

Alresford Allotment Society

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Thursday 14th November 2024 at The Alresford Golf Club.

Present: Officers - Tony Mott (Chairman), Nigel Webb (Secretary), Dawn Othen (Treasurer), Committee: - Russ Waterton and Tim Dicker.

Members - Andrew Hammond, Lorraine Lillywhite, Geoff & Jenny Ellis, James & Ann Milnes, Barry & Karen Davis, Tessa Webb, Sally Denniss, Barbra Basford, Cathy Swann, Michael Warwick, Susana Sabin-Fernandez, Mark Davidson, Alan Greenwood, Dave & Amanda Robb, Bert Spence, Ray & Anne Earl, John Silvester-Kew, Lucinda Morgan, Sarah Chedgey, David Boddy and Roger Johnson.

Item No	Minutes	
	<p>The Chairman welcomed the Members to the Meeting. In particular he wished to welcome our new Members who had recently joined the Society following the opening of the new allotments in Spring Gardens.</p> <p>The Chairman then introduced the Officers of the Society to the Members being himself as Chairman, Nigel Webb as Secretary and Dawn Othen as Treasurer.</p> <p>The Chairman advised Members that as there was a presentation by our Speaker, Barry Newman, following the AGM he would like to get through the formal matters as quickly as possible. Accordingly, all Reports had been circulated to Members ahead of the Meeting.</p>	
1.	<p>Apologies received from Deborah Alexander, Margaret Barton, Dave Basford, Howard Boardman, Sarah Butcher, Steve Butler, Cllr Johnny Dakin. Tim Dodd, Margaret Eacott, Helen Ellis, Sarah Floyd, Emma Griffin, Georgie Hibberd, John Leno, Chris Lillywhite, Tracey Newman, Jim Scott, Mike Symons, John Watley and Steph Weller.</p>	
2.	<p>The Chairman advised the Members present that the Minutes of last year's AGM, held on Thursday 16th November 2023, had been circulated shortly after that Meeting and asked for their approval. Unanimously approved.</p>	
3.	<p>The Chairman advised that as his Report had been circulated prior to the Meeting he would just cover the highlights:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• We had received two generous Grants from the Trustees of the Alresford Show and the Town Council amounting to £1,800 for	

	<p>the replacement of our communal shed. He thanked the team responsible for the project.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We have sought and received sponsorship of £100 each from 3 local businesses • We have reviewed and updated the Society's Constitution which we are presenting to Members for their approval at the Meeting • We have seen our second allotment site opened and extend a warm welcome to all our new Members • He thanked all the Committee Members for their hard work in managing the allotments. 	
4.	<p>The Secretary's Report for the year had previously been circulated. The highlights being:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We started the year with 70 Members, as to be expected we have lost some Members but gained new ones. • Following the opening of the new allotment site in October we have, to date, registered 20 new Members. • The Council's waiting list has now been reduced to nil. • There are, currently, 10 unallocated plots covering both sites. • Signage has been improved • 2 new water taps have been installed in the northwest corner of the original site • The mowing rota was successfully put in place, many thanks to all those who volunteered to be part of this team • The new car park will continue to be mowed by Merv • We were able to get the Council's agreement to hire two skips which greatly helped to remove rubbish from the main site. It is hoped we can repeat this exercise again next Spring. • We have had to find a new supplier for our manure. The first delivery was on the greenside. We will seek to get better rotted manure in future and organise a load for the new site. 	
5.	<p>The Treasurer presented her Report, the highlights being:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Our Bank balance stood at £1,406.82. • During the course of the year we had received donations from The Alresford Show (£1,000), The Town Council (£800), Prospect Fencing (£100), New Farm Motor Services (£100) and The Hearing Studio (£100). • We had purchased a new allotment shed for £1,706.14 • Income from manure sales exceeded costs • Our Bankers, Lloyd's Bank had advised that they were discontinuing free banking for Charities and Not for Profit Organisations. Whilst it is estimated that if we remained with Lloyd's it would cost us approximately £60.00 in charges. The Treasurer will investigate potential cheaper alternatives. 	

	<p>The Chairman then asked for a Proposer and Seconder to approve the Accounts. Proposed by: Cathy Swan Seconded by: Russ Waterton</p>	
6.	<p>Election of Officers The Chairman said he was pleased to say that the current Office Holders, that is myself as Chairman, Nigel as Secretary and Dawn as Treasurer have agreed to continue in Office for the coming year.</p> <p>He confirmed that we have not received any other nominations for these posts.</p> <p>With Member's agreement the Chairman proposed that the Officers were elected enbloc. Following the Member's agreement the Chairman asked for a Proposer and Seconder. Proposed by: Babs Basford Seconded by: Jenny Ellis</p>	
7.	<p>Election of Committee Members including ratification of Co-Opted Member The Chairman was pleased to tell the Meeting that the current Committee Members have agreed to continue in office for the coming year. They are Russ Waterton, Tim Dicker and Tim Dodd who was co-opted onto the Committee during the year.</p> <p>Again, he confirmed we have not received any additional nominations to join the Committee.</p> <p>With Member's agreement the Chairman proposed that the Committee Members were elected enbloc. Following the Meeting's agreement the Chairman asked for a Proposer and Seconder. Proposed by: Geoff Ellis Seconded by: Mark Davidson</p>	
8.	<p>Appointment of Accounts Reviewer The Chairman advised that Maxine Baughan, Finance Director of a local firm has kindly agreed to be our Independent Examiner. I would just like to thank her for her time reviewing our Accounts and signing them off.</p>	

