



Minutes of Annual General Meeting at Comrades Club 15th October 2018

1. Present

Chairman: Carole Allen-Morley, Secretary: Denise Audoire, Treasurer: Robert Le Grice, 6 Committee Members and 57 Members

2. Apologies

Roger Abbott, George Bailey, John Blackmore, Glynis Cooper, James Dawson, Robert Lamb and Christine Lewry

3. Chairman's Introduction – Carole welcomed members to the meeting. As this was her first year as Chairman she wanted to thank the ones who went before her. A gift was presented to Pete Thompson and another saved for John Blackmore. Mike Mason was also thanked by applause and a gift for all the time he spent on the Committee and for continuing to work hard letting out the hire equipment.

4. Minutes of the last AGM held on 16th October 2017 were agreed

5. Matters Arising

1. Manure – Although well received at first, as the growing season began it was not being taken away. It began to attract rats and had to be removed. The plot has now been rented out. In future a single delivery may be possible when a suitable site has been found.
2. Website – (<http://www.romseyallotments.org.uk/>) - Ian Todhunter is the website administrator. Carole demonstrated parts from the Website including - Rules, Procedures, (including the newly written Plots Inspection Procedure), Committee, Newsletters and Facebook. She thanked Diane for the creating the Newsletters and Alan Heasman for administering the Facebook site, which can be accessed separately. Next year the Committee will write a Waiting List Procedure, which will be on the website. Access to computers and training is available at the library.

6. Secretary's Report

Thank you all for coming this evening and a special welcome to our new Members. We now have 170 Members and 208 plots. There are 26 on the Waiting list, (some only wanting certain plots) and 5 vacant plots. More plots will become available at rent day. Some vacant plots have been hard to let because of their condition or location. Working parties have been set up to clear some plots, which helped to make them more appealing. A total of 24 plots have been let since last rent day.

I have sent out 8 warning letters giving one months notice and 5 termination letters. It has been a difficult year for Members with the long cold winter and then the drought, followed by an increase of rats and a lot of vandalism.

Members are asked to report any incidents of theft or vandalism to the Police and to let the Committee know. Shutting the gate at night and reporting anything suspicious may help. Members have been asked not to leave rubbish around their plots which can encourage rats to nest in. We had to stop the manure delivery as it was an attraction for them.

I would like to say thanks to Melissa for organising the Romsey Show. It was her first time this year. A large Gold Medal was won together with £130 in prize money and over £80 collected in donations for produce.

Also thanks to her team for helping with the display and to Members who donated produce. The Summer Show was cancelled this year but hopefully will be reintroduced next year.

Thanks to the following: Mike Mason for letting out the hire equipment. Please do not call him on Sundays as it is his day off. Ian Todhunter, for organising the Website. Alan Heasman, for administering the Facebook page and Diane Kingston, for producing the Newsletter. It can be viewed on the notice boards for those not online.

I have the Dobies Seeds catalogues here with the new discount code to enable Members to receive 45% off seed and 10% off other produce. They now have an organic range of seeds available.

7. Estates Manager's Report

Vandalism – Carole reported that sheds had been broken into. Members asked to report to police on 101 and to Committee. Do not to leave anything of value in sheds. A member asked if the Committee were reporting incidents. It was suggested keeping a record might help. Council Allotments have not had any problems recently.

Working parties - Two working parties had been set up this year, one to clear one plot and the second to move the manure.

Rats – Carole had contacted the National Allotment Society, the Test Valley Borough Council Environmental Health, the Pesticide Directive and the neighbouring allotments about the use of rat poison. It can legally be used **BUT** a tidy plot is the best way to control them. A vote for poison to be banned resulted in 9 for and 32 against. The Committee will decide on a pest control method at a future meeting.

Water Pumps – Problems occurred during the dry weather with pumps running dry and members taking water from barrels without refilling. Carole suggested members get together to share responsibility of pump repairs. Anton Page has offered to change washers and help maintain pumps. Someone suggested leaving the barrels empty, not full. The Committee will map out all the pumps next year. Only one pump on plot 6 is owned by RAHA.

Draft Guidelines Rule 9 – Guidelines were distributed and Members asked to look through and mark in green what they liked and mark red on parts they disliked. They will be modified further depending on results.

Roads – Most of the roads are fine apart from one area with potholes. Suggestions of using woodchip or gravel have been considered unsuitable. Members are asked to avoid speeding on the roads. Having potholes can help to stop any speeding.

Romsey Show- Carole thanked everyone who helped at Romsey Show

8. Treasurer 's Report

Robert circulated the Annual Accounts as at 30/09/18 showing available funds of £2,378.34 and total deposits held of £3,330.00. Income from Romsey Show prize money £130.

We are still waiting for Dobies seed discount. Main payment due is for rent to Broadlands which is the same as last year. Not so much spent as last year when more was spent on the roads.

Deposits are only returned if plot is in good condition. A reminder that rent day is Saturday 20th October. If not paid by one month after rent day members will be evicted.

The accounts were accepted.

9. Election of Officers and Committee

The following Officers were re-elected

- a. Chairman: Carole Allen-Morley
- b. Secretary: Denise Audoire
- c. Estates Manager: Vacant
- d. Treasurer: Robert Le Grice

A Member suggested that the Estates Managers role be split with the Waiting List management being a separate job. This idea will be developed by the new Committee.

The following Committee Members were elected by show of hands.

- e. Bill Chandler, Melissa Doherty, Diane Kingston, Deborah Sargant, Stephen Treglown. Jenny Fakes, Iain Messenger and Alex McArdle joined the Committee. Ross Chandler joined as a co-opted member. Jo White stood down from the Committee

10. Subscriptions and Rent

The Committee recommended no change to Subscription (£12 per year) or Rent (£1 per rod) and Deposits £30 per plot.

Deposits may have to rise in the future because of an issue with removing rubble.

The recommendation was agreed by show of hands / by the Members

11. Honoraria

The Committee recommended no change for Secretary, Estates Officer and Treasurer £150 each with Chairman £100

The recommendation was agreed by show of hands / by the Members

12. Any Other Business

- Butterfly Survey – Robert began the survey last year with 10 volunteers. It is only one of three allotment sites approved by the National Butterfly Council. A one hour weekly survey was carried out. 16 species were recorded and a total of 681, mostly Cabbage Whites. Members have been interested and have asked what to grow to encourage more butterflies. More volunteers are needed. Anyone wanting to take part needs to contact Robert, Diane Kingston spoke about moths. 34 species were found on one plot. The plot needs to be untidy for their laying of eggs.
- A member asked if there will be a skip.
- Water pumps – Previously the Committee had helped members install pumps. Only one pump is owned by RAHA. Members are asked to contact the Committee if intending to install a pump because of underground services. A member suggested collecting more rainwater from shed roofs.

