

## Skipton Middletown Allotment Association

### Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 17th May, 2023, 6pm The Hub

**Present:**, Angie Hayes, Christine Jackson, Jeff Harrison, Derek Breckon, Mags Allen, Jette Howard, Richard Annable, Richard Hardisty, Michelle Stoddard **Apologies** Ann Holmes, Deborah Hennessey, David Snell

#### **Matters arising from October meeting minutes :**

- Compost from Yororganics is too expensive so other options sourced. We are getting sales of compost for suggested donations. We need petty cash for change

#### **Treasurer report:**

- we have £490 in the bank - £160 came out in May for insurance and £104 spent on compost. We have been given £300 from councillors for an additional shed but this hasn't gone into the bank yet. Angie and Jeff to chase up.

#### **Secretary Report: -**

- currently we have 37 members
- AGM to be held in July - Mags to look at possible dates around holidays. It would be nice to get more people at the AGM but we only have permissions to contact members, not wider allotment holders so this is difficult. Mags to talk to Dale and Emma about possibly STC emailing round.

#### **Social Secretary Report:**

- Social afternoon – we only had a few people there but people who came enjoyed it. Cost came in under budget.
- £300 for shed has come through – just waiting for grant to be deposited.
- We talked about option for members of hiring the hub for a small fee (unfortunately due to insurance we can't hire out to non members). Jeff to check insurance before we look at ways of advertising about this. Suggested donation for hire £10
- Planning permission for composting toilet granted. Holding back on getting composting toilet for now.
- Leaflet about SMAA – Angie almost has a draft ready.

#### **Skipton Town Council links and issues:**

- STC Public Services Committee meeting 13/4/23 - attended by Jeff and Derek. Both reported it was difficult to hear and there was no opportunity to speak. We decided there was no need to attend future meetings.
- Feedback from meeting with Dale and Emma (STC) 11/5/23, Jeff attended. Minutes from these are available on Skipton Town Council website. Main points:
  - Tree pollarding – All costs of any works on trees are deducted from allotment sites budget and any pollarding is done on advice of qualified arborist based on H and S inspection (see AOB as well)
  - Rat control, there is a rota for this - currently every 3<sup>rd</sup> week of the month. Jeff reported people have concerns about increased numbers of rats. If anyone has any specific concerns about rats please contact Emma at STC on 01756 700553. Emma can then advise pest control to make checks. Derek is concerned that rat poison traps are being left in areas where children can reach them. Derek to liaise with Mark about concerns and other concerns about rats. ? raised about why Middletown needs so many more visits than Broughton road – Mags to check but we assume its numbers of animals being kept.
  - Rubbish on plots. Dale and Mark do monthly inspections and action is being taken on non cultivated plots. Any concerns please report to Emma (see above).

- Skips. It will be too expensive for STC to get skips to the sites this year. Angie has done some checking and it would be possible to have a medium skip delivered for up to 28 days at a cost of £205
- Obstruction posts – the lower post has been dropped now that the weather is getting better. We argued for the second post being permanently dropped but STC say this can't happen with the second post due to wear and tear on the path. But it can be dropped on request – contact Emma, Dale or Mark directly.
- Car parking – Plans are to turn pony plot 1 into car parking and remove the tree stump to increase parking – when funds allow. This isn't going to happen in the near future though due to funding.
- STC composting area, progress is being made on this. Compost will be available in about a year's time and will be moved to central areas for plot holders.
- Measurement of plots is now complete – STC now looking at costings, starting with smaller plots.

**Hub:**

- We decided to make the Saturday opening hours 10.30am – 11.30am.

**AOB:**

- Swap area – we decided this isn't working as a lot of rubbish is being left here and Jeff is having to take it to the Skip. Suggestion to re-site it – Derek to talk to Mark but in the meantime we'll clear the area and remove the signs etc. Please note - tenants are responsible for removing any rubbish or unwanted items from their own plots. If the council have to do it we will be charged through the rents.
- Trees on plots – STC will inspect and pollard any dangerous trees (see above item) so please report any trees you're concerned about from a safety point of view to Emma. Regarding overgrown trees on plots – Mags checked with the National Association legal team and they have told us that unless our tenancy agreement specifies any responsibilities of the council regarding trees on plots then the council's only obligation is to provide the land.
- Question was raised about feral fowl in plots. If anyone notices feral fowl we need to report this to STC.
- We discussed the future of SMAA going forwards as both Angie and Mags have commitments that mean they won't be able to commit time to SMAA in the future. We decided our June meeting would be a special meeting to discuss SMAA future.

**Next meeting: Wednesday 14th June, 6pm at the Hub – to discuss future of SMAA**