

## Allotments Liaison Meeting

Draft minutes of ALM meeting following the AGM at Oxford Town Hall on Tuesday 25 September 2018.

Association:	Attending*:	Apologies:
Barns Court	David Robertson	
Barracks Lane	Andrew Fairweather-Tall	
Bartlemas	Samir Shibli, Miles Chetwynd-Stableton	
Barton Fields	Michael Evans, Roger Cann, Russell Price	
Cow Mead	Faith Phipps, John Hastings	
Cripley Meadow	Manda Joyce, Wendy Skinner Smith	
Cuttleslowe	Ian Sheppard	Bob Findlay
East Ward	Clare Ferguson, Jevon Lancaster	
Fairacres Road	Paul Hopkins	
Fairview	Priscilla Grant, S Abbasi	
Headington Brasenose Farm	Bill Edwards	
Headington Eden Drive	John Lardner	Mike Halliwell
Headington John Garne Way	Alan Cooper, Mary Cooper	
Kestrel Crescent	Roy Leach	
Minchery Farm West	Michael Evans	
Old Marston Mill Lane	Chris Mitchell	
Osney – Twenty Pound Meadow	Nick Jackson	
Osney – Botley Meadow	Nick Jackson	
Ramsay Road	Brian McMillan	
Risinghurst	Jenny Bowles, Barry Alper	
Sorrel Road	Bill Wright, Roger Cann	
South Ward	David Allen	
Spragglesea Mead & Deans Ham	Tim Treacher	
St Clements & District	Phil Baker	Penny Gardiner
Town Furze		Sadia Azeem
Trap Grounds	Tony Hollander	
Upper Wolvercote	Liesl Osman	
<b>Councillors</b>	Louise Upton	
<b>OCC Parks et al.</b>	Stewart Fitzsimmons, Emma Taylor	

\* Please note if you **did not sign** the attendance sheet circulated in the meeting you will not be listed here

### 1. Welcome and apologies.

- Meeting chaired by Wendy Skinner Smith, who introduced Emma Taylor (OCC) and Councillor Louise Upton (North Ward) – council member with responsibility for allotments.
- 34 site reps representing 26 sites, Cllr Upton and OCC were thanked for attending.

### 2. Minutes of the last ALM

- The minutes of last ALM held 10 April 2018 (following the AGM) have been on the website since the last meeting. All to check these for accuracy and send any amendments to the secretary. **A1**

### 3. Our new 21-year Lease (due to start in September 2021)

- General unfamiliarity with leases seems to be common.
- Allotment Constitution /rules still outstanding from: Van Diemans lane, Upper Wolvercote, Thomson Terrace, Spragglesea Mead and Deans Ham, Minchery road west, Court Place farm, Kestrel Crescent, Town Furze and Barns Court. Please send remaining to WSS **ASAP**. **A2**

- Interestingly, almost all the leases we have seen are near ‘word-for-word’ identical.
- Also circulated were survey sheets to update and fill in. We are reviewing all the info ODFAA and OCC hold on sites to make sure we know where we are. We realise it is a lot of work but please make every effort to ensure accurate information for your site. Need as much detail as possible – all to return these to JL **ASAP**. **A3**
- Rent comparison – all Associations can ask for the pertinent rent information (e.g. rent per hectare) for their own sites. Contact WSS. **A4**
- Canvassing for Associations’ views on leases. The meeting was given 30 mins for verbal contributions and then provided an opportunity to add comments to flip chart documents:

Sorrel Road	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Narrow definition of what can be done on allotments – seems like more liberal ‘green spaces’ approach now being taken?</li> </ul>	Lease negotiations still plan to focus on growing flowers, fruit and vegetables
Cowmead	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pests – anything to cover this in the new leases. Whose responsibility will it be in future?</li> </ul>	Will consider this when drafting leases but currently Associations’ responsibility.
Brasenose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Any idea of how much site rents would rise?</li> </ul>	Not as yet.
Bartlemas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site rented by OCC from Oriel College – lease has a sub-let component.</li> <li>• A rise in rent would be unfair if no equivalent support received from OCC.</li> </ul>	Sub-let component will be taken into consideration. Site does have access to same level of OCC support as others
Barrack’s Lane	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Membership vs. Rent. Rent rising to ~£55 pa raising money to improve allotments.</li> <li>• Income allows us to budget but we need to know what to budget for. Any major work would be beyond committee to deal with.</li> <li>• Volunteer time for committee issues thinly stretched – not sufficient to cover some of the more complicated issues like boundary trees.</li> </ul>	This is why the site survey information is so essential. The more Associations take responsibility for the more membership fees rise. The more the Council takes responsibility for the more the site rents are likely to rise
Brasenose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trees – currently deal with them ourselves.</li> <li>• Issues with boundary trees/hedges – who will take responsibility in the future?</li> </ul>	Responsibility lies with Associations. Complicated – e.g. not all sites have trees
John Garne Way	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allotments prevented from making a profit. Leases should distinguish between commercial activity and fundraising.</li> <li>• JGW site has accesses from back gardens. See whether this continues in the new leases.</li> <li>• Having Trustees is bizarre and outdated.</li> </ul>	Historical ruling over Sunday trading and Allotments – allows fundraising sales activities. Emma Taylor will follow up. <b>A5</b>
St Clements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Associations are unincorporated associations (not a legal entity) so do not have proper Trustees.</li> </ul>	Looking to change Trustees to signatories or something similar

