



Minutes of Leominster Allotment Association Annual General Meeting,

2 pm Sunday May 12th 2024 at allotment site

1. Present	Janet Hardiman plot 64, Diana Emes plot 40a, Hilary Tuite plot 18a membership secretary and treasurer, Heather Davies plot35, Aldie Smith plot 46, Kay West, acting chairperson, Simon Pickhaver plot37, Andrew Mackay plot29b, Sue Morris plot 9, secretary. DSO Stephanie Harper, PCSO Emma Swallow
2. Apologies	Val Wareing, Steven and Janet Gallimore, Samantha Shakespeare, Stuart Sidebotham
3. Minutes of last AGM	Minutes were circulated and accepted unanimously as read.
4. Matters arising	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Waterlogged plots. Stuart has accepted a tender for investigative and remedial works. The work has been delayed by the very wet conditions but should be completed in the summer. b. Bulk order of compost from Severn Trent proved impractical as the minimum delivery required a truck too large to make the turn into the allotment site. c. Skip Much discussion about this. Simon suggested getting everyone to collect their bulky items of rubbish in one place so that an appropriate size skip could be ordered. The skip should be loaded in one day so that people could not bring items from home. As the cost is now between £300 and £400 pounds, it was decided to investigate more cost-effective ways of helping people to remove large items
5. Treasurer and Membership report	<p>Membership stands at 28, low numbers in view of the number of allotments. The new method of sending out membership forms with the contract has had a slow response. People who pay by BACS are reminded to inform the treasurer by email and put their plot no. as a reference so that we know who they are.</p> <p>The balance of the current account was £1472.45 at the end of March 2024. It currently stands at £1509.96. Funds were boosted during the year by the Autumn plant fair, the Harvest supper raffle, the seed order, and payments for the manure. Kimbolton Gardening Club kindly gave £20 for their visit.</p> <p>Outgoings included £27.50 for bedding plants for the tubs and the National Allotment Association membership.</p>
6. Chair person's report	<p>The exceptionally wet weather of 2023-24 was very frustrating for plot holders and Stuart's team as it prevented everyone from getting on with their planned tasks.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to Stuart and team for removing the decaying tool shed on the community area and replacing it with one donated by Graham Millard.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Community Garden needs reorganising to allow for a recently acquired storage chest of items for community use. Also needs area around new shed to be tidied up and cracked paving slabs replaced with ones donated by Hilary. The flower border needs to be tidied up to split up the more invasive plants • • Leo in Bloom report 2024 -Level achieved Thriving 78 points. We only need 8 more points to reach the next level. <p>Community participation 34 out of 40 Environmental responsibility 23 out of 30 Gardening achievement 21 out of 30</p> <p>Areas for development-</p> <p>Continue to be proactive in ways site can be developed and improved Seating in wildlife area with scented plants nearby-(2 donated by Hilary) Try and identify and fix water issues at top of site (Stuart is in touch with relevant agencies to try and identify cause so issue can be fixed) Find ways to release neglected plots to bring down numbers on waiting list and subdivision of a couple of full-sized plots. There was some discussion about the issue of neglected plots but in the end, the Town Council administer the site and follow National Allotment procedure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant Fair Sept 2023- There was some doubt as to whether the LAA could participate due to a change in insurance rules but Claire Powell kindly helped in this matter Thank you to those who donated produce and helped set up and run the stall. • Harvest supper October 7th 2023 Forbury, Church Street. This was enjoyable and well attended. Prizes of Philpott's vouchers donated by the Council were distributed by David and Lesley Pritchard who also judge the plots in the summer. Thank you to Leo Town Council for organising the venue, vouchers from Philpotts and notifying the winning plot holders There was also a quiz and a raffle. • RSPB Bird watch Jan 2024 several people took part and thirteen species were recorded in hedges bordering field / wildlife area and margin of wildlife area. • The postponed 2024 litter pick took place on Saturday 23 March. Thanks to Stuart for providing pickers, rubbish bags and clearing away litter collected. It was pleasing that there was very little litter much of which was probably caused by the strong winds blowing some plastic bags and pots into the hedges. Many thanks to our plot holders for keeping our site a pleasant and safe litter free area.
<p>7. Secretary's report</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Committee meetings were held every two months, in the summer months at the site and during the winter at the Town Council Art Gallery. • A membership recruitment drive was attempted on July 9th 2024 with a children's Treasure Hunt and refreshments. However, it was an exceptionally quiet day at the allotment! • We looked into having a bulk delivery of soil conditioner from Severn Trent but the minimum delivery was both too expensive



