

Minutes for L.A.A. on Wednesday November 3rd 2021

- Welcome
- Apologies - Glenys, Graham, Viv Pearson, John Braithwaite, Cathy Fewliss
- Persons present- Kay West, Samantha Shakespeare, Jane Lacey, Mary Laycock, Stuart Sidebotham
- Copies of minutes from last meeting for people to read.

Matters Arising from Minutes of September 8th 2021

- 1) No vacant plots
- 2) Number of people on waiting list- 12 (down from 15 in September.)
- 3) **New noticeboard** has been installed on the side of the Community shed. This is used to inform plot holders of events and give advice, e.g. adders, emergency numbers, gardening tips to be posted when space is available (this was achieved for October). Old Noticeboard by gate has information slips and reports of meetings that can be taken by the plot holders.
- 4) **Theft and Security** - Security marking Session on Saturday October 23rd 1 pm - 3 pm. Two Police Officers arrived with equipment for security marking. No one came to have their belongings marked but we walked around the allotment site and had a chat with the few plot holders that were on site. Thank you to West Mercia Police for providing this service.
- 5) **Closing the gate** - Gates to be closed if others are working on the site. However, if a plot holder is last to leave then whatever the time of day, they should lock the gate. A sign to this effect has been put on the main gate. There are still some who do not close the gate. It was suggested that a post could be installed so that instead of the gate automatically swinging the 180 degrees angle against the hedge, the opening would be restricted to about 100 degrees. This would free up a couple more parking spaces, put less strain on the gate hinges and make it obvious that the gate needed to be shut/opened.
- 6) **Veteran Allotment people**. A letter is **still** in the process of being drafted. It was decided that anyone who wished to become a "Veteran" would be asked to pay a yearly subscription of £5 to the L.A.A. to cover the cost of a key and be eligible for L.A.A membership.
- 7) **Report back from Plant Fayre** - Saturday September 18th 9-3 Corn Square. Thanks to Viv, Sam and Hilary for manning the stall and donations of plants and flowers. The only other donation was 3 courgettes so a thank you to this unknown donor. We raised £26.28 and spent £26 on two tins of blue paint to repaint the Community shed as this was down to bare wood in places.

8) **Report back from Harvest supper** Friday October 8th at the John Abel Room, Grange Court at 7p.m. A convivial evening which was attended by 15 people, including the Deputy Mayor, Patricia Marsh. Thank you to all for the tasty selection of food that was donated. There were a couple of quizzes with a gardening theme and a raffle which raised £29. This was used to cover the cost of complimentary drinks and food items.

9) **Disabled toilet facility.** Funding is required for this and it is something that will be followed up once other commitments have been addressed. Suggestions for funding were the Lottery, a Council grant, the Regional Association, sponsorship from Local businesses.

10) **Using part of the Community Garden to create 3 more mini plots.**

The perennial plants from this were put on the Swap Table, given to named persons and a post went up to inform people that they could remove any of the raspberry canes. Thanks to Stuart for sourcing timber and working to create 3 new mini plots. Top soil needs to be added, possibly from someone known who is having building work carried out at their home. One is now taken but although offered to others on the waiting list they turned them down as they wished to wait until larger plots were available.

11) **Kings Seed Catalogues** Completed order forms with payment to go to 11 Ryelands Road: **1st order** by 6th November. and **2nd order** by 4th December - by 3.00 both days. Delivery of goods to 11, Ryelands Road. So far, only a couple of have been received but they tend to be last minute.

12) **On site secure post box/L.A.A. membership and rent payment** - A secure post box will be placed in the Community Shed. With many people working shifts, it can be difficult for plot holders to use the Council Offices to pay their yearly rent and membership fees and not everyone uses online banking. It was felt that a secure box, in the Community Shed, would be a useful way for plot holders to post cheques for this. It was also suggested that a designated Saturday be used as another way to collect payments and that this could be part of a social occasion with refreshments made available.

13) **Admin for 2022 LAA membership** - In future this will be administered by LAA Treasurer Hilary. See above for a suggested system.

14) **Developing the old recycling area into new plots and wildlife area.** Still anticipated that it will be developed into new plots in Spring 2022. The wildlife area was discussed in A.O.B. (see this section). The new plots will have to be raised beds as there are cables and water pipes in this area. It was thought that Steve Gallimore might be aware of where the water pipes were. The disabled toilet will be sited next to this area.

15) **Report from Leominster in Bloom - It's Your Neighbourhood Award.** This was posted on Facebook, the allotment website and copies were made available from the allotment noticeboard. There were various recommendations which had implications for the Town Council and others which were discussed in the A.O.B section regarding the proposed wildlife area.

A.O.B.

Swap table – A thank you to Rob Evans for removing some of the rubbish that had been left in the vicinity off or on the swap table. This facility can be really useful if used correctly and the recycling of unwanted items received positive feedback in our It's Your Neighbourhood assessment. An open Swap Shed was suggested, instead of a table, as this would prevent items being blown around and getting soaked. Siting it next to the proposed disabled toilet would make it more central. This would make it more accessible and rather than be used as a dumping ground as people left or entered the site it would require a designated visit. The shelter walls could also be used for placing adverts and notices on the walls.

Wildlife area and environmental activities (the I.Y.N. Assessment highlighted the need for more environmental activities and gave suggestions).

- **Bat and bird boxes.** - Julie D is hoping to obtain some bird and bat boxes from the Environment Agency and advice can be given on the best places to site these. James Bisset does bat walks and might have helpful information that could be useful for next year.
- **Bug hotels** - Could make these by holding an allotment workshop and involve families with this. Information on designs and what recycling materials can be used for construction is needed. Echo has some good examples of different sizes.
- **Composting** - all plots could have compost bins and compost bins are available for mini plots (workshop on composting)
- **Water butts** - make maximum use of rainwater butts rather than mains water. Sam was contacted by a Ledbury Allotments person to let her know that 7 large 1,000 litre barrels were available and could be delivered for a small cost.

Encourage plot holders to garden organically as this is more wildlife friendly, Sharing knowledge and skills to enable this –

- 1) Alternatives to pesticides and herbicides- use wool instead of slug pellets. If you must use slug pellets then restrict use. (See information on November organic gardening as this suggests pest control methods)
- 2) Companion planting.

Wildlife area –

- 1) Wildflowers/plants that attract insects.
- 2) Places for animals to hibernate and suitable mini habitat (for slow worms).
- 3) Water feature/ pond/wetland area.

- 4) Plant hedge with some trees to provide food source for birds and insects.
- 5) Mow pathways through so habitat is not trampled on.
- 6) Seating areas.
- 7) Take part in RSPB birdwatch on the allotment site to identify bird species to help determine what is required to sustain them.
- 8) Could do a diary where plot holders record what has been spotted, like they do in hides at Bodenham lakes.

Future meetings –

January 2022 -Town Council Offices- Wednesday 5th @7

March 2022 -Town Council Offices- Wednesday 2nd @7

Events 2022

May Plant Fayre

LIB Its Your Neighbourhood assessment.

September Plant Fayre

October Harvest supper

Details for 2022 to be posted in January and there will also be fliers on the Community notice board.