

**Imberhorne Allotment Association AGM, Thursday 25th October, 2018, 8.00p.m. at  
Moat United Reform Church Hall, Moat Road, East Grinstead**

**1. Welcome and Introductions**

Roger Tullett, Chair, welcomed everyone and went through general house-keeping. He introduced Sue Robinson, Secretary and Robin Yetman, Treasurer. He estimated that the agenda should not take longer than an hour and would be followed by refreshments at 9.00p.m., ending the meeting at 9.30p.m.

He added 1 item to the agenda, the tree from DX falling on to the allotments and this would be discussed under Item 8.

**2. Present:** Paul Phillips, Karen Colcomb, Robin Peach, Vic Runacre, Michael Moon, Ina Milne, Sue Runacre, Malcolm Clancey, Ann Gray, Brian Leslie, Gill Leslie, Ron Smith, Alan Stonley, Cynthia Stonley, Caroline Barry, Philip Barry, John Bird, Elaine Bird, Bernard Gillbard, Derek Wailes, Eric Eves, Jenny Eves, Norman Gaddas, Richard Gambiragio, Paul Radford, Sue Wellman, Mike Wellman, Carol Abbott, John Harding

**Apologies:** Sue Parker & Lesley plot 3, Yuri Kolber, Paul Bennett plot 16, Dick Clark plot 12B, John Robinson, Dave Williams, Bill Blackledge, Mrs Moon

**3. Approval of minutes for the AGM held on 27th October, 2017**

The minutes were agreed. Proposed: Paul Phillips, seconded: Michael Moon. All in favour.

**Matters arising:** As a committee we failed to organise the BBQ date at a time not to clash with Felbridge Show. Roger apologised and said we will avoid it in 2019.

**4. Annual report:**

The report, written by Roger Tullett, Chair, up to 31.08.2018 had been circulated to all plot holders with the AGM papers. In addition to the written report Roger mentioned that in addition to the security issues with teenagers a huge part of a poplar tree on DX's adjoining property fell, damaging Philip Barry's poly-tunnel. Luckily no one was in the vicinity when it fell. He thanked Karen Colcomb for her hard work with the membership and letting of plots. The site is looking good and some of the new people have done well.

Roger thanked Jim Thomson for his work as site inspector and the reports he wrote. Michael Moon, with the help of Robin Peach is going to continue with this role. The growing season presented difficulties with a slow start, followed by heat and drought but since the end of July the growing conditions have been good. He asked plot holders, if possible, to help out with grass cutting in communal areas otherwise it fell to a few stalwart plot holders/committee members. He said that the mowers etc were domestic machines and due to abusive use there were regular breakdowns.

When he thanked Ann, Robin Peach and Alan for their continued work in the orchard he reported that other plot holders had had fruit taken from their trees and it is thought that this is being taken by non plot holders and asked for plot holders to keep their eyes open for this. He thanked Paul Phillips for his cooking at the BBQ and those that attended. Our attendance at the May Fair helps to raise awareness of our site and the value of gardening/ growing crops. The badger deterrence has been investigated but it has proved difficult and costly. We need to look at the very tall variety of maize grown by a plot holder, it hasn't been damaged by badgers but we question whether it ripens.

Bonfires will continue to be managed by the committee as we must not create a hazard for our house-

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**4. Annual report continued:**

holder neighbours, we select the right weather conditions for a hot, dry fire on Plot 26 but plot holders must not put green material on to the pile to avoid smoke. The manure seems to be good quality this year and it is hoped that everyone received the message and we aim to put up clear notices.

Thanks was given to Eric Eves who has continued to maintain our water tanks. Mention was made to the new stopcock that is now within our site. Paul Phillips was thanked for maintaining and updating the Association website.

**5. Treasurer's report:**

The accounts have been scrutinised by Bill Blackledge. Robin Yetman has prepared the annual report & a Powerpoint presentation which unfortunately could not be shown due to equipment failure. Robin asked Paul to put it on the website. The 2019 budget is more complex than previous years due to the new lease and associated legal costs, the unpredictable demand for water and the associated cost. In an average year the water cost has been about £400 but we need to allow approximately £850 to allow for increased usage and for any outstanding debt to the water company. Robin is checking on the situation with VAT and the new lease. Insurance costs rise each year. A budget has been set at £3500 - £3750 to fund these expenses.

