

RAVENSWOOD ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Meeting at the Prince of Wales on Wednesday 24th April 2024 @ 7:30 p.m.

Present:

Antony Green

Bill Harding

Sue Hone

Ivor Taylor

Jackie Swithenbank

John Swithenbank

John Kirk

Martyn Davies

Mike Rogers

Peter Davies

Sandra Finch

Desmond Jones

Apologies:

Dean Wiltshire

Geoff Adams

Pauline Adams

Non-attendees

Ken Mareverwa

1. Welcome and apologies.

Action

AG chaired the meeting and accepted apologies from GA/PA & DW.

2. Equipment usage and petrol money (Petty Cash).

BH collected £3 from MD for use of the shredder.

3. Battery tools.

BH reminded attendees that there is a spare spool for the battery strimmer in the Container on the wall by it, and that whoever uses it, please tell him to replace it.

All

4. Bees.

The Beekeeper, Ade Morris, had a disastrous winter, losing 13 over-wintering colonies leaving him with only 4. Usually he loses one or two, but this loss is unprecedented. There's plenty of stored pollen over winter but no bees or eggs, and DEFRA are as dumbfounded as he is.

So he is going to burn all the frames, sterilise all the boxes and start afresh hoping that he can increase the hives from his surviving colonies. The upshot is that it's going to take a year or two before he is near to getting the number of colonies back to full strength.

BH/AM
Ongoing

5. Wildflowers & mare's tail.

a. DJ plans to sowing clover seeds when the weather warms up, combining them with grass seed which has proven to be a good barrier against the more invasive weed varieties. He will start with the patch outside the Container doors.

DJ

b. BH said that if DJ's trial is successful, he would provide funding for more seeds.

BH

6. Cherry blossom tree overhanging plots 5 & 6.

Previous minutes refer. Having contacted CCBC, United Welsh & Celtic Horizons and being passed from pillar to post, MR has understandably come to the end of his tether. After a lengthy discussion the following was agreed.

MR

a. IT mentioned that we are unlikely to get anything done as the United Welsh residents will be liable to pay for any tree surgery.

b. MD & MR offered to look at cutting down the overhanging branches, ensuring they undertake relevant risk assessments and adhere to HSE guidelines!

MD/MR

7. Grants.

For information: MD previously mentioned that Monmouthshire Building Society were offering grants, saying that Fernlea had taken advantage of their offer. It was agreed that this gives us another option when we require funding in the future.

Pause for alcohol refresh

8. Communal IBCs.

As the pallet bases are rotting we need to get a solid foundation.

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a. Previous minutes refer. DW said that building concrete block walls and filling with hardcore is a sensible option. When the weather improves, DW will look into this to determine what is required, once the weather improves!

DW

b. Depending on feasibility and costs, BH to ask for funding from CEAF before proceeding with the build.

BH

9. Hose fittings.

BH said that having applied for and received a voluntary sector grant from CCBC, he had purchased the necessary fittings.

10. Communal composting.

This was raised in the previous meeting. A lengthy discussion ensued regarding the different methods of composting, possible location, etc. It was decided that members should have a long hard think about whether they really want a communal compost area, its feasibility, and the perceived advantages.

All

11. AOB. Skip.

SH asked if it would be possible to get a skip for the disposal of the assorted debris around the site (metal excluded!). She was mainly thinking of the large sheets of OSB, and other attendees agreed that there was stuff they would like to dispose of without multiple visits to Full Moon. BH said he thought that CEAF dealt with such requests and would look into it.

BH
Next
meeting

12. AOB. Risk of injury.

JK said that his wife had recently stepped on piece of scrap wood with protruding nails which had thankfully missed her foot. It was agreed that all members should ensure that any wood left around their plot or alongside the wood chippings store has all nails removed or bent over.

All
Ongoing

13. AOB. Container lock.

Following the recent problems opening the Container door, BH arranged for a new secure Anti-Snap/Drill & Bump lock to be fitted (by JC Locks & Keys), along with original cut keys. The new keys were distributed to a representative of each plot.

BH
Done

14. AOB. Break-in on plot 7.

This issue was discussed at length and the general consensus that, given the rarity of such an event, this was probably a one off. PD mentioned that the offender(s) had jumped over the fence by his plot using the branches of a tree next to the fence, which he had subsequently cut off. It was agreed to revisit site security if we have future problems with intruders.

All

15. Date and time of next meeting.

The next meeting will be scheduled for Wednesday 24th July in the lounge of the Prince of Wales @ 7:30 p.m.

BH