

Bridport and District Allotments Society Meeting

Annual General Meeting held at Mountfield on 13th September 2012

Members Present:

Colin Sparkes (Chair), Mandy Rathbone, Lynne Atkinson, Brian Atkinson, Roger Pollock, Alan Finch, Barry Thomas, Tristan Allsop, Bill Mellish, Angela Palmer.

Apologies from: Bob Driscoll, Charles Wild, David Rapson, Alex Gurini, Fiona Dare.

Meeting commenced at 7.00pm

1. Minutes of previous meeting

Typo error in capitalisation amended and the minutes were then agreed.

2. Chairman's Report:

Good evening and thank you for attending,

As is my custom I seem at each AGM to report on this year's weather and growing season. After last year being very wet, 1½ times the Dorset average, this year we had to put up with March, April, May, and part of June with very little rain. Surprisingly some vegetables did well. Potatoes grew enormous, broad beans were good, and runner beans after a poor start produced a very large crop which is only just reducing. Perhaps this may have been due to the cold nights; tree and soft fruit has also been good this year.

We have had no committee meeting this year as the Treasurer, Secretary and myself are the only active members, especially the secretary Lynne, and Mandy our treasurer; I would like to thank both for their efforts.

It makes it rather hard work to arrange things such as speakers, venues and notifying every one of what we are planning. Since the passing of Mary Keens and last year Ralf Probert we have had no volunteers for the committee and Lynne has had trouble arranging for deliveries of newsletters etc, please let her have your E mail address so saving paper and shoe leather. I would like to thank all of our volunteers for delivering our News Letters - they do a sterling job.

On average we get some 15 members to attend our quarterly gatherings out of a membership of 190. Every one attending has an opportunity to win a £10 voucher for Groves. This does not apply to our site visit or this AGM, I am afraid. The site visit this summer was to Allington (photograph in the News' letter by Mandy Rathbone, Editor Charles Wild). Please look out for any items in the press which Charles may be able to use. I would like to thank Charles for producing our quarterly New Letters which are always most enjoyable

We try to have 2 speakers each year but there is a limit to those who speak on vegetables or fruit. This year our guest speaker was Jim Binning, from the Community Allotment, who gave a talk on "How I became a Bee Keeper". BADAS sponsored a Bee Hive in the Boot field at Askers Meadow, and since then Jim has installed a swarm of Bees. Our next speaker will be Brian Hesketh who will give a talk on 'Organic Vegetable Growing' on 10th December 2015 - and as this will be our last meeting of the year we will be having some refreshments and nibbles - do try to come along.

We had a stand at both the Melplash Show and the Food Festival in the Bridport tent by permission of the Town Council and I would like to thank Daryl Chambers and his team for their help over this year and for allowing us to use the meeting room. While on the subject of publicity, is there any one here or does anyone know of someone who could design a web page? In this day and age I am afraid we do need one.

I have been in contact with Daryl Chambers of the Town Council and recently had a meeting with him. Firstly he intends to put the water charge up to £10 for a full plot and £5.00 for half a plot. It has not been increased for some years from £9.00 for a full plot.

He has a serious complaint regarding the compost bins erected on some sites; they are being abused. The one at Skilling north has been removed and 2 trailer loads of material taken away at a cost. Similarly at Allington there is now no bin but a pile is accumulating inside the gate containing branches, metal and plastic. At Flaxhayes 2 of the 3 compartments are satisfactory but the 3rd is piled up with grass and turf and will have to be removed so plot holders can use it properly. The Bowling Club site and Community site do not have such facilities but compost on their plots. Please do the same. For

other items the Town council in the past has provided a skip once a year, under the present conditions I think they may not do so this year. Well after that moan I will sign off.

Colin Sparkes

Chairman.

Matters arising from the Chairman's report.

Compost Bins.

The council installed bins have been removed without warning from Skilling North and Flaxhayes because of inappropriate material being deposited in them and consequent council expenditure in disposing of this (see Chairman's report). It was also mentioned that the main gate to Flaxhayes is frequently left open and very easy for unauthorised persons to determine the entry code. It is difficult to lock the gate from the inside. Also trailer tyre marks are in evidence from the main gate to the compost bins. It is not known if it is existing or new tenants (or outsiders) doing this. No rules were ever given for their use and it was **resolved** that:

The Council bins should be removed and individual plot holders made responsible for their own composting.

