

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL
OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, CLEVEDON, ON MONDAY, 14TH OCTOBER 2013
AT 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr C Wring (Committee Chairman) Cllr J Middleton (Vice Chairman)
Cllrs B Hatch, L Knott & P McNeill
Committee Clerk – Mrs S Howard
Tenants Reps: A Baker (WA), J Clark (VR), R Cheek (HA), D Regan (ML) & A Stephens (CH).

Tenants: 37

SPEAKER

Sally King and Ruth Gofton from Transition Clevedon provided an interesting talk to the Tenants with regards to the work that Transition Clevedon does in Clevedon. Sally and Ruth provided a slide show for the Tenants providing details of how the Transition initiative started and the effects of global warming and fracking. The Committee Chairman thanked Sally and Ruth for the wonderful talk and encouraged tenants to speak to Sally and Ruth if they were interested becoming involved with the work that Transition does. Further details of the talk are attached to these minutes.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr C Hall, Cllr A Giles-Townsend, P Cornock (CH), N Foster (CEM) and W Rowlinson (ML).

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL TENANTS' MEETING

The minutes of the Annual Tenants meeting held on 15 October 2012 were approved by Full Council and signed by the Chairman as correct.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Cllr Carole Wring, Chairman of the Allotments Committee welcomed tenants, visitors and Councillors to the meeting and a special welcome to the Speakers Sally King and Ruth Gofton, for the evening.

The Chairman declared how quickly this annual meeting seems to come around! It really doesn't seem like a whole year since we were all gathered here last October.

The lovely summer weather encouraged everyone to spend time on their Allotment gardens, and hopefully reaped a good harvest. The committee are encouraged too to see fewer problem areas – gardens and sites generally – and have maintained a regular inspection and liaison regime throughout the year.

We have achieved some major improvements within this year's budget, and have had great support from Tenant's reps throughout which is always so helpful. At this point I would like to thank both Andy Stephens and Pete Cornock for all their hard work in laying the new car parking area on Church Hill – this coincided with one of the hottest spells of the summer, and it was back breaking work as well.

We have finally sorted out the large heavy gate on Moor Lane, and now have two smaller gates which are so much more user friendly – and haven't as yet caused

any complaint. We've also added a small pedestrian gate further to the eastern boundary, which is proving popular. We've managed to have trees lopped, and boundary areas tidied and gravelled too – our thanks to Will Rowlinson for all his help with this. We continue to replace taps with dip tanks, and this will hopefully be accomplished within this current year.

We are not complacent, and know that there are a number of improvements still to make across all sites, and these will be factored in to next year's budget. If anyone has any suggestions then during the Agenda item 'Tenants' Business' there is an opportunity to make them.

Two of our Tenants' reps have retired during the past year: first of all Dee Holladay from Victoria Road, and Keith Santo who took on Moor Lane for many many years. Our thanks go to them both for all their hard work, skill and energy over a lot of time. We are fortunate that John Clark and Dave Regan have taken over as new Tenants' reps on Victoria Road and Moor Lane respectively.

It just remains for me to thank Sue Howard, who has throughout been so helpful, so proactive, and brought some truly excellent ideas to Allotment operation. She has been persistent in organising outside contractors whenever required, and has always been exceptionally professional with Allotment Committee administration – we are all grateful as it makes our job as committee members very much easier.

Sue also planned and executed our stand at this year's Flower Show, which generated great interest – a flavour of what was on display is here for all to see.

Our thanks also go to our Town Clerk, Paula Heath, and to our Deputy Town Clerk, Isabel Johnson, who have both been so helpful whenever the opportunity arose.

I would like to add my personal thanks to all members of the committee – we have worked well together and achieved much, and I look forward to next year and even greater achievement.

REPORTS OF THE COUNCILLOR SITE REPRESENTATIVES

CHURCH HILL

Cllr Knott advised that this summer we seem to have recovered from the cold spring and last summer's wet weather. Most of the gardens look good and many people have worked hard. A few have found it too much and have left.

The big achievement this year is the laying of a gravel car park at the south end. A huge thanks to Andy and Pete who laid it all one hot week end. Ironically it has been dry ever since.

We also have a new notice board and several neighbours have put up very smart fencing between themselves and the allotments. Sadly some fences are a mess.

The two problems are the continual irritation of badgers eating people's precious crops, and the broken lid of the southern dip tank. The latter can be repaired but the badgers are a real problem. Other than that the atmosphere on Church Hill is friendly and cooperative thanks to the leadership of Andy and Pete and some very nice gardeners.