The accounts show a surplus of £728.75 for accounts year ending 31st Aug 2018. The Current Account is £4074.43, the Deposit Account £4481.48 and Petty Cash £102.39 putting us in a sound but modest situation. Income for the year rose from £3076.41 to £3097.27 with this benefiting from £275.36 for petrol and equipment hire, a donation of £50 in lieu of damage caused in wet weather. £101.05 was collected at the East Grinstead Lions May Fair and this amount was paid in full to the Lions charities.

65% of members pay their rents by bank transfer, a slight increase on the previous year, making it easier and reducing the cost of collecting rent. Rents are being paid on time.

Expenditure for the year was £1774.81, a decrease on last year with income exceeding expenses by £728.75. The rent was £84.33 but this is the last year of our current lease and the new 21 year lease being negotiated by the Committee will see an expected rent of £450 which will continue to be index linked thereafter. Site maintenance costs fell by 39% to £299.61 and included shingle for the carpark, upkeep of the orchard and communal areas, signs and gate security. Robin thanked Eric Eves for his maintenance of the water tanks.

In order to raise the necessary funds it was proposed to raise the rental cost from 15p per metre to 20p per metre from January 2019. The following questions were raised when the attendees were asked:

Mike Wellman asked about water supplier and suggested that as the Association is considered to be a business that there was a choice. The Association committee were under the impression that because we aren't a registered charity that there is no choice. Mike was asked if he could look into this.

Alan Stonley asked what Mt Noddy allotments did about the water supply and charges and Roger is going to contact them to see what they do.

Ron Clarke raised the issue about the fallen poplar tree being DX's responsibility but currently there is little progress with clearing the wood and making the remainder of the tree safe. The Town Council are not prepared to supply the Association with an indemnity if the company or their landlord do not take responsibility for the work and the damage: it would require legal action on the Association's part. DX has sent an arboriculturalist and Roger has asked for a report.

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**1. Treasurer's report continued:**

The proposal to increase the rent from 15p to 20p, proposed: Robin Yetman, seconded: Paul Phillips. All in favour.

**6. Committee Business**

**a) Proposed changes to Constitution and By Laws**

The proposed changes had been circulated to all members with the AGM papers prior to the meeting. No questions were raised. All in favour of the changes.

**b) Lease Renewal**

The committee have been negotiating the lease renewal this year. It will be extended for 21 years and it is now in a position for an engrossment to be signed. The new lease is with the Association rather than with individuals. The rent is to be £450 per annum with an index linked regular increase. The Association have taken on responsibility for the water, previously the Council. The Council will take responsibility for any trees on the site or in the boundary. The Council are not prepared to provide an indemnity e.g for trees falling on to the site from outside the boundary, we will have to cover this with insurance. We have ensured that the rent is in line with Mt Noddy allotments and proposed £450 which was accepted. This was felt to be reasonable considering the Council are responsible for the trees. A question was raised about the stream: we need to establish the boundary as there are several different areas of responsibility.

**c) Site Security**

There have been a number of incidents of intruders culminating in potential violence but since keeping the gate locked and the main perpetrator identified there have been no further incidents. Questions / points were raised: The padlock is jamming with increased use - Robin Yetman will purchase a new one. The white tape helps with securing at the right chain length. A keypad type entry/locking system has been investigated but we have been unable to find anyone confident to fit it and guarantee that it will work successfully. Paul Radford mentioned a bolt system and was asked to send details through to the committee. Eric Eves talked about a sliding lock. It was suggested that alternative methods were discussed over tea.

One person asked about the intruder and Philip Barry updated the meeting by saying that the police had identified and spoken to the boy and the boy's mother who had come down tough on her son.

**7. Resignation and Election of Committee members and officers**

Roger Tullett was re-elected as Chair. Proposed: Sue Robinson Seconded: Robin Yetman

Committee members: Robin Peach, Karen Colcomb, Dave Williams, Paul Phillips, Michael Moon, Vic Runacre, Ina Milne are all happy to continue for another year and have been duly re-elected. All in favour.

Peter Roud has shown an interest to join the committee but as he wasn't in attendance Roger will speak with him and we will vote him on at the next committee meeting in November if he is happy to join.

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**8. Business items submitted by tenants**

Trees: there is concern for what could have happened when the tree fell during normal allotment working times: it has resulted in a squashed and torn poly tunnel. DX and the Town Council have been written to. It identifies what can happen with a pollarded tree and it appears that DX have probably failed to take advice. The Council have contacted DX. The Association will support Philip Barry with a claim for his poly tunnel.

A question was raised about whether the Committee or the Association do risk assessments on the trees. This will be looked into and the possibility of paying for this to be done.

The meeting closed at 9.15p.m.

Signed: ..... (Chair)      Date: .....