

Bath and North-East Somerset Allotments Association
Annual General Meeting 2022

Minutes of the meeting held at BRSLI, Queen Square, 22 November 2022.

Apologies:

Anita & Geoffrey Breeze
Stephanie Lockhart
Mike Duckett
Maria Humphries
Louise Jones-Robinson

2. Minutes 2021 AGM held on 11 November 2021

Minutes approved.

Proposed Anne Love, Seconded Jon Lucas.

3.1 Treasurers Report and Accounts.

Judith Jordan (JJ) reported that the accounts were in a good state and that she would encourage applications for small projects. She thanked Tony Davies for carrying out the Independent Audit of the Membership and Trading Hut accounts.

Accounts approved.

Proposed Lyn Barham, seconded Judy Enticknap.

3.2 Membership Report.

Judith Jordan reported a gradual increase in members, although a turnover of membership. There is an annual loss of new starters, who have struggled to get plots under cultivation due to size and condition of the plots on accepting their tenancy. This needs better understanding.

A question was raised about other types of members. Judith confirmed that anyone can join as an individual as membership is not restricted to B&NES Council allotment holders. The question of affiliation with other allotment/growing organisations was raised. It was agreed that affiliation to other groups with similar aims could be beneficial, but that it could not give access to the Trading Hut – this should only be available to individual members.

Action: Further consideration to be given to partnerships/affiliations.

3.3 Trading Hut Report.

Charlie Love (CL) reported a strong financial position, although costs were rising. The Trading Hut always welcomes volunteers, and he added that volunteering can actually be fun. A question was asked about phasing out plastics. CL said that this would be difficult in the current circumstances.

Accounts Approved.

Proposed Judith Jordan, seconded Barbara Walker.

3.4 Planning Officer Report.

Jacky Wilkinson (JW) reported that the Council had started work on the New Local Plan, so the submissions previously made to the Local Plan Partial Update for the designation of the allotment sites at Combe Down, St Georges, Larkhall, Meadow View (Curo site), Abbey View (extension) and Batheaston (with Batheaston Parish Council) would go ahead again. Reflecting concerns expressed at the recent Site Reps meeting, a site facilities survey will be carried out to assess priorities and to bring equity especially to the smaller sites.

4. Election of officers and site representatives.

Officers.

Erica Draisey was elected as Chair and Jacky Wilkinson was elected as Secretary. All officers re-elected. Proposed Chris Walters, seconded David Haigh.

Site Representatives.

Lyn Barham informed the meeting that she would be the representative for Bath Organic Group (BOG), on Lower Common West.

All site representatives were re-elected. Proposed Hilary Sheppard, seconded Nikki Ruck.

5. AOB

5.1 Erica Draisey raised the question of compostable WC's and explained that detailed research was being carried out for a possible WC at Bloomfield, which others might like to share.

5.2 Charlie Love responded to the perennial problem of high turnover of new members. The Sites survey will contribute to a better understanding of the various problems.

5.3 Jon Lucas raised the question of the need for smaller plots. JW explained that at the recent meeting with the Council, Gerard Parry had confirmed that wherever possible, he was divided larger plots, but that he would not divide a plot below a certain size.

5.4 JJ responded to a question about low membership numbers by explaining that the Council had a data protection barrier on information about new ploholders, so the AA site reps do not know who is on a plot unless that person voluntarily offers the information. Some sites have Facebook pages and WhatsApp groups. The Council does put a flyer for the Association in tenancy letters for a small fee.

6.0 Speaker.

Jane Moore has amongst many other horticultural journalism roles, the job of head gardener for the Priory Hotel, in Weston. She also has been given the enviable role of landscape designer for a number of other really wonderful hotel gardens in the same ownership. She outlined her relaxed approach to growing and planting and encouraging pollinators into the vegetable gardens.

I was struck by the simplicity of one of her ideas - buy a Ladybird! This well known insect has voracious larvae who will tackle your white fly problems in no time. She also outlined a number of pollinators we could consider popping into our plots – some are well known “companion plants”, other less so. Lavender is of course well known, but amongst the list were chicory, borage, violas, nigella, amaranthus, sunflowers, sweet peas, chives (for their flowers) nasturtiums (also repels white flies), French marigolds (companion to tomatoes), calendulas (pot marigolds). She suggested planting a few different kinds of runner beans, not just for the beans but for their flowers – in other words – try to think how bees and

other pollinators might also be catered for when selecting your vegetables. I for one will definitely try to increase my flower-power on the allotment!

Jacky Wilkinson

7. Actions Arising.

- 7.1.Membership. Investigate why high turnover of new members. Pursue affiliation with a shortlist of selected organisations. JJ.
- 7.2.Small grants. Site reps to be encouraged to apply for more small grants. All SRs.
- 7.3.Site facilities survey – JW /Site reps.
- 7.4.Committee to continue to press Council on better ways of communicating with new ploholders.
- 7.5.Site reps to be encouraged to seek out new comers and form WhatsApp groups or similar.

8.0 Attendance List (38):

Judith Jordan	Ron White	Nikki Ruck
Charlie Love	Lyn Barham	Jenny Bakoff
Anne Love	Ron Lorenc	Barbara Walker
Janet Armstrong	Diana Groom	Tony Davies
Hannah Rees	Chris Pearce	Anna Carling
Julia Cleveland	Brenda King	Sharon Keevil
Howard Jeffs	Liz Tomlinson	Andy Lenthall
Jacky Wilkinson	Graham Bachman	Angela Lucas
Erica Draisey	Kate Mills (BOG)	Nadia MacCall
Chris Walters	Chris Dawson	Charles MacCall
Anne French	Judy Enticknap	K T Taylor
Jon Lucas	David Haigh	Anne Beardsley.
Hilary Sheppard	Kerry Rogers	