	<p>and would have required a vehicle that could not make the turn on to our site.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manure delivery, Thanks to Claire and her father for organising this. We hope to repeat it in early autumn this year.
<p>8. Wildlife area</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks to Stuart and his team for continuing to mow this area. Hopefully it will only need mowing regularly for one more year to control growth of unwanted perennials such as nettles and to reduce the vigour of the grass. Some patches have had native varieties of bluebell, Lent Lily (Daffodil) woodland snowdrop etc planted and it is hoped these will flourish and be added to as needed. Plants to encourage insects have been planted in beds It is hoped to dig a small pond. • Now that the hedge is more established the temporary fencing will be removed and Stuart's team will erect a permanent fence to protect the central grassy area. They will also create a bay for any wood chip or manure so that it does not take up space on the car parking space in the middle car park. The gate at the far end of the site will be relocated so that the grassy area can be protected from vehicles when the conditions are too wet. • Bat boxes. Thanks to Heather for working with Stuart and his team to source and place bat boxes around the allotment perimeter. It is hoped that bird boxes can be obtained for 2025 • Thank you to Hilary for donating the two benches to be situated on the wildlife area, and the paving slabs used in various places around the allotments. • Thanks to Kay for her hard work on the wild life area (Secretary)
<p>9. Site matters (Stuart)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 17 people on the waiting list • 3 half plots available to rent out immediately with a further 2 available at the end of the month. • I have accepted a quote for work on the leaky plot and asked when the work can be started. So hopefully by midsummer we should have that plot available again. • The water has been turned back on and a number of leaks have been fixed. Please can plot holders keep their eyes out for new leaks and report to me at grounds@leominstertowncouncil.gov.uk or drop into the office. • When we have got grass cutting under control, we will be moving the far end gate to its new home near the wildlife area. • The Information sheet for new tenants was sent out with the contracts. • Rats, please report rat sightings to the Council. Do not put your own poison down as it can kill other species either directly or through dead animals being eaten by predators or carrion eaters.
<p>10. Election of officers</p>	<p>Kay and Charley Crosse were elected to be co-chair persons Hilary Tuite was re-elected as Treasurer and Membership Secretary. She is only willing to serve for one more year. Sue Morris was re-elected as Minutes Secretary</p>



	<p>Heather Davies was appointed as wild-life officer It is hoped that all who attended will continue to offer their ideas and participation in future events.</p>
11. Dates of future meetings	<p>July 6th Leominster in Bloom assessment visit July 14th Allotment association meeting at the site 2pm July 20th – potato weigh in August 31st – Judging for plot holder awards Sept 8th Allotment association meeting at the site 2pm Oct 11th harvest supper at the Forbury, Church Street 7pm Nov 6th Allotment association meeting at the Town Council Art Gallery 7pm</p>
12. Christmas Tree Festival	<p>This is organised at the Priory annually by plot holder Coral Lemm. We will take part and decorate our tree with natural objects like teasels and will hold a competition to create the best dolly peg scarecrow, to be judged at the Harvest Supper.</p>
AOB Security	<p>There have been two break ins recently, first over the 25th to 26th December 2023 and again in April. On both occasions, equipment and metal for sale as scrap have been taken. Ledbury allotments were targeted on the same day in April.</p> <p>Our thanks to DSO Stephanie Harper and DCSO Emma Swallow for attending, security marking and giving advice about security. Their recommendations:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Do not lock your shed. It signals that there are valuables inside and might invite damage to your shed. ii. Security mark in an obvious way your valuable items e.g. with brightly coloured nail varnish, making sure it goes into crevices where it would be hard to remove. iii. Packs of Smart Water could be purchased at about £84 per individual pack. This product is invisible except to UV light and is traceable to each theft site. iv. Please REPORT THEFTS to the Police. They cannot watch everywhere 24 hours a day and can only act when they have information. v. Some thefts are random e.g. removing a child's spade, but others are easier to follow up by officers monitoring scrap metal merchants and online sales platforms. vi. Wildlife cameras should be sited in an inconspicuous place with a view over the shed likely to be targeted. vii. Report fly tipping near the allotment site. There is a budget for anti-fly tipping cameras which could also spot raids on the site. viii. Craig Salmon is the officer for prevention of fly-tipping. ix. The allotment can sign up to an email feed from the police called Neighbourhood Matters.
	<p>The meeting closed at about 4pm and attendees and the Police Officers were thanked for their attendance.</p>