

## Rotherham Allotments Alliance

# Board Meeting No.70

**Held:** Monday 15<sup>th</sup> August 2022

**Meeting Location:** Garden Room, Clifton Park and Online, Zoom  
(Minutes Donna Bushby)

**Present in person:** Directors: Brian Steele (BS) Chair, Mick Hirst (MH), John Palmer (JP), Mohammed Suleman (MS), ASA: Donna Bushby

**Present by Zoom:** Cllr Dave Sheppard (DS), Jack Taylor (JT).

- 123/08/22**      **(1) Apologies:** Tess Sheen (TS), Cllr Rachel Hughes (RH).  
No contact from Kris Edwards (KE)
- 124/08/22**      **(2) Declaration of Interest**  
JP declared an interest as a tenant on Barnsley Rd site.  
JT declared an interest as secretary on Wood St site.  
MH declared an interest as a tenant on Avenue Rd site.  
MS declared an interest as a tenant on Clifton site.
- 125/08/22**      **(3) Minutes of previous Board Meeting –18<sup>th</sup> July 2022**  
These were moved as a true record by MH and duly signed (electronically) by the Chairperson.
- 126/08/22**      **(4) Matters Arising**  
All addressed in agenda / admin report.
- 127/08/22**      **(5) Admin report – circulated to directors prior to meeting**
- a) Greasbrough. Fire reported on site by a tenant. Exact details not known – possibly plot 49. Tenant has not been in contact.
  - b) Andy Lee been in contact regarding boundary / trees at Clough Bank. Advised that we had some trees cut down last year but fence not our responsibility. Can go and look at it if required.
  - c) RMBC Estates will be looking into the Rectory Field encroachment. Details have been passed to Tim Archer. Also need the RAA to make contact with the resident who has the gate access – this may also be an encroachment. Letter not been responded to so need to visit the property to get resident details. DS advised he could assist with this. DB to arrange.
  - d) Fire on field behind Avenue Rd – damage to sheds / beehives on neighbouring plots and gate hasp cut off again. Gate has now been repaired.
  - e) Complaints about fires on Herringthorpe – passed onto secretary.
  - f) Tenants been contacting regarding inspection outcomes – some not happy. Some have blamed working full time etc. Have advised most that it is to encourage them to improve the condition of the plots. It was stated that it is tenants responsibility to remove rubbish, keep the plots tidy etc.
  - g) Shareholder Forum information has been emailed to all direct-managed tenants, site secretaries and put on website / Facebook/Instagram. Discussed regarding the agenda and what will be discussed. 2 items have already been put forward by tenants – water supplies and splitting plots. It was suggested that the tenants are brought up to date in what actions the RAA have been taking then also offer an open forum for tenants to speak / ask questions. Could be split into sub-groups, depending on numbers attending. It was discussed that tenants need to be informed regarding bringing rubbish onto sites and when to have fires. Overall, waste and burning is the main problem on sites so does need attention brought to it.
  - h) Greasbrough – tenant complained about weed growth in untenanted area. Blames this for weeds on their plot. Would like it to be cut down. DB advised that Community Payback will be going to the site so could be arranged for them to do. Further discussion then took place regarding Community Payback having a plot on the site for a long-term project. They can then do any work required on the site. They would need use of a skip to remove the rubbish. It was agreed by directors that this is permitted to go ahead.

**128/08/22 (6) Financial Matter / (9) Sub-Committee Meeting – 1<sup>st</sup> August 2022**

*(Item 9 – Finance Sub-Committee meeting was discussed alongside Finance)*

- a) Bank Balance: as @ 15.08.22 - Current account balance: £28,273.02, Reserve Account: £38,136.43.
- b) 4 payments outstanding - £1696.38. DB to set up.
- c) The main bank account contact is now BS.
- d) Report sent to JP on projected expenditure for rest of 2022 which identified funds available to spend on projects this year.
- e) Finance sub-committee meeting minutes were circulated to directors prior to the meeting.
- f) Starting to look at budgets for future years. These will then be presented at a future board meeting. Need to consider the possible rental increases and also inflation rates to ensure income and expenditure is realistic given the current economic climate and what projects need completing. A list of outstanding projects was submitted to directors prior to the meeting. Some £100k capital projects still need to be fulfilled and other projects prioritised.
- g) Discussed regarding concern for treasurer and not getting apologies for not attending meetings. Suggested that if they are unable to attend, they should still submit a written contribution. The financial expertise is very valuable to the Alliance. DB to contact KE to arrange a Zoom meeting.

**129/08/22 (7) Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)**

- a) Still need to arrange a meeting with Andy Lee.
- b) Still received no details of grazing land from RMBC Estates.
- c) Solicitor sent updated details of buildings on the sites to be included in the insurance. Discussed regarding including non-RMBC sites being insured for a small amount to be able to rebuild if required.

