

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Board Meeting No.80

Held: Monday 17th July 2023

Meeting Location: Garden Room, Clifton Park, Online via Zoom
(Minutes John Palmer)

Present (in person): Directors: Brian Steele (BS) Chair, Mick Hirst (MH), John Palmer (JP), Cllr Dave Sheppard (DS) Mohammed Suleman (MS), Jack Taylor (JT).

Jane Skelding and David Atkinson (representatives from Rectory Fields attended for item 272/07/23 d only).

Present (via Zoom):

- 266/07/23 (1) Apologies:** Chair advised he had received communications from Tess Sheen (TS) indicating intention to resign from the Board. It was agreed that a letter thanking Tess for her efforts and contributions be sent. Also communication from Sue Jackson (SJ) concerning tending her apologies and raising concerns with regard to the role of Treasurer.
- 267/07/23 (2) Declaration of Interest**
JP declared an interest as a tenant on Barnsley Rd site.
MH declared an interest as a tenants on Avenue Rd site.
JT declared an interest as a tenants on Wood St site.
MS declared an interest as a tenants on Clifton site.
- 268/07/23 (3) Minutes of previous Board Meeting – 13th June 2023.**
These were moved as a true record by MH and duly signed (electronically) by the Chairperson.
- 269/07/23 (4) Matters Arising**
MS raised the question of zoom facilities ‘not being available’. It was pointed out that in the Board meeting notification email it was stated – ‘*it would be appreciated if anyone wishing to attend by zoom would notify us before hand to ensure facilities are in place*’ – no such notification had been received.
- 270/07/23 (5) Admin report**
a) Chair reported the appointments panel had agreed to the appointment of ASA – Jamie Calvert, who would be commencing duties week commencing 21st August 2023.
b) It was noted that a new tenancy for Hartley Lane grazing site had been agreed and the full year’s rental (1st July to 30th June 2024) paid. The Hartley Lane society had indicated their support for the grazing licence for the area and would arrange with the tenant independently for use of water.
- 271/07/23 (6) Financial Matters**
In the absence of the Treasurer no financial information was available.
- 272/07/23 (7) Maintenance**
a) Moor Road - drainage. It was agreed that a meeting with the contractor would be arranged to obtain a revised and updated quotation. MH to arrange.
b) Site inspections, vacant, overgrown plots on directly managed sites. BS/JT had carried out inspections at Rectory Fields; Rosehill; Psalters Lane; Highfield Road.
c) Skip provision: - The Board having noted the information previously circulated detailing what cannot be placed in skips it was agreed to reinforce the views of the Society Forum (16/5/23) in that when it was agree to provide a skip, it would be arranged to be delivered and collected on the same day and whilst on site item’s placed in the skip would be

monitored by representatives of the society (RAA or nominated site representatives on directly managed sites).

- d) Rectory Fields – (site representatives as detailed above in attendance). Discussion concerning the future use of the shed (provided initially for use of Restorative Justice when on site) and removal of rubbish and unwanted items from the site. Chair outlined the benefits of the formation of society to manage the site which would allow use of the shed for community use and allow active participation of tenants to re-cycle unwanted items and arrange disposal. It was stressed that the RAA Board would actively assist and advise on the formation. It was agreed that the representatives would seek support on site and if required advise the secretary (JT) if they wished to have a communication circulated to allow tenants.
- e) Avenue Road – further complaint has been received with regard to cockerel noise. A site visit with the enforcement officer RMBC is being arranged.
- f) Asbestos removal – it was agreed that arrangement would be considered to collect asbestos from individual sites, correctly bagged, and take to a central point for commercial disposal, if arrangements could not be made to dispose directly at RMBC waste removal site. This operation would involve the hire of a suitable vehicle.
- g) Rosehill Plot 25 – issues now fully resolved livestock husbandry and cultivation being correctly observed.
- h) Vermin control report – previously circulated – MH reported on the July round of control. He also advised that during 2024 one of the treatments currently utilised was being phased out. RAA supply should be used in advance and Societies would be advised likewise. Recent vermin at Clifton was now under control and MH was to visit Herringthorpe site to attend vermin issues on the site.
- i) Access to plots/sites with non RAA locks in place. During recent visits a number of instances of non RAA locks has caused difficulties in accessing sites. The individual instances to be pursued. The situation of access to allotments from adjacent residential properties was also considered. It was noted that all allotment plots should maintain an access from the allotment path. It was agreed that there was a need to identify all the offending plots and tenants and these be contacted to advise a) that direct access to the allotment path must be maintained and that their personal access from the residential property was only for their use during their tenancy of the plot and would have to be removed if and when the plot was no longer in their tenancy. b) That there was **no** automatic transfer of the plot to any new tenant of the residential property, if the plot became vacant it would be offered to the next eligible person on the waiting list for the site in question.
- j) High Street – tree issue raised again by RMBC – JT to advise that matter with ward councillor resolved.

273/07/23

(8) Transfer and Transitional arrangements RMBC to RAA (including SLA)

- a) No progress to report on the transfer.
- b) Grazing sites – AL (RMBC) has requested details of the grazing sites within the lease agreement which required further information from the Estates section. It was agreed that JP would convey the necessary information.

274/07/23

(9) Society Update

- a) Broom Valley Old – held an EGM (16/7/23), BS and JT attended on behalf of the RAA, to fill vacancies to their committee due to a number of resignations. These were filled and a new committee is now functioning.
- b) South St – held a meeting on 1/7/23, JT attended on behalf of the RAA, changes to the committee were made and subsequently the Chair at that time has now resigned. Assistance is being offered to advise on the constitution and other management issues.

A complaint has been received from a prospective tenant raising concerns about there application for a plot on the site and the conduct of the previous chair of the society. The Board agreed that there was now no requirement to investigate the complaint further, the society now dealing with the request in the correct manner.

A skip was provided at the site on 15/7/23.

- c) Clough Road – adjacent resident - request for overhanging tree branches to be pruned. RMBC have advised that this work will be carried out by their contractor at their cost.
- d) Wood Street – branch of tree in dangerous condition JT to arrange removal as necessary.
- e) Formation of new societies – agreed to pursue at a later date.

275/07/23 **(10) Rotherham Show**
Rotherham show – 2nd and 3rd September 2023. RAA to attend – details to be arranged.

276/07/23 **(11) Any Other Business**
• No issues raised.

277/07/23 **(12) Agenda Items for Next Meeting**
• Rotherham show – 2nd and 3rd September 2023.

278/07/23 **(13) Date of Next Meeting**
Board – 21st August 2023 – 1pm – Clifton Park Garden Room

BS thanked everyone for their attendance. The meeting was closed at 3.50pm.

Signed  _____ Date 21/08/2023
Brian Steele (Chair)