9.	<p>Adoption of Updated Constitution</p> <p>The Chairman advised the Meeting that the Committee felt that the Society's Constitution, in place since its establishment in 2005, should be reviewed and, where appropriated, updated. Accordingly, this has been circulated to Members for comment in accordance with the Rules set out in the Old Constitution. One minor amendment has been made for the purpose of clarity.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that in order for the new Constitution to be adopted two things needed to happen. Firstly, at least a majority of the Members in the room must agree and if that is the case, it will then need to be ratified by the Town Council.</p> <p>The Chairman asked for show of hands in favour of adopting the new Constitution.</p> <p>The Meeting voted overwhelming in favour of adopting the New Constitution.</p> <p>Thank you, we will now ask the Council to ratify it at their next Meeting.</p>	NW
10.	<p>Proposed phased increase in Annual Allotment Levy, from current level of £3.00 to £8.00 in two instalments, September 2025 to £5.00 – September 2026 to £8.00</p> <p>The Chairman advised that Committee had reviewed the level of the Annual Allotment Levy which each Member pays. This is collected by the Town Council on behalf of the Society together with your rent in September each year.</p> <p>The current level of the levy, £3.00, has remained unchanged since 2005.</p> <p>The proposal in front of you is to increase the levy from £3.00 to £5.00 from September next year, 2025, and then from £5.00 to £8.00 in September 2026.</p> <p>The reason behind this is that, as you can see from the Accounts, this raised £201.00 last year. By increasing the levy to £5.00 this will generate income of approximately £475.00 in 2025 – 2026, bearing in mind an additional 26 plots and the further increase to £8.00 generate income of approximately £760.00 in 2026 – 2027.</p> <p>With this additional income we propose to enrol all Members with the National Allotment Society. Amongst many benefits this will give all Members Public Liability Cover against any accidents on their plots, currently un-insured. We also propose becoming an affiliated Member of the RHS which will give us access to their Gardens.</p> <p>Before I ask you to vote on this are there any questions?</p>	<p>NW</p> <p>DO</p> <p>DO</p>

	<p>Roger Johnson asked if this was not already covered under our Household Insurance. The Chairman asked the Secretary to respond, The Secretary said that Liability would only be covered if the Policy Holder asked their Insurers to extend their Household Policy to cover their plot. The Secretary explained that as we did not own our plots cover is not automatic nor was it part of ones own garden. It was because of this potential gap in cover the National Allotment Society provided the cover.</p> <p>The question was raised about any possible increase in rent next year. The Secretary was able to confirm he had been in touch with the Town Council who had confirmed that it was not their intention to increase the rent for the foreseeable future.</p> <p>The Chairman advised that should Members be in favour of the proposed new scale of the Annual Levy it would need to be ratified by the Town Council. He asked for a show of hands from all those in favour of adopting the proposal.</p> <p>All in favour.</p> <p>Thank you, we will now ask the Council to ratify this at their next Meeting.</p>	NW
11.	<p>Membership of the National Allotment Society & RHS Affiliated Membership</p> <p>Despite not benefiting from the increased income from the levy until the 2025/26 year we have been lucky enough to raise £300.00 in Sponsorship this year we could, with your agreement, enrol with the National Allotment Society at a cost of £3.00 per plot and become an affiliated Member of the RHS immediately which would allow upto 50 of us to visit one of their Gardens during the year.</p> <p>The Chairman asked for show of hands in favour.</p> <p>All in favour.</p>	
12.	<p>Report by Cllr Johnny Dakin on behalf of New Alresford Town Council</p> <p>We have been very lucky to have Cllr Johnny Dakin sit on our Committee in his capacity as our liaison contact with the Town Council. This has greatly improved our communication with the Council although there is still room for improvement which we are working on.</p> <p>Unfortunately, Johnny is unable to be with us tonight but his Report has been forwarded to you ahead of the Meeting. He pays regular visits to the allotments and takes a real interest in what we are doing and is very supportive.</p>	

13.	<p>AOB</p> <p>Lastly, the Chairman asked the Member's if anyone wished to raise a question?</p> <p>Ann Earl asked if the mowing Rota was expected to include the new allotment site. The Chairmen responded by saying that as yet there was no grass to mow and the Licence Holder of the Right of Way would be expected to keep it mown.</p> <p>It was mentioned that the gate into the new allotments need to have a post or something to stop it shutting on its own. The Secretary agreed to deal with this.</p> <p>The Chairman wished to express his gratitude to Merv for allowing us to dump our green waste on his land and for agreeing to keep the new car park mown. We are hoping to put a Notice Board in the new car park to keep everyone informed.</p> <p>There were no further questions.</p> <p>The Chairman ended the Meeting by saying that whilst we now had two allotment sites we are one Society and he encouraged all new Members to actively participate in the business of the Society.</p> <p>There being no further business the Chairman declared the Meeting closed at 7.28pm</p> <p>There followed a presentation by our Speaker, Barry Newman.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">NKLW 16.11.24</p>	
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