

Leominster Allotment Association Annual General Meeting

Wednesday 1st May 2019, 7.00pm in the Town Council offices, Corn Square, Leominster.

Committee members present: Gill Murdoch (Chair), Jane Lacey, B Hirschmann, Elliana Meek, Ian Wilkins

Others present (not a full list): D Arkell, R Cox, G Ding, S Gallimore, M Goodwin, M Locock, C Loran, G & G Millard, S Morris, R Murdoch, V Pearson, R Read, L Rowan, S Shakespeare, R Wall, D Wilkins, K West

Apologies: J Braithwaite, C Fewlas.

Minutes: Christine Conlon

Minutes Approval

The minutes from the previous A.G.M. meeting, 2nd May 2018, were approved as a true record of last year's meeting and they were signed by the Chair, Gill Murdoch.

Opening matters

Gill welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked several people, including Bridget for clearing out the Community greenhouse and Ray for mowing the grass and weeding.

Report from the Minutes Secretary, Christine Conlon.

A total of six general meetings and one AGM have been held in the Leominster Allotment Association year, 2nd May 2018 – 1st May 2019.

The Minutes and Newsletters are put onto the Documents page of the website, enabling public access. Also, paper copies are put into the Community shed, available for all to read.

The Leominster Allotment Association website has had a healthy 947 'hits', from April 2018 to April 2019. If anyone is interested in knowing more about administering the website, please feel free to ask me.

I am stepping down this year from my role as Minutes Secretary, as stated at last year's AGM, but I will continue to administer the website. I took over the role of Minutes Secretary in September 2011 and since then I have taken minutes for 45 meetings and 8 AGMs.

Although, not having an allotment myself, I have admiration for those who do. They deserve thanks for doing a worthwhile task not only for themselves, but for the community and the environment.

Finally, thank you for your support over the last 12 months and of course, over the last 8 years.

Report from the Chair, Gill Murdoch.

Since May 2018, the monthly site visits have continued. They take place on the first Wednesday of the month and their purpose is to check that all is running smoothly down at the allotments. There are very few plots vacant at the moment and the site looks good.

Activities during the year

- In June 2018, a BBQ / bring-and-share picnic was held down at the allotments, next to the Community shed. It wasn't as busy as hoped, but those who were there enjoyed it.
- In August, Julie Debbage, Environmental Services Supervisor, organised a property marking event at the allotments. Some plot holders brought along items to be marked by Sue the local Police Officer. Cups of tea and home-made cakes were available and made it a social occasion.

- In October, the annual Harvest Supper and Awards Evening took place at Grange Court. It was a popular event and a successful evening, with funds raised by holding a raffle.
- In February, The Leominster Allotment Association attended the Seed Swap in the Priory. The allotments and the Leominster Allotment Association were publicised.

Other matters

- The bottom step of the tree bog is broken and will be fixed soon. Bridget and Kay have replaced the toilet roll in there. Thanks to Sue Morris who has sourced another supplier of sawdust for the toilet which she looks after. The toilet compost is recycled by being spread around the trees nearby.

Town Council issues

- The Environmental Services Supervisor, Julie Debbage, left in April to take up another job. Mark Culbert has taken over from Julie. Gill will make one more inspection with Mark, before stepping down.
- The hedge cutting was successful and the hedge has started to bulk up.
- The large compost bays have been dismantled as they were not successful. There were problems of inappropriate and non-compostable material being put into the bays. Further discussion about the space left by the bays, will be needed.
- The Pest Control operator successfully used 'targeted control' of vermin, avoiding harm to wildlife. It is believed that food spillage from bird feeders, attracts vermin, so advice is not to put feeders on plots.
- The matter of the surface water leaking into some plots has been investigated. Herefordshire Council was contacted and a plumbing engineer came out to check storm and foul water systems. Welsh Water had checked that the water is alright and not contaminated. The issue has now been passed on to Highways for comment as it is believed that it must be an issue with surface water from the highway.
- There was water leaking from a plastic pipe joint from a water station. The water was turned off to this water station until the leak can be fixed. The tap can easily be turned on and off as required, until the fix is made.
- The standpipe in the car park was knocked down and a new one, for hand washing, is to be installed near to the Community shed, which houses the First Aid kit.
- The Town council will soon be sending out five letters of request to improve their allotments.

Gill thanked all the committee members for their work during the past year. As announced at last year's AGM, Gill will stand down after the meeting.

Report from the Facebook administrator, Ian Wilkins

A total of 110 people 'follow' the Leominster Allotment Association Facebook page.

