



TAMWORTH FARM ALLOTMENT SOCIETY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES 7.00pm, 4 December 2024

Attendees: Steffi Backhouse (SB), Anthony Redpath (AR), Katy Willison (KW), Rob Rudolf (RR), Beverley Stansfield (BS), Julie Mallett, Elisabetta Constantini (EC), Jo Rodgers (JR)

Apologies

1. No apologies.

Minutes and Actions

2. Minutes from the November meeting were agreed.

Site Maintenance and Security

3. RR updated the Committee on site maintenance. Water has been turned off for the season. The tree team have started winter pruning of larger trees. RR to check the Rose Avenue toolshed padlock

Budget Report and Debtors

4. KW presented the finance report. Spending is currently on track. Only a small number of debtors are outstanding. The Committee agreed that, for those who had not yet paid or engaged with us by the end of December, we should take a strong line and let people know their plots will not continue to be available unless they pay immediately. We always offer payment plans for anyone experiencing financial problems and will let anyone who has not yet paid know that.

Insurance Renewal

5. SB updated the Committee. We tested the market thoroughly last year and found our current providers were by far the most competitive. Unless the quote this year is very high, we intend to renew with them. The Committee were content with this approach.

Encouraging New Members to join the Committee

6. The Committee discussed approaches to encouraging new members to join the Committee. It was agreed that:
 - we should encourage anyone interested in joining the Committee to shadow a Committee meeting.
 - we should identify members who we know might be interested by talking about the work of the Committee and how they might contribute.
 - we should encourage ex Committee members to consider rejoining.
 - we offer opportunities for people to get involved in specific projects without actual Committee membership.

- We should hold events that would allow members to meet the Committee, including an event at our first spring community day inviting people to come and meet the Committee, possibly involving food to tempt people in. **Action: KW Item for February Committee meeting**
- We find ways to make the Committee more identifiable and human, perhaps through a group photo. Repairing the Rose Avenue noticeboard would help. **Action: SB/RR**

Strimming paths review

7. A TFAS member has asked us to review the paths that we strim monthly to reduce the burden upon individual members. KW informed the Committee that the current cost of strimming the current paths is around £2,000 a year. If we agreed to strim all member paths, the cost would be likely to increase to between £4,000 and £5,000. This would mean that we would either have to increase rent levels or make cuts elsewhere in the budget which would be very difficult.
8. The Committee agreed that it was not appropriate to extend the existing strimming route. The additional cost was not affordable and would not be a good use of resources. It was also noted that there was a clause in all tenancy agreements that members should be responsible for the paths around their plots.
9. It was, however, noted that the Farm strimming map would benefit from a further review to check what should and should not be strimmed. The check should also include which paths are carpeted as this is a health hazard and limits strimming activity. Once the survey is complete, we should check in with Garry. **Action: SB/ AR**
10. AR/ KW and JM let the Committee know that, when new plots become available, they will in future seek to re-establish paths whenever possible to help prevent future disputes about paths and boundaries.

AOB

11. We have had a request from a plot holder who wants to keep chickens on his plot. He is experienced with birds and committed to care for them appropriately. The Committee considered that there were some challenges with this, including the standards that would be required to keep chickens safe and well; measures required to manage avian flu; concerns about impact on neighbours, including the smell; concerns about rats and foxes; the precedent this would set for other plot holders; and lack of Committee capacity, expertise and resource to establish a workable approach to chicken keeping on site. It was agreed that we would engage with the plot holder to discuss if and how these concerns could be managed. **Action: SB/ AR**
12. We have had a request for a plot holder's daughter to undertake her Duke of Edinburgh voluntary work on site. Agreed that we should facilitate it. **Action: KW/ AR**
13. KW updated the Committee that the soil samples tested were negative and it was agreed that the plot concerned should be relet.

14. JR to talk to BS about the Rose Avenue bed and whether we could get some free bedding plants. **Action JR/ BS**

COMMUNICATIONS ACTION FOR DECEMBER

To:	Format of communication:	Topic/Issue:	Action:	By:

Item	Action	Name	Target date/ Completed
14 Nov 2022	Investigate Rose Avenue handover terms and historic use of land	JR	30 May 2023
3 April	Bring forward a proposal on using and letting the community shed	SB	30 May 2023
5 June	Book Capital Growth speaker for September compost master class	EC	3 July 2023
5 June	AR/ KW to consider next year's cultivation guidelines including action on cumulative non cultivators	AR/ KW	Feb 2024
7 Aug	Make contingency plans for website	SB	Oct 23
2 Oct	New contract to be agreed with GM, to include clarity over May mowing plans and documentation uploaded to Dropbox	RR/ JM	31 Oct 23
2 Oct	Arrange removal of pallets	JR	31 Oct 2023
20 Nov	Investigate value for money of alternative water supplier	AR	End Dec 2023
4 Dec	Consider options to repair/ renew RA notice board	SB/RR	28 Feb 2024
4 Dec	Take a Committee group photo		Spring
4 Dec	Item on Feb meeting agenda on Committee event	KW	31 Jan 2024
4 Dec	Review Farm strimming paths	SB/ AR	31 Jan 2024
4 Dec	Respond to request to keep chickens	SB	31 Jan 2024
4 Dec	Plan DoE activity	KW/AR	31 Dec 2024
4 Dec	Plan new planting for RA communal bed	JR/ BS	28 Feb 2024

Dates for the Diary 2023/24

8 January 2024

5 February 2024

4 March 2024

8 April 2024

13 May 2024

3 June 2024

1 July 2024

5 August 2024

2 September 2024

7 October 2024

AGM Sunday 10 November 2024 TBC

11 November 2024

2 December 2024