

# **MOORSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION**

## **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 21st JANUARY 2015 AT 7.30 P.M. IN ST JAMES' AND ST BASIL'S CHURCH HALL, FENHAM HALL DRIVE, FENHAM**

The meeting was attended by 41 members and Peter Whewell was in the Chair.

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** were received from Ian Carter, Gina Coster, Jill and Steve Dales, Sarah Dunne, Nicola Francis, Krys Gaffney, Melissa Girling, Emma Hughes, Julia Roxburgh.

### **2. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held in January 2014 had been circulated to the membership. There were no matters arising from the minutes and they were accepted as a true record of that meeting.

### **3. BRIEF FILM OF MOORSIDE LIFE**

Steve McDonnell presented a brief overview clip of the film he had made about Moorside life for the National Archive. The clip of around 10 minutes in length was very well received by members.

### **4. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2014**

The Chairman's report had been circulated to the membership and was taken as read by the meeting. The Chairman highlighted some aspects of his report. Firstly he emphasised members responsibility in maintaining our infrastructures:- greenhouses, sheds, fences, hedges and the soil as these were part of our inherited wealth. Secondly he discussed the factors behind the need to agree the new 2015 Constitution and Rules. In relation to the Cultivation and Building Standards incorporated in the new Constitution and Rules the Moorside Inspection Team would expect gradual progress in achieving these standards. It was important that members should let the Moorside Committee know in as advance if they were unable temporality to manage their plot so allowance could be made.

### **5. TREASURER'S REPORT**

The Treasurer, Nicola Francis, noted that in 2014 Moorside's rental income did not cover necessary expenses, with a shortfall of £500 taken from the association's cash account. Moorside still had cash reserves of £5,463.59 which was sufficient to allow for emergencies (such as needing to repair trading hut/community hut, toilets or our water system). In the coming year the Newcastle city Council rent was rising by 30% and so it would be necessary to raise the Moorside rent for 2015 by a corresponding amount. The cash reserves were in the process of being transferred to a higher interest account. The Chair noted that over recent years Moorside's cash reserves had consistently been between £5,000 and £6,000.

### **6. TRADING HUT MANAGER'S REPORT**

The Trading Hut Manager, Susan Pownall, noted that this had been another good year, with yearly profit of £361.98 and stock in hand valued at £2807.50. The profit was reduced from 2013 with two relevant factors being slow paraffin sales because of the warm autumn and our source of reasonably priced scaffolding planks had dried up. The new shop premises had proved a success allowing members to easily see what was available.

Seed potatoes were now available and the Trading Hut is coordinating the Thompson and Morgan allotment discounted seed and plant scheme giving our gardeners 50% off seeds and 20% off plants. Order forms are available at the Trading Hut.

The Trading Hut is extremely short of clean, dry paraffin cans and would be grateful to members able to donate 5 litre plastic containers.

Speaking now as NAWG Representative Susan noted that there had been complaints from the Freemen of Newcastle about fly tipping on the verges outside Moorside. Susan had arranged for the Council to provide two no-fly-tipping notices which were now posted up. She asked that if members saw any materials being dumped on the verges they should pass on any relevant information (e.g. vehicle registration numbers) to her. There had also been a recent complaint by a member of the public to the Council about bonfire smoke from Moorside causing a nuisance. Members were reminded they should be familiar with the Council's bonfire code of practice (on the notice-boards and website) before lighting their bonfire. Members were also reminded to keep the gates locked at all times.

Finally Susan thanked all the Trading Hut volunteers in 2014 and would welcome anyone new wishing to help out in 2015.

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## **7. SHOW SECRETARY'S REPORT**

The Show Secretary's report was presented by the 2015 Show Secretary, Pat Francis. The 2014 Show had been a great success with 39 Moorside members entering at least one exhibit. Stan Tortoise won the shields for Master Gardener, Best Exhibit and Best Vegetable Grower whilst Audrey Tortoise won the Top Vase award. The Chair, Peter Whewell had gifted two new trophies, the Best full Plot and the Best Newcomer. We were grateful to Susan Pownall for donating the major raffle prize, a Scalextric Demolition Derby, which was suitably won by a young member from the Comfrey Project. With help from jam, book and plant sales and our on the day catering the Show made a profit of around £200.

The 2015 Moorside Show will be held on the 12<sup>th</sup> September 2015

## **8. MOORSIDE PLANT SCHEME 2014**

George Kell, on behalf of the plants scheme, reported another good year with 5,000 plants sold and a profit of £315 after seeds, compost, trays and other consumables had been taken into account. During last Winter and Spring plant scheme members erected and repaired three greenhouses, giving the scheme 200 square feet under glass...a good asset base to go through to 2015. This season it was planned to improve advertising of what's available and what's on the way. And spring bulbs and fruit trees were already available. George thanked the plant scheme volunteers for their hard work in 2014 and would welcome new volunteers for 2015.

## **9. GREENING WINGROVE**

David Rochester, a founder Director of this initiative which aims to make the Wingrove Ward a greener and pleasanter place to live presented an update of Greening Wingrove's progress in 2014 which included:- planting 600 fruit trees including 50 donated to Moorside, planting a poppy-rich border along Barrack Road, planting 4,000 bluebells along Brighton Grove and Nunsmoor Road, planting street tubs and starting a community orchard in Nunsmoor Park. In 2015 there are plans to plant more fruit trees, to plant an orchard in Wingrove School grounds, to complete the community orchard in Nunsmoor Park and to bid to take over the management of Nunsmoor Park. Volunteers would be welcome and can contact David on plot 21.

## **10. RENTS FOR 2014**

A motion was proposed to accept the Treasurer's recommendation that the rents for 2015 would be £70 per full plot (£55 per concessionary full plot) and £35 per half plot (£27.50 per concessionary half plot). (The concessionary rate is for pensioners over the age of 65 and the unwaged). This motion was carried unanimously.

## **11. CONSTITUTION AND RULES 2015**

An updated Constitution and Rules for 2015 showing changes from the 2009 version had been circulated to all members via the AGM pack. A motion to accept the new Constitution and Rules was unanimously agreed with one amendment, namely that section 7.1 of the Rules will read:- " In the interests of safety, members must act in a manner so as not to cause danger, harm or injury to themselves or others"

## **12. ELECTION OF COMMITTEE FOR 2014**

Prior to the meeting, the following had been proposed and seconded for Committee membership:

Sue Brophy, Nicola Francis Krys Gaffney, Sue Johnson, Steve McDonnell, Sue Pownall, John Reid, Peter Whewell and Tony Whittle.

There being no further nominations from the floor, the above were all duly elected to the Committee 2015

## **13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

Sue Johnson, joint editor of the Moorside Newsletter, invited members who had subscribed to the newsletter to collect their issue after the meeting. On a show of hands a majority would be happy to receive the Newsletter as an email attachment. Four members would want to continue to receive a hard copy of the Newsletter. Sue circulated a questionnaire offering future options for the Newsletter. When all views had been collated a decision by the end of February 2015 would be made about the future format of the Newsletter.

The meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.