

## Leominster Allotment Association Annual General Meeting 2023 Minutes

**Sunday, May 14<sup>th</sup> 2023 at 3pm Community Garden, Ginhall Lane Allotment site**

**Committee Members present:** Kay West, Hilary Tuite, Sue Morris, Graham and Glenys Millard,

**Others present:** Val Waring plot 88, Jane Lacey plot 21, Simon Pickhaver plot 37, Andrew Mackay, plot 29b, Graeme Ainsworth, plot 72.

**Apologies:** Stuart Sidebotham, Samantha Shakespeare, Viv Pearson, Heather Davies, Daved Saunders, Philip and Anne Purcell, Marcus Williams, Mary Locock

2.	Minutes of last AGM	Printed copies of the minutes of last year's AGM were circulated and read. Approved unanimously.
3	Matters arising	Progress on wildlife area. See item 7.
4	Chair report	<p>Kay outlined the <b>activities</b> which had taken place over the year.</p> <p>The <b>Leominster in Bloom assessment</b> in July raised our award from "Good" to "Thriving". The assessors liked the variety of planting but were still keen for us to improve rainwater harvesting and noted that other recommendations eg flowers at the site entrance had been implemented.</p> <p>The <b>Harvest Supper</b> took place on Saturday, October 8<sup>th</sup> Plot holders supplied excellent food, Kay prepared a quiz, Sam did the flowers and there was a raffle. Special guests were David and Lesley Pritchard, the Leominster in Bloom "It's your neighbourhood Award" assessors and Romy Worthington, chairperson of LiB. Due to problems with access to the kitchen at Grange Court, the next Harvest Supper will take place at the Forbury on Church Street on October 7<sup>th</sup> 2023.</p> <p>On 24<sup>th</sup> October, committee members went in search of a <b>composting loo</b> similar to the one proposed for our site. We found an excellent one at the remote St Thomas à Becket church at Huntington, near Kington. However, the Council currently has no funds to install one.</p> <p>In January three plot holders took part in the <b>RSPB Garden Bird Watch</b> and observed a number of different species including green woodpeckers.</p> <p>Tracey Evans, <b>Community Officer of Herefordshire Wildlife Trust</b>, met with Kay and Sue to discuss her projects for community engagement with gardening.</p> <p>Pudleston and District Rambling and Nature group toured the allotment site on 9<sup>th</sup> May and kindly donated £20 which will be spent on plants for the tubs by the car parks.</p> <p>We did not take our usual stall at the LiB <b>Spring Plant Fair</b> on May 13<sup>th</sup> because of the current new requirement to provide our own public liability insurance. There was discussion about</p>

		<p>this and Jane Lacey, as a member of LiB, will investigate further. We hope to be at the Autumn Plant Fair.</p> <p>Kay and Stuart have worked on a plot holder <b>information pack</b> which has been issued to all plot holders with the renewal of their contracts. Jane pointed out the advantages of the previous system whereby a representative of the LAA committee would meet new tenants and show them round the site. Could this be reinstated? Tips from the information sheet to be posted regularly on the facebook page.</p> <p>Kay would like to relinquish the role of Chairperson although is willing to help another person to do it. She appreciated the help given by other committee members.</p>
	<p><b>Secretary's report</b></p>	<p>We have held 4 committee meetings (which can be attended by any members) on July 10<sup>th</sup> at the site, and on November 9<sup>th</sup>, January 11<sup>th</sup> and March 15<sup>th</sup> in the Art Gallery In the Council building in Corn Square.</p> <p>We have been looking into things which we might be able to do to benefit plot holders more.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Getting a bulk delivery of soil conditioner from Severn Trent – they have a minimum delivery of several tonnes and the lorry couldn't do the turn from the track into the site.</li> <li>2. Obtaining water butts and IBCS. A Company in Dymock supplies used water containers but would charge £100 for delivery.</li> <li>3. Supplying guttering to help people set up roof drainage for water butts. Thank you to Ian Jones who supplied lengths of guttering from his place of work.</li> </ol> <p>We could also do with some brackets and connectors!</p> <p>We are hoping to hire a skip so that bulky items such as pieces of greenhouse or broken polytunnels can be removed. Jane pointed out that when done before, people brought rubbish from home. Simon P suggested that the bulky rubbish could be placed by the first car park and then loaded on a specific day by volunteers</p> <p>We are also planning an event on Sunday, July 9th to recruit more members, have some food and fun activities as well as security marking of property by the police.</p>
	<p><b>Treasurer's and Membership Report</b></p>	<p><b>Membership</b> is at 27, hence the need for a recruitment drive before August when the National Allotment Association subs are paid.</p> <p><b>Treasurer's report</b> The current balance at the bank is £1279.26. Last year, our income was £462.58 and overall expenditure was £432.93, which is a small profit of £29.65. This year we are unlikely to break even due to unrepresented invoices and not having a stall at the Spring Plant Fair because</p>

		of the prohibitive cost of public liability insurance. I feel that steps must be taken to recruit more members and to investigate with Leominster in Bloom the possibility of sharing their insurance so that we can do the Autumn Plant Fair. Only 5 people took advantage of the Kings Seed Scheme, which brought in a small profit of £10. The income from the two Plant Fairs last year was £190 but only £121.50 from membership. Our largest drop in income was from reduced membership.
7	<b>Progress on Wildlife Area</b>	Kay has raked and cleared a lot of rubbish from the wildlife area, with help from other plot holders. The central strip is to become a wild flower meadow but will require regular mowing for a few years to reduce the nettles, control the grass and allow wild plants to colonise the area. Heather Davies obtained more tree whips which were planted in an extension to the new hedge by a working party of plot holders who also did a litter pick. Thanks to Stuart and the Town Council for supplying litter picking equipment and removing the rubbish. Action on bat boxes still awaited. We have two but need three for appropriate siting.
8	<b>Waiting List</b>	Currently at 14, down from 22. Stuart has top soil ready to fill in some of the miniplots by the community shed. These need some identification mark so we know whose they are. Julie, the town clerk, is working on lease renewal.
9	<b>Web-site and social media</b>	The invoice for the web-site has just been paid. The Facebook page is well used. However, the blackboard at the entrance is also an effective means of communication.
10	<b>Seed order</b>	Jane reported that as far as she knows John Braithwaite is still willing to do the seed order and she is willing to help him. Thanks to them both.
11.	<b>Election of Officers</b>	The current team of Kay West (acting chairperson) Hilary Tuite (membership and treasurer) and Sue Morris (Minutes Secretary) were willing to continue for another year. This was proposed by Jane Lacey and seconded by Graham Millard. Graham thanked the office holders for their work.
12.	<b>Dates of future meetings</b>	Sunday July 9 <sup>th</sup> meeting and recruitment, Sunday, September 9 <sup>th</sup> , both at the site. Wednesday, November 8 <sup>th</sup> 7pm Council Art gallery Leominster in Bloom assessment visit July 8 <sup>th</sup> or 15 <sup>th</sup> if wet on 8 <sup>th</sup> .
13.	<b>AOB</b>	Simon mentioned a water leak between plots 35 and 36. These should be reported to Stuart at <a href="mailto:grounds@leominstertowncouncil.gov.uk">grounds@leominstertowncouncil.gov.uk</a> .

