

Minutes of Allotment Association Meeting, Wednesday, January 10th at Town Council Art Gallery.	
Present	Kay West (acting chair), Sue Morris (minutes sec), Hilary Tuite (Treasurer and membership Secretary) Heather Davies, Mary Locock, Stuart Sidebotham (Leominster Grounds Officer) Simon Pickhaver, Elaine Smith, Christine Vale
Apologies	Graham Millard. Samantha Shakespeare, Valerie Wareing
Minutes	Circulated and approved
Matters Arising	It has been too wet for the Council Grounds staff to carry out projected works: - investigating the already waterlogged plots, moving the far gate to by the wildlife area and installing the bat boxes. Elaine asked about rats. Stuart advised to email him if she sees rat activity so that he can bring in LeoPest control. Individual plot holders should not put their own bait in bait boxes.
Security and break-in	The main gates were locked when the break in occurred probably on the night of Christmas Day or early on Boxing Day. The offenders cut through the hedge on the side of the access track and removed items through the hedge, using someone's wheelbarrow. This has been left by the gap in the hedge for its owner to reclaim it. Please collect this week! Suggested putting prickly brash to plug the gap. Stuart emphasised that plot holders should not leave valuable items in their sheds. It may be possible to repurpose the steel cube as a secure storage area. There was discussion about improving security by installing security lights, and/or camera similar to a wildlife camera. Simon pointed out that this is a rare event. The last one was six years ago so there is a danger of overreacting. There are problems with both lights and cameras. Those affected should get a crime number. Sarah Davies in town council office can assist.
Treasurer's report and membership	The current balance at the bank is £1453.86. There are currently 26 members although the two new ones do not actually have plots. Sarah will mail out LAA membership forms with the contract renewals in April. Hilary will add information about the benefits of membership to the form and how to pay the membership fee – to the Treasurer NOT the Town Council.
King's seed Catalogue and seed order	Hilary delivered the King's Seed orders which John Brathwaite and daughter had administered. 6 people put in seed orders which brought in about £15 for the Association.
Waiting List	16 on waiting list. There is one quarter plot available and three min beds. More plots may become available in April.
January RSPB bird watch	This will take place on January 28 th and 29 th . Forms, instructions, and observation guides will be available in the Community Shed. Participants spend one hour noting which birds land on the site. Completed sheets can be returned to the community shed for Kay to send off.
Improving the site	Suggestions are: installing benches on the wildlife area, painting the Community Shed (work party to be arranged when the weather is better) Sue suggested asking individual plot holders to take on watering the tubs of flowers by the car parks so Kay does not have to do it all. Litter Pick around site, track and possibly on part of Gin Hall Lane. Meet Saturday 2nd March at 10.00 am. Stuart will supply litter pickers and hi-vis vests.

Social Events and competitions this season	<p>Simon suggested a potato growing competition. Each entrant will receive one potato and a bucket on Good Friday. The buckets will be emptied at a date to be arranged in June. The heaviest crop receives a prize. Potatoes to be donated to the Food Bank. Heather to source buckets.</p> <p>We need a work party later in the season to help people with woodwork projects and fences on their plots. Can we exchange woodwork for cake?</p> <p>A picnic may be organised in summer if there is interest.</p> <p>Harvest supper to be at the Forbury again in October.</p>
Dates of 2024 meetings	<p>March 6th 7pm, Council art gallery</p> <p>July 14th 7pm on site,</p> <p>September 8th 2pm on site,</p> <p>November 6th 7pm. Council art gallery</p> <p>AGM May 12th 2pm at the site.</p>
AOB	No other business
Members were thanked for their attendance. The meeting closed at 8.40 pm.	