

# ROMSEY ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION

Minutes of Annual General Meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> October 2023.

Held at Comrades Club at 19.00 hrs.

		Action
	<p><b>Attendance.</b> Carole Allen-Morley (CA-M) - Chair Iain Messenger (IM) - Treasurer Jules Facchini (JF) – Membership Secretary + 51 Others.</p>	
1	<p><b>Apologies.</b> 23 apologies received.</p>	
2	<p><b>Previous Meeting Minutes and AOB.</b> Minutes of last AGM held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2022 were approved. 40 votes for; 11 abstentions.</p>	
3	<p><b>Matters Arising.</b> None.</p>	
4	<p><b>Chair’s Chat</b></p>	
4.1	<p><b>State of Plots.</b> A survey of all plots has been carried out by a team of three Committee members who found that 20% of all plots did not meet the required standards of cultivation/maintenance (Rule 9). The majority of these plots appeared to belong to sick and elderly persons. Chair read procedure for evicting plot holders who didn’t meet the required standards and asked attendees if “some leeway should be given to older plot holders”. <i>Members agreed that every avenue should be explored with individual plot holders, including a) reducing size of plot b) pairing up with plot applicants on the Waiting List c) enlisting near-by plot holders to assist on a short-term basis to help maintain the plot.</i> Members agreed in other cases where the plot was simply being neglected that the 2 month eviction period should stay in place; i.e. 28 days from the Verbal Enquiry plus 28 days from date of Formal Warning Letter. <i>The time should not be shortened.</i> <i>It was agreed that the “proving period” for new plot holders should remain at 12 weeks, but the amount of effort made by the plot holder in that period should be taken into consideration before any approach by the plot inspection team is made. Assistance could be offered if the new plot holder is making a genuine effort to progress.</i></p>	
4.2	<p><b>Bonfires.</b> The Committee has received a complaint from the Local Council with regards to bonfire smoke on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2023. Smoke was drifting across the road into the Knatchbull estate. Plot holders were reminded not to have bonfires when the wind direction is south/south west as this will blow smoke into Knatchbull Close or Jacobs Close.</p>	
5	<p><b>Membership Secretary Report.</b> See Attached Report.</p>	

6	<p><b>Grounds Maintenance Co-ordinator's Report.</b> See attached report.</p>	
6.1	<p><b>Keeping gates across Entrance and Exit Closed</b> - Proposal to keep the Entry and Exit gates closed at all times was put to the Members present. <i>After a discussion, the general consensus was that the gates should remain open in the day and closed at night, with the last person leaving in the evening should close both gates, as it was before COVID.</i></p>	
6.2	<p><b>Lock Entrance and Exit Gates</b> – <i>Proposal to keep the Entry and Exit gates locked was discussed. Some were in favour but a majority of Members rejected the idea for now.</i></p>	
6.3	<p><b>Exit Gate Issues</b> – Several Members reported that it was difficult to close the exit gate having to lift the gate to prevent it dragging on the ground. Committee agreed to look at all the issues with the exit gate and resolve.</p>	
6.4	<p><b>Security</b> – The use of CCTV cameras on the site was discussed by the Members. The Chair asked if cameras were installed would anyone volunteer to view the footage and report what is found. No volunteers stepped forward to offer their help. Also, member relayed police do not take action on shop thefts in Romsey of £1,000 a day. Reporting allotment thefts to police highly unlikely to result in action. CCTV cameras will not be considered.</p>	
6.5	<p><b>Roads</b> - It was agreed by the Members that the road planings provided by Wayne have proved to be a good solution for repairing pot holes in the roadways. Remaining planings to be used over the winter to continue with necessary road repairs. Working party to be set up to carry out the works when required.</p>	
7	<p><b>Treasurers Report -</b> See attached report. Treasurer reported that Broadlands will be increasing the site rent from £1,600 per annum to £2,000 per annum in 2024.</p> <p>An increase in rent to £2.00p per rod from £1.40p per rod was proposed seconded and carried unanimously by the members (51 in favour, none against, 3 abstentions). The increase will not be implemented until 2024.</p> <p>Treasurer confirmed that the Teachers Building Society account has been closed and the association now has two bank accounts with HSBC.</p>	
8	<p><b>Election of Officers and Committee -</b> Key members of the Committee were elected;  <b>Chair</b> – Carole Allen-Morley  <b>Treasurer</b> – Iain Messenger  <b>Membership Secretary</b> - Jules Facchini  <b>Estate Management Co-ordinator</b> – Wayne Lawrence  <b>Committee members re-elected -</b>  <b>Alf Tilt</b>  <b>Jenny Fakes</b>  <b>Deborah Sargant</b>  <b>Two new Committee members</b>  <b>Dave Watson</b>  <b>Shirley Dawson</b> – Secretary</p>	

	<p><b>Webmaster-</b> Robbie King agreed to take over this role but did not want to be a member of the Committee. The Chair welcomed the help.</p> <p>Following key role remains vacant: <b>Events Co-ordinator</b></p>	
9	<p><b>Subscriptions, Rents and Deposits.</b>  <b>Rent-</b> Voted for Rent increase £2.00p per rod from October 2024.  <b>Membership</b> – No change.  <b>Deposits</b> – No change.</p>	
10	<p><b>Honoraria</b> – No change.</p>	
11	<p><b>Any Other Business.</b></p>	
11.1	<p><b>Abusive comments/language being used</b> – Several Members raised the issue and felt that something had to be done to stop this trend. A proposal was made by Brad Miller that “any plot holder found to be making abusive comments or using offensive language to other plot holders, face to face, by telephone, email, Facebook or other social media platforms will be given an immediate 28 day eviction notice from their plot”. This proposal was seconded by Robbie King and carried by vote of Members (40 for, none against, 11 abstentions).</p>	
11.2	<p>Plot holders agreed that a “<b>sound system</b>” was needed for large meetings so that all attendees can hear what is going on. Committee agreed to provide a suitable sound system with microphone for the next AGM.</p>	
11.3	<p>The Chair suggested that plot holders needed to provide <b>insurance cover</b> for their own individual plots and that the association’s insurance only covered common areas such as roads and pathways. This was challenged by several Members and the Treasurer agreed to look at the association’s Zurich insurance policy and report back at the next Committee meeting.</p>	<b>IM</b>
11.4	<p><b>Plot 49B</b> still remains unoccupied and needs a lot of work to bring up to an acceptable condition. Chair suggested that a group of volunteers would be organised to bring the plot back up to the required standard.</p>	
11.5	<p>Boundary plot holder (6B) asked if boundary plot holders were responsible for the upkeep of their boundary fences/hedges. The Chair confirmed that plot holder was responsible for the “inside face” of the boundary.</p>	
	<p>Meeting closed at 20:30</p>	
	<p>Dobies 2024 seed catalogues were made available at the meeting.</p>	