- If any ODFAA members have further lease-related queries they should contact Emma Taylor (OCC) by email for a response: [etaylor@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:etaylor@oxford.gov.uk) **A6**
- NJ will collate and type up the additional written contributions. **A7**

## 4. Oxford City Council Reactive maintenance budget 2017-2018 update

- First round of grants for this financial year.
- Received nine submission, totalling £7,469.55. The ODFAA committee and OCC Parks discussed these and recommended seven submissions for ODFAA approval totalling £3201.05:

	Site	Project	Amount applied for	
1	Brasenose	Solar Panel Lighting for allotment shed	£312.01	<b>Approved</b>
2	Brasenose	Fencing to reclaimed allotment land	£2768.50 (or proportion of this)	At last meeting BN were asked to contact Parks about this as a dispute
3	Cripley Meadow	Solar-powered trickle-feed for communal water tank	£610.00	<b>Approved</b>
4	Cotteslowe	Installation of Solar Panel System and Intruder Alarm	£1,399.00	<b>Approved</b>
5	Eden Drive	Composting	£79.83	<b>Approved</b>
6	Eden Drive	Solar Panel + Water Pump	£417.03	<b>Approved</b>
7	Fairview	Access and sustainability	£1,500.00	Too large for a site that does not contribute to ODFAA funds so <b>not approved</b> - suggest a lottery bid.
8	John Garne Way	Water Harvesting Shelter	£287.18	<b>Approved</b>
9	St Clement's & District	Water Harvesting/ Conservation - mulching	£96.00	<b>Approved</b> - need to tighten up on definition of what is being asked for

- Should be another round in Jan/Feb if still some reactive maintenance funds still available. Focus on composting, water harvesting, solar power, sustainability, building/site security + accessibility
- Over the past 10 years all 35 allotment sites have been invited to apply, including those who do not pay rent to OCC. This decision was taken some years ago to try to help sites which had fallen into neglect and thus raise the number of plots available across the city. ODFAA will review non-OCC-site access/insurance payments as part of the lease discussions. We hope to continue to work together.
- Reactive maintenance money historically available for grants but if work on trees takes most of it then little would be available for grants in the future. Several items that Associations are bidding for are really items that could/should be funded from Association funds in future

## 5. ODFAA Centenary Plans

- Phil Baker has worked tirelessly to go through both our archives and OCC's and we already have a draft for 50 years of history and several site/association histories.
- Lottery bid of £4,500 to fund publication and printing was unsuccessful. Feedback suggests greater pressure on lottery funding due to reductions in local authority funds.
- Individual Association contributions still needed from quite a few associations. East Ward, Cotteslowe and Bartlemas to resend to Phil. **A8**
- Any updated versions also to be sent to Phil by the deadline of the end of the month. **A9**
- All to contact their local ward councillors to ask for a financial contribution of ~£200 to support the publication to from their annual grant of £1500. **A10**
- When doing this it is worth stressing the value of allotments to increase involvement and integrations of Oxford's ethnically diverse population.
- It was suggested that although hard copy of publication will be 'illustration-light' we could consider adding these to the electronic copies that would be on the website and go out to members.

