

# Alresford Allotment Society

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> March 2025 in the Committee Room at NATC.

Present: Tony Mott (Chairman), Nigel Webb (Secretary), Dawn Othen (Treasurer), Tim Dodd and Cllr Johnny Dakin. Newly co-opted Members, Jo Downie, Barry Davis and Brigid Taylor.

Before the formal business was discussed the Chairman expressed his gratitude to Tim Dicker who had decided to step down from the Committee due pressure of work. Tim's involvement in the running of the allotments had been significant during his time on the Committee for which we should all be grateful.

The Chairman was delighted to introduce three new co-opted Members, Jo Downie, Barry Davis and Brigid Taylor. He felt their presence would greatly enhance the Committee's skills.

Item No	Minutes	Action
1.	Apologies - Russ Waterton.	
2.	The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 <sup>th</sup> January 2025 were agreed.	
3.	<p>The Chairman raised the following matters which were not covered under an Agenda Item:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Item 8. We have now joined the RHS as Affiliated Members, as agreed at the last AGM. One important benefit this gives the Society is Public Liability Cover. Another benefit is discounted rates for entry to any RHS Garden. The Membership Card, which Members will need to take with them, is now held in the Town Council Offices. Members will be advised separately how the system is going to work. We can also take upto 55 Members to RHS Wisley. BD and BT agreed to look into this further and make enquiries into the cost of hiring a bus.</li><li>- Item 17. The Council had ratified the updated Allotment Rules. The Chairman confirmed he was redrafting the Clause relating to trees.</li></ul>	BD & BT

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Item 18. AOB We intend to mark all sheds and compost bins not sited on a plot so that their ownership can be ascertained, or not as the case may be. Those not identified will be removed/relocated.</li> <li>- BD agreed to look into suitable Guest Speakers we could invite to give a talk to Members during the year. JD offered to help with contacts, especially at Sparsholt College.</li> <li>- Cllr JD advised the meeting that the suggested name for the new allotments was "Watercress Gardens Allotment" which the Committee accepted.</li> <li>- BT suggested that rather than having a formal meeting with the new plot holder at the Watercress Gardens as many Committee Members should make themselves available one Sunday morning to discuss any outstanding matters. It was agreed that this would take place on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> April at 11am. BT said she would put the word around.</li> <li>- A working Party of TD, RW, BD &amp; NW would be formed to make a base for the new Communal Shed and then erect it.</li> <li>- The installation of two new standpipes in the north east corner of the Spring Gardens site was in hand and work was expected to start shortly. TD had kindly agreed to dig the trench for the pipework.</li> </ul>	<p>All Committee</p> <p>TD,RW,BD &amp; NW</p> <p>TD/NW</p>
4.	<p>The Treasurer presented her Report. The current Bank Balance stood at £1,138.00. We were now signed up for Online Banking with Lloyds. DO and RW had completed the Authorised Signatory procedure. The Chairman and Secretary's application was currently being processed. It was agreed to look at our Banking arrangements in 12 month's time in view of the £60.00 pa Bank Charges we were now having to pay.</p> <p>The Treasurer confirmed we had received the £3.00 per plot Members Annual Subscription from the Council for 80 plots. Our Subscription of £309.00 in respect of our Membership of the National Allotment Society had been paid out. The Treasurer had received payment from 15 plot holders for manure. It was suggested that a sign should be put up by the manure pound on the Watercress Gardens allotments setting out our bank details to make payment easier. The Chairman said everyone should be encouraged to pay as they took manure. Likewise, a sign will be erected advising that the wood chippings are free.</p>	