The Chairman commented that bonfires are legal if not committing a nuisance or within 20yds of a main road and are thus permissible if employed responsibly.

Terms & Conditions.

These are being reviewed by the Bridport Town Council and will include a "3 strikes and you are out" clause.

Website

The minutes secretary offered to investigate the construction of a basic web site using the address bridportallotmentsociety.com or similar. BADAS is not available and in any case would attract undesirable attention. Costs are thought to be approximately £10 per annum for registering the address and £88 or less per annum for hosting the website. Facebook is a more dynamic social media and may thus not be suitable for us.

Guest speakers.

We have previously agreed to join the Castle Gardens Group Gold Club (Corporate Membership £60.00 per year. Subscriptions run from 1st February to 31st January), and can entitle member organisations to one free talk per year plus other member benefits.

The secretary reported attending Bride Valley Gardening Club's recent talk on "Soft Fruit" at Puncknowle, which was organised via the Gold Club and thought that it was very good.

3. Treasurer's Report – see separate page

4. Election of Officers

Existing officers were willing to continue, were nominated by the meeting - and elected unopposed.

Chair: Colin Sparkes

Treasurer and Membership Secretary: Mandy Rathbone

Secretary: Lynne Atkinson,

Newsletter: Charles Wild

Minutes Secretary: Brian Atkinson

5. Nominations for the Society's Committee

Roger Pollock, the existing committee member was willing to continue and was nominated by the meeting and elected unopposed. There are thus 3 vacancies for committee members.

6. Annual Fees

No change from the current level of £2.00 was confirmed in matters arising from the Treasurer's report.

7. AOB

- Grass mowing.

Clarification of who is responsible to cut the small paths at West Allington and whether it was possible to employ someone to do this as some tenants do not bother. It was confirmed that it is the individual tenants who should do this – perhaps this could be highlighted in the next newsletter?

- Publicity

The secretary proposed advertising our meetings in the local press to encourage more attendees. It was resolved *that we should do this.*

Meeting closed at 8.17pm

3. Treasurer's Report

The overall number of members has increased by 3 on last year - 196 in total.

This year we continued to invite speakers to come to 2 of our quarterly meetings and to hold a raffle and provide refreshments on these occasions. Despite an increasing number of members receiving their newsletter by email, costs for stamps and photocopying have risen due to increased charges for these items.

However overall there is a small surplus of income over expenditure for the year which means that we continue to have a healthy bank balance.

Annual Statement 1 September 2014 to 31 August 2015

	2015	2014
Income		
Subscriptions current year		
Direct paid to BADAS	73.00	64.00
Burton Bradstock	62.00	66.00
Paid via Bridport Town Council	258.00	254.00
Burton Bradstock	62.00	66.00
Total Income	393.00	382.00
Expenditure		
Stationery	12.00	12.85
Stamps	42.57	35.26
Photocopying	171.17	139.07
Refreshments for meetings	35.10	25.45
Speakers Fees & Raffle Prizes	95.00	60.00
Donations to Beekeepers		100.00
Total Expenditure	355.84	372.63
Surplus/Deficit	37.16	11.37
Balances		
Cash at bank 31 August	792.99	766.62
Petty cash	20.56	9.77
	813.55	776.39
Increase/decrease in funds	37.16	11.37
Number of members		
Paid up	196	192
Local Food Links - free membership	1	1

Mandy Rathbone/Honorary Treasurer & Membership Secretary, 1 September 2015

Matters arising from the Treasurer's report

- Newsletter
The number of members receiving the newsletter by email has increased but with higher photocopying and postage costs the cost of distributing the newsletter is still escalating and we would thus like to see more members receiving it electronically. It was resolved that:
We will advise in the next newsletter that it will be generally distributed by email (which does have the advantage of being in colour). For people who do not have or use email, copies will be available at Mountfield, The Tourist Information Centre and/or the Library. Where members find this too inconvenient then if they contact the secretary we will continue to post to these members. Membership cards will continue to be distributed annually by post.
- Annual Subscriptions
It was resolved to keep the subs at £2.00