

## Rotherham Allotments Alliance

# Board Meeting No.54

**On Meeting Date:** Monday 19<sup>th</sup> July 2021

**Meeting Location:** Online: Zoom

**Meeting Called By:** Brian Steele

**Chair:** Brian Steele

**Secretary:** Jack Taylor (Minutes John Palmer)

**Present:** Directors: Brian Steele (BS), John Palmer (JP), Jack Taylor (JT), Mick Hirst (MH), Mohammed Suleman (MH), Alison Howard (AH), and Cllr David Sheppard (DS). Allotment Support Assistant – Donna Bushby (DB).

**208/07/21** (1) **Apologies:** N/A

**209/07/21** (2) **Declaration of Interest**

**209.1/07/21** JP declared an interest as a tenant on Barnsley Rd site.

**209.2/07/21** JT declared an interest as secretary on Wood St site.

**209.3/07/21** MH declared an interest as a tenant of Avenue Rd site.

**209.4/07/21** MS declared an interest as a tenant of Clifton site.

**209.5/07/21** AH declared an interest as an interim committee member of South Street.

**210/07/21** (3) **Minutes of Board Meeting 53 – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

These were moved as a true record and duly signed (electronically) by the Chairperson.

**211/07/21** (4) **Matters Arising**

None advised.

**212/07/21** (5) **Administrator's Report – submitted to Director's prior to meeting. Summary:**

**212.1/07/21** High Street – fire nuisance reported again. Report of fly-tipping. Mick visited site and took photos. Another fire reported at 10.30pm on Tuesday evening. Vehicle was seen accessing and leaving the site. Waste dumped at the top of the site and left to burn. Resident called fire brigade out. Residents have reported that because of the trees inside the site, they were unable to see who / what was being done onsite. They have requested the trees to be cut back so they can see into the allotments. Ward fund application to be submitted for funds to buy some cameras to monitor the site. It was discussed regarding the location of the cameras and who would be responsible for them.

Discussed introducing times that sites can be accessed but this has been discussed before and was decided it was difficult to enforce. It was discussed that a particular tenant who has previously dumped / burnt onsite is the culprit so they should be sent a warning. Cameras will help to identify who is causing the problems. DS advised that cameras bought from Ward funds must stay within Rawmarsh. The trees need to be assessed when doing the inspections. Tenant also reported that the gate has dropped again so needs looking at as difficult to open/close.

**212.2/07/21** Barnsley Rd – cockerel noise reported again.

**212.3/07/21** Hartley Lane has been broken into again. Chased up date for new fence installation.

**212.4/07/21** Herringthorpe – stand-in secretary has reported unrest on the site due to tenants / committee members not following rules. Have suggested we could have a meeting onsite to assist. Email sent by secretary was circulated to directors.

**212.5/07/21** Rotherham Show – to be discussed in AOB later in meeting.

**212.6/07/21** Greasbrough – lock cut off again. Reported to SY Police online. Also emailed Cllr Elliott. Mick has spoken to a tenant onsite. Tenants have put a temporary lock on the bottom gate. Have asked regarding getting stronger lock for that gate and possibly a box/cover for the lock.

Enquired about Ward funds to fund cameras being put up. Tenants don't want the gate blocking up. (On a positive note, she has got an article in the Advertiser about her plot this week.) Also reported that the toilet door needs replacing. It was asked if the 'shop' was still being run onsite. DB reported she had not heard anything and wasn't sure if the building is being used. Community workers have cleared some more plots. SY Police have closed the matter due to no evidence. However, local PCSO has been in touch an anti-crime visit has been planned onsite for 21<sup>st</sup> August – will bring smart water

for tenant's belongings.

**213/07/21**

**(6) Financial Matters**

**213.1/07/21** AH reported that we will not be able to use the mobile banking app due to needing dual authorization.

**213.2/07/21** DB now has the card details to resolve the Zoom payment issue. DB also needs to fill a form in to have her own card.

**213.3/07/21** AH will take MH his fob and go through authorizing payments.

**213.4/07/21** Now have full visibility on the bank account. DB is going through Quickbooks to match everything up and categorise transactions properly so we can see a clearer picture of expenditure and income against the budget. We are still owed some capital expenditure payments from RMBC.

**213.5/07/21** Approx. £1900 rent payments outstanding – DB to chase up.

**214/07/21**

**(7) Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)**

**214.1/07/21** DB has now got all the Land Registry documents from the solicitor. These are to be split up between DB/JP/BS/JT to go through and look for any issues. JP has looked through some already and found the RMBC and Land Registry plans are different. Current Land Registry plans may not be up to date as RMBC Estates updated their plans in 2019. It was suggested that it may be up to the Alliance to register the changes with Land Registry as leasee. It was suggested that any areas not in the allotment fence, may or may not need to be included as it could be changed back to allotment in the future.