5.	<p>We have now applied to be members of The National Allotment Society (NAS) at £3.50 per plot from 1<sup>st</sup> April. Should any of our members wish to benefit from the Public Liability Cover available from NAS they will be required to supply their home address to NAS, currently only their name and email address has been supplied, where the member has agreed. Cover is already provided under our membership of the RHS. NW to circulate the Members.</p> <p>Cllr JD agreed to add a Clause to the Council Plot Application Form asking new plot holders to give their consent, or otherwise, to the release of their name and email address to NAS.</p>	<p>NW</p> <p>JD</p>
6.	<p>BT confirmed she had the April Newsletter in hand. It was agreed that we should continue to send out our Newsletter twice a year in the Spring and Autumn. It was agreed to have a Sun Flower competition, the winner being the tallest one.</p>	BT
7.	<p>Cllr JD advised the Waiting List for an Allotment now stood at 10. He confirmed there would be a follow up inspection on 31<sup>st</sup> March to check all matters raised after the last inspection on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2024 had been complied with. JD advised that if we would like to arrange an ‘official’ Opening of the Watercress Gardens Allotments we had the Council’s permission to do so. NW to approach the Lord Mayor of Winchester, an Alresford resident, who had already indicated his willingness to carry out this function.</p>	NW
8.	<p>There is only one vacant plot on the Spring Gardens Allotments which requires some work before reletting.</p>	
9.	<p>NW confirmed a sign had now been put on the Lane side of the Notice Board at Spring Gardens acknowledging our local business sponsors with the agreed wording.</p>	
10.	<p>JD said she had done some work on how to set up a website for the Society and she had looked at the Bishop’s Waltham Allotment Site website which was very informative. It was agreed that the domain name should be alresfordallotments.org. this will cost us in the region of £10/15 per annum to register. We will also need to</p>	JD, BD & BT

	<p>link in an email address for contact purposes which will carry an additional cost, but necessary.</p> <p>The Chairman asked JD to work with BD who has some experience in this area and liaise with BT so it links into our Newsletter.</p> <p>BT mentioned that for data protection purposes we need to be careful that any personal information appearing on the site must have the approval of the individual(s) involved.</p>	
11.	<p>The Allotment Spring clean will take place on 2<sup>nd</sup> May. The Council have kindly ordered a skip to be delivered. It was agreed that we would see how quickly it was filled before deciding if an additional skip was required. The possibility of providing a smaller skip for the Watercress Gardens allotments was discussed as there was a high degree of metal which had been dug up and needed removing. A decision will be made at the next Committee Meeting</p> <p>A working party needs to be arranged. It was agreed to ask Howard Boardman's advice as to what tasks need doing.</p>	NW
12.	<p>More wood chippings were needed at both sites. Cllr JD agreed to contact Chris Mathews, our usual supplier, and ask him for another delivery. BT said a plot holder at the Watercress Gardens arranged a delivery of wood chippings which were very good quality. She agreed to investigate further.</p> <p>Cllr JD had also been in contact with Ben and Natalie Sparks, who keep their horses in the adjacent paddock, who have offered us some well rotted manure. It was agreed Cllr JD would ask them to drop some off on the vacant plot C26.</p>	BT  JD
13.	The agreed Memorandum of Understanding between the Town Council and the Allotment Society had been circulated to all Committee Members.	
14.	The Council and Allotment Rules were now agreed.	
15.	<p>AOB.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NW advised that through the good offices of Tim Dicker, Southern Water had donated 4 x 200lt water butts to the Society. NW had offered these to members and had received 21 replies.</li> </ul> <p>A ballot had been drawn to choose the lucky recipients.</p>	

16.	<p>TD had asked Southern Water if they had any additional butts available bearing in mind the level of response we had received. Southern Water responded by offering upto a further 10 butts and asked if we would be willing to supply some publicity material for them and they may wish to visit our allotments. It was agreed we would be happy to provide some photo opportunities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- NW advised the meeting that we had been asked by the Town Trust, who were organising a Plant Fair in Broad Street at the end of June, if we would like to have a stall for plant and seed swaps. It was generally felt that with the new allotments we should be offering any surplus plants to other members of the allotments first.</li> <li>- TD agreed to make another Seed Swap box for the Watercress Gardens. TD also agreed to repair the slatted table that had been donated and move this to the Watercress Gardens for surplus plants to be put on.</li> <li>- DO will look into the level of interest into holding a Bank Holiday barbeque at Spring Gardens.</li> <li>- The post code on the gate into the Watercress Gardens allotments is incorrect. NW agreed to deal with this.</li> <li>- It was agreed to put a Questionnaire in the next Newsletter seeking allotment holders views on what could be improved.</li> <li>- The Chairman had put in a Grant Application to Winchester City Council for a rotavator which had been successful. We have received £679, the amount requested. NW agreed to discuss with Howard Boardman the most suitable machine to purchase. Once purchased we would need to discuss with the Council any H &amp; S issues, restricted use to only those who had undertaken a course on how to use the machine and a Risk Assessment.</li> </ul> <p>The next meeting will take place on Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> May in the Committee Room at NATC Offices starting at 7pm.</p> <p>There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.40pm.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">NKLW 22.03.25</p>	<p>NW</p> <p>TD</p> <p>DO</p> <p>NW</p> <p>NW</p>
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