill and this was noted.

Following the death of Gordon Grieg MM has been contacted to hold a small ceremony on his plot, which was agreed and it was further agreed that CNAA purchase a fruit tree for the orchard in his name. **Action** MM and MH to liaise to arrange these occasions. TB suggested that the orchard would be a good place

to remember those giving long and committed service to the allotment site and this is noted.

There is to be another survey in support of the Environmental Project on 9th June and this is currently a moth event but may be expanded if other experts can be secured. The report to the St Albans Civic Society has been sent to the Chair, Freda Chaloner, and has now been circulated to the Committee.

Nunnery 1

Nunnery 1 - 1 vacancy to be split into 2 plots, 27 on the waiting list

Nunnery 2

Nunnery 2 - no vacancies, 39 on the waiting list.

The sites are waterlogged but not flooded. Heidi at Wilder St Albans has received consent for the archaeological excavation to go ahead and then it is hoped to create the wildlife hedging.

Sopwell

There are four vacant plots but CN is having trouble attracting takers as they are in an overgrown condition. This is a common problem at all sites. CN has had some success with O'Connors to improve the cutting regime. The re-wilding area and orchard area are progressing.

6. COMMUNICATIONS.

Facebook-ticking along.

Newsletter – LW preparing the next edition and asked for contributions. She will use the Environmental Project report as the basis of an article.

Website –JR has asked if the administration can be assigned to another Committee member and LW has offered to take this over. Thank you Louise!

7. JOINT ALLOTMENT GROUP

KR attended a meeting recently and asked for the minutes to be circulated-
Action JW. JR will check on the next meeting date and may represent CNAA. CN and KR also attend but it is only necessary for one to go.

8. SUMMER SHOW 2023

EW has secured the services of a judge for this event on 3 September which will be at the Sub-aqua Club. The preference would be for an afternoon event giving time in the morning to set up. It was agreed that a Q&A session would be good and may be a useful way to involve new plot holders. **Action** JW to contact EW to ask if she agreed a judging time and if this could be around 2pm. Also if her contact could provide some possible dates that they might be able to hold a Q&A around the latter part of March/beginning April. Once this is settled JW to book the Sub-aqua Club and find out if the Hub might be available for a Q&A session. **Action** JW (see AOB for additional information).

9. AUTUMN FESTIVAL

MM reported that this event had been very successful and well attended. By sharing costs and renting table space the cost to CNAA for the event was less than £5. Some lessons were learnt for next year and it was agreed that CNAA will purchase a banner for this and other events. **Action**-MM/TB. CNAA is positive about a similar joint venture for Autumn 2023.

10. AOB

- Contact has been made about the bridge work on Cottonmill Lane asking for a meeting – **Action** JW to follow-up. *[Post meeting update, MH spoke to a representative of the contractor and the work will take 3 months and access to the allotment site will be maintained.]*
- AGM – Date for the latter part of April to be agreed – **Action** KR to send possible dates. This will be held in the small room at the Hub subject to availability and it was discussed if this might be linked to the Q&A session which could follow the formal part of the meeting. **Action**- JW to liaise with EW. Alternatively an AW presentation might follow the AGM.
- CNAA Notice Boards on the sites are looking in poor state – to be put onto next agenda. **Action** JW

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

TBA

Action Summary

Website	Post October 2022 minutes	JR	
Bank repair	EA to be contacted for permission for work.	MH/PL/KR	
Tool storage on Sites	Source larger shed option	TB	
Water table, Cottonmill	Ask AW to share data it receives automatically with CNAA.	MH/PL	
Gordon Grieg	Arrange memorial occasions	MM/MH	
Joint Allotment Group	Circulate minutes of recent meeting	JW	
Risk Assessment	Forward Ver Valley version to JW	KR	
Risk assessment, risk policy, volunteering policy	First draft to circulate to Committee	JW	On-going
Affinity Water presentation	Arrange an open evening for the Affinity Water Engineer, Ilias Karapanos, to make a presentation	KR	Defer
Summer Show	Clarify judging times and Q&A session with EW then book Sub aqua Club	JW	
CNNA banner	Source suitable pop-up version.	MM/TB	
AGM	Dates in April to be suggested/circulated	KR/JW	
CNAA notice boards	Include on agenda for next meeting	JW	

