

Alresford Allotment Society

Minutes of the Committee Meeting held on Thursday 15th May 2025 in the Committee Room at NATC.

Present: Tony Mott (Chairman), Nigel Webb (Secretary), Dawn Othen (Treasurer), Tim Dodd, Russ Waterton, Co-opted Members, Barry Davis, Brigid Taylor. In attendance Cllr Johnny Dakin – NATC Liaison

Item No	Minutes	Action
1.	Apologies – Jo Downie.	
2.	The Minutes of the previous meeting held on 20 th March 2025 were agreed.	
3.	The Chairman raised the following matters which were not covered under an Agenda Item:- - RHS Membership Card. This was now held in the Town Council's Office but there was, as yet, no system in place to record who the card has been lent to. Cllr Dakin agreed to look into this. - Cllr Dakin confirmed the Updated Council Allotment Rules had been through Committee and agreed. - In place of a 'Formal Meeting' with the new Watercress Allotment Holders it had been decided an informal approach might be a better option. TM and BT visited on Sunday morning 6th April. They were met by a good response. In particular, two allotment holders had organised a delivery of good quality wood chippings. The Chairman said he was trying to make contact with Tom, the supplier to arrange another delivery. - A working Party needs to be arranged to build the base for the Communal Allotment Shed at the Watercress site and erect the shed. The large pallets, sourced by NW, need to be erected around the Green Waste area to stop rubbish falling into the watercress beds below. - The Chairman thanked TD and NW for their endeavours in arranging the installation of two new standpipes to service the north- west corner of the Spring Gardens Allotments. The original quote to undertake this work was £960 with us digging the trench. The work was completed	Cllr Dakin NW

	within the Council's Grant to the Society of £500.00. It was agreed to keep an eye on the standpipe where the new supply was taken from as the pressure in one tap is poor indicating a possible leak. The overall site is now well serviced by a sufficient distribution of standpipes. - The Spring Clean at Spring Gardens over the weekend of 3rd/4th May had been a success with the skip being filled in a day and a half. - The Chairman thanked TD for building and installing another Seed Swap Box for the Watercress Gardens site. - The Chairman asked if there was any support for a BBQ over the Bank Holiday. BT suggested that speaking to her plot holders they would prefer a get together one evening. It was agreed that this could be done on Friday evening 27th June at 5pm. NW agreed to action. - The incorrect post Code on the gate into Watercress Gardens had been amended. - The Chairman asked BD to bring the Committee upto date on a possible outing to RHS Wisley for Members of the Society. BD advised that he had done some costing for a coach which worked out at £10.00 a head and had sent an email round asking Members to advise him which, of four proposed dates, they preferred. The response he had received did not warrant the hiring of a coach as most respondents preferred to take their own cars. It was agreed that the offer to arrange a group visit would be dropped and Members advised accordingly.	NW BD/NW
4.	The Treasurer presented her Report. The current Bank Balance stood at £1,691.51. We had received a Grant of £500.00 from The Town Council to pay for the installation of the standpipes. We had also received a Grant, applied for by the Chairman, of £679.00 from Winchester City Council for the purchase of a rotorvator. Our Bank had made charges of £8.92. We have not been invoiced for any manure so far this year. We now had three Committee Members authorised to make online payments, DO, TM & RW, it was felt this was sufficient.	

	Lloyds Bank did not apparently have systems in place to allow payments to be authorised by more than one signatory. It was agreed that as long as there was a paper trail in place supporting each payment this would be adequate for audit purposes. Manure, to date we had received £234.75 from 21 plot holders. DO suggested that possibly upto 8 plot holders had outstanding payments to make. The Chairman expressed his concern that payment should be made within a week of taking manure. BD suggested that following delivery of the next load the Secretary should send an email to all plot holders reminding them of the cost per barrow load and the payment procedure together with the Society's Bank details. NW agreed to action.	NW
5.	Spring and Autumn Newsletters. BT advised that the Spring Newsletter had been well received and gone out on time on 7th April. Matters were in hand for the next issue in September. Several plot holders had offered to contribute	BT
6.	The Chairman expressed his thanks to the Mayor of Winchester, Russell Gordon-Smith who Officially Opened the Watercress Garden Allotments on Tuesday 29th April. This was well attended by approximately 20 plot holders together with a photographer and journalist from The Hampshire Chronicle. See Thursday 1st May's Edition. BT advised that one of the three wheelbarrows was no longer serviceable as it was badly damaged. It was agreed that one of the wheelbarrows from Spring Gardens would be transferred. BD wondered whether if one of the local builder's merchants might be willing to donate a couple of wheelbarrows. The Chairman agreed to investigate.	NW TM
7.	The Spring Clean at Spring Gardens over the weekend of 3/4th May went well. The skip was filled within a day and a half. BT agreed to sound out the plot holders on the Watercress Site to see if a skip was needed there. The general feeling was that it might get filled up with rubble. A plot holder had suggested that dumping any rubble on the side of the site made a good wildlife habitat. The Chairman was concerned the bridge may not be strong enough to carry the weight of a lorry delivering the skip.	BT Cllr Dakin