## 6. Allotment Competition

- ODFAA have not run allotment competition since 2016 due to lack of resources (people and time).
- ODFAA committee proposed a way of reducing the administration time by sharing it with associations. This is like a method first suggested by a competition judge some years ago. On this basis Tim Treacher and Ian Sheppard have agreed to manage a 2019 centenary competition.
- TT & IS, plus Tina Mould and Mike Kent, two previous allotment judges, have met and formed an allotment competition subcommittee for 2019.
- We will manage to fund the competition with bigger prizes, particularly the site prize, by reducing paperwork and only running it every 3 -5 years. Thus, more of the competition budget will be returned to developing sites and celebrating and encouraging good practice.
- Entry by sites requires a minimum of one plot in **at least three** of the categories:

under 35 years	35 to 64 years	65 to 75 years	older than 75 years
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- Also category for small plots – 2.5 poles or smaller.
- The Association winning the overall site competition, should receive the Alderman Knight Shield, and prize money of £300, with a runner up prize of £100.
- For 5 plot categories there will be winners and runners-up with prizes of £50 and £30 respectively.
- The overall individual winner of the competition, will receive £100 and the Challenge Trophy.
- Highly Commended certificates will be awarded to runners up in the Challenge Trophy section. It was noted that these are cheap to produce but are highly motivating to recipients, particularly new starters.
- Two judging dates – 2<sup>nd</sup> week of June and 2<sup>nd</sup> week in September. Sites to be judged in both rounds.
- Motion to run the competition was passed unanimously by the meeting.

## 7. Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme – flood channel plans

- NJ reported back from a recent meeting between ODFAA and our solicitor that we have engaged to assist in dealings between two Associations (Osney ST&NB and Spragglesea Mead & Deans Ham), the Environment Agency and OCC regarding the proposed Oxford Flood Alleviation Strategy. The Environment Agency have committed to covering all costs of the legal advice we require.
- It was noted that one likely consequence of the OFAS works would be to hold back water north of Botley Road so as to channel it into the top of the new bypass channel at Seacourt. While it is unlikely to increase the height of future floods it may impact several allotment sites in the area by taking longer for flood water to dissipate and drain away after the flood has peaked. Of the 2,700 allotment plots in the city over 1,000 of these are in the flood-affected area.
- WSS again reiterated the need for the Environment Agency to consider proper clearing and maintenance of ditches in the area to speed up post-flood drainage. We have asked for this to be incorporated into the revised 'Heads of Terms' document our solicitor is currently revising.

## 8. ODFAA Annual Talk

- Poster for details Charles Dowding, No Dig talk. 7.30pm November 3<sup>rd</sup> at West Oxford Community Centre had been circulated.
- Tickets now go on sale – Associations can advertise from 26<sup>th</sup> September onwards.

## 9. AOB.

- No items were presented.

## Provisional dates for ALM meetings, Committee meetings and deadlines:

<b>2018</b>		
January 30 <sup>th</sup>	7pm for 7.15pm	Allotment Liaison meeting
February 9 <sup>th</sup>	OCC should have sent Grant forms out to associations by the 9 <sup>th</sup> Feb	
February 22 <sup>nd</sup>	2.30pm – 7pm	Potato Fair at West Oxford Community Centre
March 13 <sup>th</sup>	3.30pm	OCC/ODFAA Fed Committee
April 10 <sup>th</sup>	6.30 - 7pm/7.15pm	ODFAA AGM/Allotment Liaison meeting
May 1 <sup>st</sup>	<b>Insurance renewal (fees must be paid and insurance paperwork received before/at AGM)</b>	
May 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Weds 7pm Chair's house	O&DFAA committee planning meeting
May 26 <sup>th</sup>	OCC send Grant forms out to associations <b>before end of May</b>	
August 14 <sup>th</sup>	Tues 3.30pm - 4.30pm 4.30pm - 5.30pm	OCC / O&DFAA and Fed Committee ODFAA committee
August 18 <sup>th</sup>	TBC	Elder Stubbs Festival
September 25 <sup>th</sup>	Tues 7 for 7.15pm	Allotment Liaison meeting
<b>November 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>O&amp;DFAA Talk at West Oxford Community Centre</b>
December 11 <sup>th</sup>	Tues 3.30pm - 4.30pm 4.30pm - 5.30pm	OCC / O&DFAA and Fed Committee ODFAA committee
<b>2019</b>		
January 6 <sup>th</sup>	<b>10am - 1.30pm</b>	<b>Pennard Plants Potato Fair at West Oxford Community Centre</b>
January 22 <sup>nd</sup>	<b>Tues 7pm for 7.15pm</b>	<b>Allotment Liaison meeting</b>
March 12 <sup>th</sup>	Tues 3.30pm - 4.30pm 4.30pm - 5.30pm	OCC / O&DFAA and Fed Committee ODFAA committee
April 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Tues 6.30 - 7 pm</b> <b>7.15 - 9pm</b>	<b>O&amp;DFAA AGM</b> <b>Allotment Liaison meeting</b>