HIGHDALE AVENUE & WESTBOURNE AVENUE

Due to the absence of Cllr Hall there was no report for Highdale Avenue or Westbourne Avenue.

MOOR LANE

Cllr Middleton advised it has been another good year on Moor Lane with I think plenty of produce but we seem to have had a lot of waste left over from his site visit last week.

The new gates seem to be a great success certainly much easier to use but I would remind everyone to keep them closed.

My thanks to Will Rowlinson for his work along the front railings with the use of the spare chippings, it has made the area very neat and tidy.

Cllr Middleton thanked the Tenant Reps for work done to provide a replacement post for the water tap.

Cllr Middleton also gave a warm welcome to Mr Dave Regan who has become Tenant Rep for Moor Lane.

VICTORIA ROAD

Cllr McNeill advised that the gardens have been maintained very well and it has been evident that considerable effort has been made by everyone, especially by the new tenants.

One thing that has been noted, is the assistance that has been given by a number of tenants to their neighbours, who at times of illness have not been able to manage as well as they would have liked. Thank you and well done.

We still have a problem with the deer from the Clevedon Hall estate. I do not know what the answer to this is, apart from building a huge fence around the whole garden and maybe not growing such tempting produce!

CEMETERY

Cllr Hatch informed the tenants that pride, productive and perseverance sums up the tenants at Cemetery allotments.

Half size plots have been introduced which have proved to be very successful. Once a probation period has passed the tenants could progress up the hill to a larger plot!

The on-going subject of the colour of sheds rumbles on. New smart sheds have appeared but - are they the correct colour? Personally, I'm all for a multicultural society and I say bring on Cornish cream, found fossil taupe and churlish green. But until ideas progress unfortunately we are stuck with green or brown!

Cemetery still looks good from the road, and I still hear good remarks from passers-by.

ALLOTMENT ADMINISTRATION

The Committee Clerk advised that she has thoroughly enjoyed being Clerk to the Allotments. We have had very busy Committee meetings and completed a number of projects this year. We have also seen a number of new tenants being offered gardens, just this year to date the Clerk has allocated 22 gardens to new tenants compared to only 12 last year.

We also have a new way in which to pay your allotment rent this year, by BACS payment.

The year has been full of opportunities to don my wellington boots and to go out on site and to meet some of the tenants as well as learn the terminology for a wacker plate! This being the compactor machine required to flatten chippings on the new car parking area for Church Hill.

The Allotment Clerk thanked all of the Allotment Committee members, Paula Heath, Town Clerk, Isabel Johnson, Deputy Town Clerk for their help and support over the year.

ALLOTMENT WATCH

The Committee Clerk advised that there have again been a couple of incidents this year. One tenant has suffered the theft of some tools and a galvanised watering can that also had sentimental value. Please, please can you not leave tools out on site, either lock them in your shed or remove from site.

For any new tenants, if you should have anything that needs to be reported, please in the first instance contact the Police and obtain a crime reference number and then provide this information to the Council office who will record any issues and will also notify the Tenant reps. The noticeboards on site will also be updated to warn other tenants to be vigilant on their own and neighbouring plots.

The Allotment Clerk also advised the tenants that there has been a sighting of Japanese Knotweed on one of the allotment sites. If any tenant should see this invasive plant, please can they contact the Council offices immediately so the appropriate action can be taken.

TENANTS' BUSINESS

A Tenant from Westbourne Avenue advised that as we are keeping the tap on this site, it needs a new box putting up around the tap to support it.

The Councillor Rep for Victoria Road asked if either the large gate on Victoria Road could be refurbished or perhaps a new one installed.

A Tenant from Victoria Road also said that a deer is hopping over the wall and whether it was possible to put more height with fencing etc., to the boundary wall due to the amount of produce that is being eaten by the deer.

The Tenants on Church Hill are also suffering loss of produce due to badgers.

The Committee Chairman advised that all of these items would be looked into at the next Committee meeting when we set the budget for the next financial year.

Action – Agenda item for next Allotment Committee Meeting

BEST GARDEN AWARDS 2013

The Chairman of the Council, Cllr Patrick McNeill presented the Best Garden awards; a list of winners is attached to these minutes. A photograph was taken of the prize winners to be included in the next Council Newsletter in the local paper.

The Committee Chairman thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD CHAIRMAN.....

