

Blandford Allotment Society
www.blandfordallotments.co.uk
Minutes of meeting held at the Lamperd's Field Potting Shed
On Tuesday 19th March 2019 at 7 pm
Chaired by: Ian Ricketts

Present: Ian Ricketts – Chair, Barbara Marjoram – Vice Chair, John Harding – Treasurer, Ann Edwards – Social Secretary, Peter Brundish – Committee Member, Dave Buchan – Committee Member, Ken Pearce – Plot Allocator, Phil Williams – Elizabeth Road.

Apologies for absence from Virginia Barnard – Webmaster, Diane Mawer – Plot Allocator

1. The Minutes of the meeting dated 12th February 2019 were approved and signed.

2. REPORTS

- (a) Report from Chairman – Ian Ricketts

Ian has had the cup repaired at a cost of £50. He has a list of previous winners, which he will email to Ann, once he has finalised the details, for her to type up for display on the board in the allotment shed. 3 packets of wild flower seeds had been received. The Committee thought it best not to have an allocated plot for sowing these, but to restrict sowing to one of the planters by the gate, and possibly in an agreed hedgerow.

Regarding the "community payback scheme", Ian has spoken to the Town Council and agreed for them to come to us, in particular to attend to the clearing of the dumped waste at Elizabeth Road. All tools and clothing will be provided by the Scheme.

Although signs had been put up at Elizabeth Road, people were still dumping waste. The recent Sunday Work Day had gone extremely well, with some 15 people attending. Lots of pea sticks and bean poles had been cut. As those helping were entitled to a free bundle, there only remained 2 pea stick bundles and about 6 bean poles, for sale. Two trees had also been cut down. A big thank you to all those allotment holders who turned up to help the Committee.

Action: Ian

- (b) Report from Vice Chair/Seed Secretary – Barbara Marjoram

For the potato competition - 30 Picasso potatoes and 30 potato sacks have been purchased at a cost of £69.77. At the April 6th coffee morning Ian will be doing a talk on growing potatoes and I will be selling the potato package (1 x potato and 1 x sack) at a cost of £3; this should give us the funds to purchase a garden voucher for the winner. The potato sacks are very robust and can be used by the purchasers for future years. Each contestant will need to register and there will be rules given out at the time. Barbara said she would be putting details on Facebook.

The rules are as follows:

Blandford Allotments Potato Competition Rules 2019

- 1 Each contestant will register and purchase 1 potato and 1 potato sack on or after the 2nd April 2019 Allotment Coffee morning. (2019 cost £3).
- 2 This competition is limited to 30 contestants and it will be 1st come 1st served. Anyone not able to attend the coffee morning should contact the Seed Secretary to arrange collection.
- 3 Each contestant can grow their potato using any compost, fertiliser etc. they wish but can only grow 1 potato in the sack.
- 4 Each contestant should submit their potato plant, complete in its sack, with compost intact at the judging at the 7th September 2019 coffee morning.
- 5 Once submitted the sack will be emptied and the potatoes removed to present for weighing.
- 6 The winner will be the person with the greatest weighed crop. **Action: Barbara**

(c) Report from Treasurer – John Harding

Having reimbursed our Webmaster £84, being the very reasonable cost of setting up the new website the bank balance now stands at £2008.73. As of the evening of Monday 18th I had not received the tractor insurance invoice and I have now chased it up - it is due at the end of March.

I have received £35 cash in rents since the last meeting and have reimbursed Barbara £70 being the cost of potatoes and growing bags for the forthcoming summer competition. As such the petty cash now stands at £63.09. I have received an invoice for the 4th quarter from Southern Electric for £54.46 (£44.26 last year) which I shall pay in the next week or two.

Action: John

(d) Report from the Plot Allocator – Ken Pearce.

Not much has changed since our last meeting. We now have 1 x full plot, 4 x ½ plots and 2 x ¼ plots available at Lamperd's Field. At Elizabeth Road, we have 2 x ½ plots and 1 x ¼ plot available. We have one new starter at Lamperd's Field, who has taken on a 1/2 plot.

(e) Report from Phil Williams, Elizabeth Road

The shed has been moved off the path. It was said that there will be a delivery of manure in the following week. No other problems at the moment, apart from the ongoing waste problem, which is being dealt with.

(f) Report from the Webmaster – Virginia Barnard

I was pleased to report that the website is now ranking 1st if searched using Internet Explorer and 5th if searched by Google.

There has been one niggling issue reported to me regarding the access of the drop-down menu whilst using an iPad or tablet. This unfortunately is a situation regarding the screen size and the way in which "responsive" page resizing works. When the page shrinks to a tablet size the screen shows a small down-arrow next to the menu item. The little arrow itself needs to be clicked in order for the drop-down menu to appear. I received one plot enquiry from the new online contact form so am pleased that the system works.

So far, I have received very positive responses to the website and will be looking at ways to develop the website further.

(g) Upkeep of allotments – Dave Buchan

Dave was welcomed back to the UK. He has spent time strimming a vacant plot, and weed killing. He has rotavated a quarter plot too and was involved in the Sunday working party.

(h) Report from Social Secretary – Ann Edwards

The first coffee morning on March 2nd where Mike Holloway gave us a talk, was really successful. It set off the season brilliantly. We had some 22 people attending which is a record! Big thanks, from the Committee, to you Mike.

Dates of remaining 2019 Coffee Mornings, all on a Saturday starting at 11 am (except for the BBQ) are:

April 6th - (Ian Rickets - Growing Potatoes – Potato Competition – register and collect your potato and container - £3) plus Ian's raffle

May 4th – (Virginia Barnard – Preparing your allotment, clearing, laying-out, fencing etc.) plus Ian's raffle

June 1st – Speaker needed

July 7th (Sunday at 2 pm) - (Annual Barbecue) Bring a dish, own tipple, knife, fork and spoon and chair.

August 3rd - (Tasting - Bring your baking (and recipe) for courgette, carrot or beetroot) plus Ian's raffle

September 7th – Potato Competition – bring along your container today for weighing. Meet your Committee, prior to the Annual General Meeting at the end of September. Plus Ian’s raffle.

October 5th - (Malcolm Fowler - Mead 3 - More Making and Tasting) plus Ian’s raffle

November 2nd – (John Harding - Strawberries) plus Ian’s raffle.

CHRISTMAS GATHERING:

December 7th – Mulled wine and Christmas nibbles plus Grand Christmas Raffle

Ann would like a volunteer to set off a discussion at the June Coffee Morning please. Just 10 minutes out front (no pressure). **Action: Ann**

(i) Report from Committee Member – Peter Brundish

Peter reported the tractor needs servicing and he is getting quotes. The committee asked Peter if there was a possibility of getting in more pallets. Peter agreed to try.

Action: Peter

3. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was decided to wait until Easter before issuing red and yellow warning cards.

4. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – TUESDAY 30TH APRIL AT 7 PM IN THE POTTING SHED.

5. The meeting closed at 7.45 pm

(Ann Edwards – 22nd March 2019)