The Facebook page has a group, comprising 27 members, who post messages and share photographs etc on the page. A lot of photographs are being shared and messages being sent, which are picked up immediately by followers, which has proved useful, especially when bad weather caused a problem and followers were alerted to this.

Ian thanked those who have posted things onto the page.

Report from the Membership Secretary, Jane Lacey

Current membership is 32 members (as at 30/4/2019).

The association has been through a period of dormancy over the last few years, for a range of reasons. One of these was a period of plot holders changing frequently, thus having an impact on developing a sense of community within the allotment site.

I feel personally that perhaps the length of time I have served on the committee has left me with a diminished level of enthusiasm which may have had an impact as well.

As announced last year, I am standing down, but I would be very happy to assist in any way, the next membership secretary in their endeavours.

Report from the Seed order Co-ordinator, John Braithwaite (Gill reported in John's absence)

Kings Seeds orders were down a little in 2018 - 2019.

Catalogues and order forms are available from mid-September to the end of September, from Leominster Town Council Offices, Corn Square. Just ask at the desk.

Order forms and remittances to John Braithwaite 11 Ryelands Road, Leominster. Details and dates will be on the catalogues. Please ensure your contact details are on your form and you will be contacted when your order arrives, to let you know when to collect them from Leominster Town Council Offices.

Report from the Treasurer, Jane Lacey

Leominster Allotment Association: Treasurer's Report for April 2018 to March 2019

Movements on the Lloyds Bank account ****4323

There has been minimal movement of monies in this financial year, beyond the regular activity demonstrated in the table below:

Balance as at 1st April 2018 **£1,290.06**

Balance as at 31 March 2019 **£1,410.47**

Income 2018-19			Expenditure 2018-19	
Membership	£405.00	54 members	NSALG affiliation	-£165.00
Excess from seed orders	£46.03		Insurance	-£154.74
			Administration	-£36.03
Seed orders	£403.35		Seed orders	-£357.26
Raffle at Harvest Supper	£44.00		Website	-£65.00
Total Income	£898.38			-£778.03

Overall change on the year 2018/19:is £120.35 increase during the year.

Notes for expenditure items: Administration is, cost of postage, photocopying and Website domain

Jane thanked everyone for their help and support and, as announced at last year's AGM, stepped down from her role as Treasurer, after 13 years' of being on the committee.

Election of Officers

This year, there were several expressions of interest in joining the committee and taking on roles.

- **Kay West – Chair**
- **Samantha Shakespeare - Secretary**
- **Dawn Arkell – Memberships**
- **Glenys Millard - Treasurer**
- **John Braithwaite** - remains as **Seed Order Co-ordinator**
- **Ian Wilkins** remains as **Facebook co-ordinator**
- **Elliana Meek** remains on the committee
- **Graham Millard** joins the committee

Christine Conlon – remains as **website administrator** (not on the committee) until another interested person takes on this role.

These appointments were proposed, seconded and passed unanimously by those attending the meeting.

Any other business

- **Potholes in the road leading to the allotment site** - The deep ruts could cause damage to vehicles, as well as a vehicle getting stuck in one. Mike Goodwin believed that Western Power own the road. This matter will be passed to the Town Council to follow up. One solution might be to order some stones and tamp them down into the ruts.
- **Hiring a table at the Plant Fair, 25th May** – Gill Ding invited the LAA to hire a table at the forthcoming Plant Fair for £15. The association will sell plants, as well as publicising the allotments and the LAA.
- **Compost bays** – Now that these have been closed to allotment users, the council is now depositing its own mix of items there.
- **Gate lock** – This is now easier to open since being oiled. The lock lubricant is kept in the shed.
- **Allotment vacancies** – At one stage there was a waiting list for plots, but this situation may have resolved itself now.
- **Gate at Cattery Lane** – The gate at the Cattery lane end will not be opened as it is wet there and unsuitable for vehicles. Also, there would be issues with using the private lane for an entrance.
- **Help for ploholders** – Dawn Arkell made contact with a new member who wanted some help with their allotment (as reported at the March 2019 meeting). It was recommended that the LAAs Facebook page could be used for asking for help and offering help for plot holders as it gives a quick response time.
- **Vote of thanks** - Sue Morris proposed a vote of thanks to the outgoing committee and this vote of thanks was given by all those present.

Gill Murdoch then thanked everyone for attending the meeting and the meeting was closed.

Next Annual General Meeting: Wednesday 6th May 2020, 7pm, in the Town Council Offices, Corn Square, Leominster.

Please bring your copy of these minutes with you to the next A.G.M. meeting.