Meeting finished at 9.10pm. DATE:

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL - ANNUAL ALLOTMENT TENANTS' MEETING

BEST GARDEN AWARDS 14 OCTOBER 2013

ORDER OF PRESENTATION

COMMEMORATIVE COASTERS

FOR LAST YEARS' WINNERS, REPLACING THE CUPS THEY HAVE RETURNED

1 ST	Mr & Mrs Pain	(ML13)
2 ND	Mr Bigwood	(VR82B)
3 RD	Mr Clark	(VR83)

COMMENDED AWARDS: (Certificate & Voucher)

Moor Lane – ML33 – Mr M Evans
Highdale Avenue – HA60 – Mr R Cheek
Victoria Road – VR82A – Mrs G Tossell
Westbourne Avenue – WA96 – Mr D Beynon
Church Hill – CH117 – Mrs S Collins
Cemetery – CEM138 – Mr B Crewe

HIGHLY COMMENDED AWARDS FOR NEW TENANTS IN THEIR FIRST YEAR OF GARDENING: (Certificate & Voucher)

Moor Lane – ML3B – Ms B Stockwell
Highdale Avenue – HA64A – Mr T Goodman
Victoria Road – VR78A – Ms S Murphy
Westbourne Avenue – WA95B – Mrs G Knight
Church Hill – CH126 – Mr & Mrs Poole
Cemetery – CEM135 – Mr A Rogers

HIGHLY COMMENDED AWARDS: (Certificate & Voucher)

Moor Lane – ML8 – Mr W Rowlinson
Highdale Avenue – HA62 – Mr R Bailey
Victoria Road – VR71 – Mrs L Reed
Westbourne Avenue – WA94 – Mr J Proud
Church Hill – CH115 – Mr L Wait
Cemetery – CEM154 – Ms T Daniels

BEST GARDEN ON SITE: (Certificate & Voucher)

Moor Lane – ML14 – Mr S Dunn
Highdale Avenue – HA59B – Mrs M Thornton
Victoria Road – VR76 – Mrs P Pitman
Westbourne Avenue – WA89 – Mr A Baker
Church Hill – CH104 – Mr & Mrs Faraway
Cemetery – CEM158 – Mr N Foster

OVERALL WINNERS: (Cup/Rosette/Certificate & Voucher)

THIRD PRIZE: Mrs P Pitman (VR76)

SECOND PRIZE: Mr S Dunn (ML14)

FIRST PRIZE: Mr A Baker (WA89)

Minutes taken from Transition Clevedon's talk

Sally King informed the Tenants that a gentleman by the name of Rob Hopkins set up the Transition movement in 2004. The project was to see how the community could be more resilient. Now more than 1,000 groups in 40 countries have been formed under the Transition heading.

The Transition initiative can be an island, village, university, i.e. a community led response to the pressures of climate change.

Sally King provided information on how to reduce the use of fossil fuels, i.e. oil and to reduce our carbon footprint.

The talk also touched on climate change and that we are starting to see trends in our weather whereby it has been the hottest period in 12 years, we are also suffering forest fires, flooding and unexpected snow storms too.

There is also discussions taken place with the suggestion of fracking whereby water and chemicals are put into the ground to extract gas from the ground, this is a route that Transition is not keen to go down.

Ruth Gofton provided more local information as to what Transition Clevedon has done. The group manage the Millennium orchard which they rent from Clevedon Town Council for a peppercorn rent. They have apple blossom picnics and it's a lovely oasis in the orchard. The orchard is situated just off Brookfield Walk, Clevedon.

They also have a stall at the monthly Farmer's Market whereby you can come and do seed or plant swaps and talk to someone about Transition.

The group is also a way of meeting new people, working with different organisations. They have talks and films, social evenings, make and mend projects are held at the Spinning Weal in Hill Road where you can re-use materials.

The group has produced a cycle map, showing all the cycle routes in Clevedon making it safer to get to school etc. There are also plans for a cycle route from Clevedon to Weston Super Mare too.

Recycling projects and challenges to encourage more people to recycle items.

Also encouraging people to use less energy, by insulating, draft proofing etc.

They are looking into a garden share scheme, but this is not as easy as it seems with some people not wishing to garden on someone else's property. They also would like to encourage allotment tenants to grow perennial plants so that it is better for the soil, less work and healthier food.

If you are interesting in learning more, then please contact either Ruth or Sally at Transition.

<http://transitionclevedon.wordpress.com/>