	Cllr Dakin suggested a decision should be deferred until after the first inspection when the amount of rubbish and obsolete items could be assessed.	
8.	The Spring Allotment Inspection of both sites would be undertaken by The Town Council at 6.30pm on Thursday 26th June. It was agreed that DO and RW from the Committee would attend.	DO & RW
9.	JD had submitted a paper with her proposals for our new website which the Chairman thanked her for. The Chairman asked BD to liaise with JD to develop this going forward. BD said that it was not necessary to finalise the website in its entirety before launch as amendments could be made at any time. JD had also undertaken some research into looking for suitable Speakers which had done through her contacts at Sparsholt College. BD said he had spoken to the Golf Club and they were happy for us to use the Club House for our events. RW also suggested the upstairs room at Arlebury Park which could seat upto 50 people. BD said he was in contact with Ray Broughton, a very knowledgeable speaker, who JD recommends and could suggest topics for him to present. It was agreed that we should charge £2.00 for Members who wished to attend and £3.00 for Non Society members. When JD has engaged a Speaker and a date BD will arrange a venue. The anticipated cost of a Speaker is £100/150 plus travel costs.	JD/BD
10.	Cllr Dakin confirmed he had spoken to Ben and Natalie Sparks, the tenants of the adjacent field about letting us have some well -rotted horse manure for the Watercress site. He agreed to follow this up. NW advised that he had spoken to Charlie Cheyney, the Farmer in Cheriton, and he will deliver another load next week to Spring Gardens.	Cllr Dakin
11.	AOB - BD raised asked for confirmation as to the correct title of the Society, which is The Alresford Allotment Society and NOT The NEW Alresford Allotment Society. BD asked NW if he could let him have to current list of those plot holders who had elected to be included under the RHS Public Liability Scheme. NW to action.	NW

12.	DO reminded the Committee that we need a band of volunteers for our stall at The Alresford Show (Saturday 6th September). NW agreed to ask the Show Secretaries how many passes we receive as this greatly helps recruiting volunteers. We also need to start early to remind everyone of the need to provide some produce for our Stand. The Chairman said he had met some new Spring Garden plot holders, Jane & Phil, and that she made wire decorations which he thought could be incorporated into our display. DO raised the issue of succession planning following the Chairman's recent Memo. She felt that it was particularly important to think of people to take over from the Society's Officers in due course. This could be addressed in the Newsletter. NW agreed to circulate the Roles of the Officers to the Committee. DO was concerned, having just found a plastic tree discarded in Merv's Green Dump, that Members should be reminded, perhaps in the 'House Keeping' Section of the Newsletter, that only green waste can be deposited. BT said she was concerned that the general public might use the Watercress Allotment Car Park. Whilst there was a sign on the gate that it was only for use of Allotment Members it was agreed to keep an eye on who used it. The Committee agreed that they did not want to put a padlock on it if possible. NW raised the issue of unmarked Sheds and Compost Bins not immediately situated on Members plots. It was agreed he would send an email to all Members asking them to put their plot number on any property not on their plot by 30th June and that after this date any unmarked items will be moved or reallocated. The Chairman advised the meeting that following the Grant received from Winchester City Council The Hampshire Chronicle were due to attend, together with some Councillors to unveil the new rotavator at some point to be advised. The Chairman wished to record his thanks to Geoff Ellis for making a new Notice Board which will be placed in the car park of the Watercress Allotments. NW and TD agreed to put it in place. The next meeting will take place on Thursday 17th July in the Committee Room at NATC Offices starting at 7pm. There being no further business the Chairman closed the Meeting at 8.45pm. NKLW 16.05.25	NW TM NW NW
-----	---	---