

Prudhoe Gardeners' Association

Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 1st September 2021 7.00pm at The Legion

1) Present

Karen Cumberledge, Paul Muto, Christine Hewitt, Allie Hughes; Dot Dickinson at the end of the meeting

2) Apologies

Ami Cumberledge, Liam Scarth, Peter Kerry, Gary Brennan, Julia Cooper

3) Minutes from last meeting; matters arising

- a) Christine followed up the Prudhoe Volunteering Group that Joan Russell mentioned at the Prudhoe Community Allotment AGM; Caroline Warburton says that it is an offshoot of the Prudhoe Community Partnership that being re-launched in the autumn, and she will seek to help us.
- b) The PGA is now on Twitter as well as Facebook.
- c) Paul reports that the NCC rat specialist says that rats are still crossing the StonyFlats site to eat fallen apples which raised eyebrows of the committee; seems that there is an ongoing rat situation that is under observation

4) Treasurer's Report

- a) £314 cash in hand to be banked (from sales)
- b) £21,102 in bank – number of repairs due to be progressed so this will soon be lower
- c) We have spent £566 on stock for the Hut this year – COVID has affected sales greatly
- d) We have spent £2,418 in small jobs, £336 in insurance and £294 for membership of the National Allotment Society
- e) We have also spent £492 on repairs for the Hut; need to find a carpenter for ongoing work

5) Stores Report

- a) No current orders for stock outstanding
- b) Liquid feed is running low as are one or two more items
- c) Stock take required before order; discussion on what the Hut is for and what it can stock in the light of the West Wylam Inn's expanded beer garden next to the entrance.

6) Lettings Report

- a) There are no plots vacant at the moment
- b) The Inspection file was given to Christine this afternoon
- c) All results and necessary comments entered on the lettings sheet for 2021
- d) CD29 received a second E so is an eviction; it's suggested that the outgoing tenant be sent the bill for strimming the overgrowth and removing the debris as the plot was graded A and B last year, left in a good state on handover; can we ask the town council to do this?
- e) E26 received a second E. Karen suggested that if he appeals to the next meeting then we could give a list of steps for him to undertake to keep the plot and if he fails at any point then the eviction is enforced
- f) E21 received a first E but the hens and shed were removed the week before the inspection and no cultivation has been undertaken; plot thought to be vacated by the tenant.
- g) CD9 and R15A need to receive letters telling them that they are not keeping to the rules of their tenancy in that they are only keeping hens and not cultivating their plots under Section 5.3

7) Repairs Report

- a) Awaiting a quote for strimming, hedge cutting and clearing of debris from E12 and E14 from Tom Harrison

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- b) Awaiting a site meeting and quote for creating gates to CD1 and CD2 off the path to save tenants using the steep and unofficial entry off Station Road
- c) Fencing at rear of E28 and E29 is in the hands of the Town Council along with the the fencing at StonyFlats on the east side, bordering The Copse which needs boards along the bottom. We accept and are pleased that the town council will include this in their spend for this financial year and that because we haven't said this clearly to the town council it has held up the work being done
- d) The town council is also looking at repairing one tap near CD29 and possibly moving taps at StonyFlats. We accept and are pleased that the town council will include this in their spend for this financial year and that because we haven't said this clearly to the town council it has held up the work being done
- e) Repairs to internal hedge/fences between E11, E12, E13 have been organised by Dot the site rep and paid for by Karen the treasurer
- f) Waste removal – need a quote for CD12 and SF3 – Christine has not yet sorted this Dot and Karen to liaise over date for the provision of and payment for a skip for Edgewell

8) A.O.B.

Hut Rota 4th October Allie and Christine, 11th October Paul and Christine, 18th Karen and Dot, 25th Karen and Julia or Christine, 2nd October Paul and Christine

9) Date of next meeting

Wednesday 6th October 2021 7pm at the Legion

Clerk's Note to Council (not part of minutes)

Reference 6d) The Clerk has discussed with the secretary that advice to the Council would be that the Council should not issue a bill for strimming to a tenant that has been evicted from their plot as a) this has not been applied universally, b) the Town Council can only invoice for payment to the Town Council, not PGA.

It was discussed again that a bond would be a better way of recouping funds for plots that have been left with work to be carried out, and that this could be applied as a new term from the start of the rental year. Whilst PGA have included in lease that tenants can be asked to pay for plots left in a state, this has never been applied so appears on the face, not to be working. The ability to raise and chase invoices would most certainly be an issue for PGA.

Reference 7c) Quotes were sought for new fencing at E30 in March and at that time it was not considered necessary for fencing to continue into plots E29 and E28. In view that this work is now being requested, the Clerk has sought a duplicate quotation from the contractor who did the work in E30 and will seek completion via delegated decision.

Reference 7d) Quotes will be sought for repairs to taps and any additional work once NWL have assessed all taps and connections, as required by Water Regulations. Clerk meeting NWL on all sites 28th September.