**130/08/22 (8) Society Update –**

- a) Vicarage Fields – secretary reported that neighbouring residents are throwing used dog poo bags into the site. DB has reported to RMBC. Secretary have asked if the RAA can fund 50% of the cost to remove brambles to open up another plot – cost to RAA would be £200 which would come from the surplus amount specified for match-funding. Will need to charge society for extra rent if land put back into cultivation and not currently charged for. Question asked regarding impinging on land that was suggested for a turning circle. The expenditure was agreed by directors as the society are
- b) Herringthorpe – secretary reported plots being targeted and pipes being cut. The new locks and a wildlife camera have been delivered. Been in touch with local councillors and PCSOs regarding security issues. Committee happy to work with councillors as they plan to do a walk of the surrounding area and possibly include allotments. PCSOs can do a visit with SmartWater and advise on crime prevention.
- c) South Street – Enquired about using Community Payback. It was agreed that the RAA can fund a toilet, dependant on duration. DB explained that it would need putting to Community Payback for Reported that 8 x shed doors are unsafe and need replacing. DB to get updated quotes. There is £2k in the surplus fund already accounted for.
- d) Wharf Rd still having issue with an uncultivated plot. Letter been sent to tenant from RAA to support the society with the issue.
- e) Barnsley Rd – the 3-month deadline is approaching for the removal of cockerels. Tenant confusion regarding the actual date.

**131/08/22 (9) Sub-Committees**

*Already discussed*

**132/08/22 (10) Maintenance Update -**

- a) Community Payback are going back to Rectory Field and Greasbrough. Work also been done on Broom Valley Old. Should have been at Rectory Field last weekend but toilet didn't get delivered.
- b) Moor Rd – tenants disgruntled regarding inspection grades and blame the flooding issues / condition of rest of site. A number of local gardening contractors been contacted for quotes to clear the overgrown areas and Mare's Tail / Hogweed problem. RMBC Drainage have advised they may not be able to do the work this year, or possibly October. DS to speak to RMBC to find out for definite. Need to look into making the ditch into a French drain. It was suggested that other drainage contractors be contacted to quote for the work.
- c) Lowfield Avenue – one plot has been tenanted. Clearance of other plots to be arranged.
- d) Discussed skips for new tenants – Greasbrough especially needs one – 3 new tenants with rubbish to remove. Some has been piled near the bottom gate. Also need one on Avenue Rd to clear some rubbish moved from a

plot – tenant has been told they’ve got to burn the wood but said they wouldn’t at the minute with the current risk of wildfires. It was suggested that DB find out if skip prices will be increasing as it will help with budgeting. The budget currently allows 1 skip per site but extra funds should be budgeted to allow for extra provision for clearance projects.

- e) DB has spoken to the new contracts manager at RMBC regarding Japanese Knotweed treatment. Tenant on Wood St reported that it has grown on that site and needs looking at.
- f) Still waiting for approval from RMBC to remove asbestos garage on Greasbrough and also pick up fragments from various sites.
- g) Rosehill tap – the plumber tried to fix it but the nuts are rounded off. Advised not enough pipe in the manhole to redo. Would have to dig out of the manhole to fix. Plumber on holiday for 2 weeks. Need to wait or find someone else who could do it. It was agreed to wait for the plumber to fix it.

**133/08/22 (11) Rotherham Show**

- a) DB has advised she is available work both days. MH advised he can now do some of the time. Other directors, if available, will do what they can.
- b) Discussed the minor logo update which was circulated to directors prior to the meeting. The logo was agreed and DB had approval to order the embroidered polo shirts.
- c) DB also needed to confirm seed giveaways. BS advised he had enough. DB to purchase some if required.

**134/08/22 (12) Future Actions**

Re-inspections of category C plots will need doing. DB/BS to arrange.

**135/08/22 (13) Any Other Business**

- a) Yorkshire Water (YW) hosepipe ban announced for 26<sup>th</sup> August. Tenants need to be informed of this. DB had already put some guidance on the website. YW will allow people to water crops with hosepipes, but, the RAA rules do not allow the direct watering of crops. It was clarified that hosepipes can only be used to fill containers under RAA rules, therefore, tenants won’t be able to fill up water butts with hosepipes during the ban. DB to communicate an update to tenants before the ban comes into force.
- b) DB advised of reduced working hours this week and working pattern change w.c. 29<sup>th</sup> August due to working Rotherham Show.

**136/08/22 (14) Agenda Items for Next Meeting**

- Maintenance Committee -
- Board – 12/09/2022 -

**137/08/22 (15) Date and Time of Next Meeting.**

Maintenance sub-committee meeting – Monday 5<sup>th</sup> September 2pm - Zoom.

BS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was closed at 3.15pm.



Signed ..... (Chair)