**214.2/07/21** DB reported that there was no further development with Estates on the grazing land.

**214.3/07/21** It was suggested that a meeting be arranged to go through the plans together. DB has enquired about the use of the Garden Room with Andy Lee.

**214.4/07/21** It was also discussed regarding the fees as up to £5k has been approved by RMBC. It will be a concern if the fees go above this point – RMBC have always stated they will pick up all of the legal fees, which may increase if the lease is re-written as suggested by RAA's solicitor. May need to involve Directors to get further answers and the lease finally completed.

**215/07/21**

**(8) Society Update**

**215.1/07/21** Barnsley Rd – DB has received an email from the secretary with an update. Pictures of work being done on the site is on their FB page. They have also now changed the bank account names over. DB asked regarding the treasurer as a different person is named on the FB page as to what was advised in the meeting with them onsite. In regard to the paths, the Allotment Operative used to trim the paths – it wasn't on the Grounds Maintenance schedule.

**215.1/07/21** South Street – interim secretary has questioned why the site currently doesn't allow livestock – it is no different to many sites. JP advised the history of the allotments in the 1970s County Borough and they did not allow livestock – the decision was then made by the society running the site. It was discussed that the RAA has no objections and will support the decision of the society. It was then discussed and decided that it should be an agenda item at the AGM for the site and be voted on by the tenants, rather than the decision being made by the interim committee. The site AGM is TBC due to relaxation of restrictions.

**216/07/21**

**(9) Maintenance**

**216.1/07/21** Hartley Lane roof repair – materials were dropped off but the fitter was in a fatal road accident. DB rang the company who advised they would know when the job can be done in the next few days.

**216.2/07/21** Broom Valley New toilet – work was booked in for today. DB to check it has been done.

**216.3/07/21** Lowfield Vine removal – 2 companies have quoted – 1 to remove the tree and all the vine growth (£950 + VAT), 1 to just remove the vine (£600 + VAT). The resident's shed is damaged. It was voted and carried that the tree should be removed. DB will speak to the resident regarding them putting new fence up to block access to the allotments.

**216.4/07/21** Capital Expenditure works- DB has been in touch with Burkinshaws who are back up and running. Will be finding out dates this week for the works to be done.

- 217/07/21 (10) NAS Membership Update**  
 No further update received. MH has done further research and discounts apply on spend thresholds / bulk orders which may not be possible for directly-managed members. Individual members pay more for membership. We now have access to the members area – contact details have been changed.
- 218/07/21 (11) Risk Assessments/Health and Safety**  
 Dynamic risk assessment prepared by MH circulated to directors prior to meeting. Applies to anyone doing work on sites. It was agreed that this should replace the existing health and safety risk assessment as it is more comprehensive.
- 219/07/21 (12) Future Actions**  
**219.1/07/21** Hedge Cutting survey – need to determine what will be included in the council contract. Establish whether allotment / public sides are both cut. Need to arrange a time / day with Grounds Maintenance.  
**219.2/07/21** Vermin Control – MH reported that the bait boxes are working on Avenue Rd. Doing The pest control training was offered to directors – AH would like to do it. Also mentioned a South Street tenant who would be willing to do it. It was discussed that if the RAA supplies the training, it is up to societies to supply their own bait boxes and poison. Or, directors do the training and manage the sites on behalf of the society. AH offered to do the pest control on other sites where required. A concern was raised regarding how the poison is going to be stored and if the poison gets into the food chain through dead animals. It was voted and agreed that the first option was more viable – the RAA will pay for the training. However, tenants should be reminded that they are ultimately responsible for pest control as per the allotment rules / tenancy agreement.
- 220/07/21 (13) Any other business**  
**220.1/07/21** Rotherham Show – taking place 3/4/5 September. Need to work out a rota so our stall is covered all weekend – directors to advise DB what they can do. It was discussed regarding what we will do – marketing materials – visual display, banner / giveaways / competitions – environmentally friendly options. Depends on budget. DS explained that the show being over 3 days will help to ease big crowds. DB to come up with ideas for the stall.
- 221/07/21 (14) Agenda Items for next meeting**
- As per last meeting
  - Rotherham Show
- 222/07/21 (15) Date and Time of Next Meeting. (Meetings will be cancelled if not required).**  
 Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> August 2021 at 2.00pm  
 Monday 16<sup>th</sup> August at 2.00pm  
 Tuesday 31<sup>st</sup> August at 2.00pm (Bank holiday)

BS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was closed at 3.20pm.



Signed ..... (Chair)