

Rotherham Allotments Alliance

Maintenance Sub Committee Minutes

Meeting Name:	Maintenance Meeting - 11		
Minute Taker:	Jamie Calvert		
Date:	05 February 2024	Time:	13:00
Location:	Virtual Teams Meeting		

Attendees:

Directors: Brian Steele Chair (BS), Mick Hirst (MH) and Richard Watson (RW).
Support Officer: Jamie Calvert (JC)

Apologies:

Jack Taylor (JT)

M001/01/24 Apologies

- a. Apologies from Jack Taylor (JT)

M002/01/24 Declarations of Interest

- a. MH declared an interest as a tenant on the Avenue Rd site.
- b. RW declared an interest as society treasurer on the Clifton site.

M003/01/24 Minutes from the previous meeting

- a. Maintenance meeting 10 minutes were moved as a true record by MH and duly signed (electronically) by the Chairperson.

M004/01/24 Matters arising

- a. There were no matters arising.

M005/01/24 Burning policy review

- a. A discussion was had regarding the reference to fires in section 5 of the allotment rules and a bonfire notice previously circulated to some tenants and posted on notice boards. It was agreed that the bonfire notice was guidance, not policy.
 - i. It was agreed that the existing guidance document should be updated, taking into consideration the guidance documents used on society sites. It should be made clear that this is guidance to add clarity to the reference to fires in section 5 of the allotment rules.

ACTION: (JC) to consolidate and draft burning/fires guidance and present at next maintenance subcommittee meeting.

M006/01/24 Plot clearance

- a. A discussion was had concerning plot clearance and the options of maintaining clear plots between tenancies. Several options were considered, including covering the land after clearance, routine spraying after clearance and postponing clearance until a tenancy is secured. It was agreed that postpone clearance until the tenancy is secured, offering the new tenant appropriate support and time to clear the plot.
- b. It was agreed that the ASO should determine on an individual plot basis the type of clearance required and the cost.

M007/01/24 Grazing sites

- a. It was agreed that a site inspection with the tenant is necessary to determine a course of action.

ACTION: (JC) to arrange site visit with tenant

- b. An application was received to rent the grazing land on Queen Street. It was agreed that a meeting with the applicant on-site is necessary to ensure the land is suitable.

ACTION: (JC) to arrange a meeting between the applicant and two directors (BS) and (MH) on 07/02/2024

M008/01/24 Society sites

- a. Broom Valley Old site - An issue of a neighbouring property accessing the site and removing boundary fencing to complete works on their property had been reported to the RAA. The site is society managed but the committee has resigned. As this is a boundary issue, it was agreed that the RAA should write to the property and insist that there is no further unauthorised access and that the boundary fence be restored to its previous state.

ACTION: (JC) to write to the owner of the property

- b. Broom Valley New site – Regarding the on-site track in need of repair; quotes have been requested by the society and ASO but no quote has been provided to date. It was suggested that the RAA source a suitable material to repair the track and arrange a contractor to spread and compact the material.

ACTION: (BS) to confirm the type of material to be sourced for making repairs. (JC) to follow up with contractor regarding a quote.

- c. Clifton site – An update from (MH) was given on the footpath which needs repair. It was recommended that the flagstones be lifted and set correctly or lifted and replaced with a suitable footpath surface. It was suggested that the RAA fund the materials required if the society could provide the labour. It was agreed that the preference would be to reuse the existing flagstones.

ACTION: (JC) to contact the society secretary and request them to obtain quotes for the work required to re-set the flagstones

- d. Vicarage Fields site – A request had been raised to improve/repair the lower entrance to the site, where the road surface has deteriorated. It was agreed that it would be necessary to ascertain whether the road is the responsibility of the RMBC or the RAA before arranging any work.

ACTION: (JC) to enquire with RMBC highways team regarding ownership. (BS) and (MH) to visit the site

M009/01/24 Any other business

- a. Rectory Fields site – Vehicle damage to the on-site track reported by tenants was discussed. It was agreed that further inspection should be made before obtaining a quote to improve the track.

- b. Avenue Road site – It was noted that funds from the dissolved society should now be returned to the RAA for investment in site improvements. It was suggested that this could be used for water storage/conservation on individual plots, depending on the demand from tenants. It was also suggested that it could be used towards track improvements.

ACTION: (MH) to arrange a cheque from the dissolved society bank account to be deposited with the RAA until a decision is made on allocation of funds.

- c. Moor Road site – It was noted that on a recent site visit, the newly installed drains appear to be effectively draining the site of sitting water. A question was raised about the impact of the drain running on the plots that it crosses. It was noted that future tenants need to be made aware to avoid damaging the drain.

ACTION: (JC) to contact the contractor and clarify the drainage ditch dimensions

- d. A query was raised regarding water bills on society sites. It was agreed that societies that are directly responsible for their water contracts may be paying for wastewater and standing charges that are disproportionate to their usage.

ACTION: (JC) to contact society secretaries and request confirmation of their billing type. To share any best practices identified with affected society secretaries.

M010/01/24 Agenda items for next meeting

- a. Internal fencing height rules
- b. Boundary fencing and access enforcement
- c. Plot inspections process and schedule

M011/01/24 Date of Next Meeting

- a. Board Meeting 87 – 26/02/2024 – 13:00 – Clifton Park Garden House
- b. Maintenance Meeting 12 - 18/03/2024 - 13:00 – Virtual Teams meeting

The meeting was closed at 15:00pm.

Signed  _____ Date _____
Brian Steele (Chair)