

## **GUNSITE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE**

Minutes of Committee Meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 6.00 on Zoom

Present: Mike Patrick (Chair), Maggie Jarman, Linda Craig (Secretary) Liz Brunton, Judith Patrick, Jane Taylor, Carrol Henry, Gavin Hamilton, Lorna Mills, William Marshall

1. Apologies for Absence: Kathy Heeps, Marc Meryon

2. Approval of Minutes of last meeting (1 October 2023) – approved

Matters arising: none not elsewhere on the agenda.

3. Chair report

This was sent with the agenda and the topics discussed are all included in these minutes.

4. Recording Committee and AGM minutes

All three sites have very different approaches to posting their own committee and AGM minutes on their websites. In relation to CDAS minutes, a proposal has been put to CDAS Committee, that minutes will be distributed to the membership via the sites' secretaries and not be posted on Section websites (decision pending). Gunsite Terms of Reference 2014 requires display of our committee minutes but this has not been possible until website was recently reorganised. AGM minutes are simply required to be presented at the following AGM. Committee sees no reason why both committee and AGM minutes should not be displayed on our website. Agreed with one abstention.

We note the difficulty with recording the votes at the 2023 AGM, given the noise going on during the vote, and we will put instructions for voting in the terms of reference for conduct of AGM. Action: Mike P

5. Website updates

Mike has updated all CDAS and Gunsite dates for the website, and Maggie and Mike have worked on the introduction to Gunsite. We agree unanimously that the 2023 AGM minutes should now go on the website.

Action: Mike P

6. Status of CDAS lease

The lease has not yet been signed.

7. Finance report

Report not available but the Treasurer has no item of concern.

8. Site Officers' report

Liz, Judith and Jane reported verbally.

- Wheelbarrows – Jane and Colin are trying to find puncture-proof wheelbarrows. The foam-based wheel option is no longer available. The choice therefore is pneumatic tyres (which will puncture) or hard wheels (which wreck the paths). There is no material difference in cost. Agreed that we go with four barrows with pneumatic tyres, with a team of people to maintain them on a monthly basis.  
Action: Jane T
- Some of the paths are in bad condition and will be closed for a while. Action: Jane T
- Potholes: the pile of planings is still there but is being used.
- The middle car park is being cleared of overlay, so it will be easier to park in the winter. The new gully is allowing better drainage .  
Action: Mike P

- Horsetail has died down. Plot 76A has been sprayed and as agreed will be let rent-free for the next years. Two vacant plots, 149A & B, affected less badly, have been let. Japanese knotweed near east apiary has also died down and will be dealt with in the next growing season. *Action: William M*
- The skip is being changed next week and three volunteers are taking the tyres to the public dump.
- The waiting list is down to 150. Liz has two vacant plots on the whole site. Mike & Judith are clearing plots 11 & 12. Agreed that unauthorised WC in this corner will be demolished. *Action: Mike P*
- Rubbish in wooded margin near plot 143 and SP apiary. Would need draft letter for relevant plot holders before any clearance could be undertaken. *Action: Mike P & Liz B*

## 9. Consultation re. Structures

Maggie has prepared expansion of the questionnaire, which Mike has seen. Mike will comment and return to Maggie to re-issue in due course. The survey will not be undertaken until the lease is signed.

*Action: Mike P & Maggie J*

## 10. Toilet Provision

We have no toilet on the site (whilst Grange has two earth toilets). We have an informal arrangement with the Scout Centre to use their toilet occasionally. Maggie has consulted the Scout Centre Manager, who agrees to continued use of the toilets, as long as he is present on the site. But plot holders should not be leaving muddy footprints in the Scout Centre.

## 11. Health and Safety

- Mike and Judith have inspected boundaries today; there are no issues with the trees.
- Strimmer protocols – a book for signatures has been passed to Nelly T, who will liaise with John & Nigel.

## 12. Bee update

There has been a continued correspondence on this issue, including the following latest PM proposals to CDAS Committee. CDAS has asked for the Gunsite Committee's opinion.

- That CDAS sets up a cross-site beekeeping policy. The rules of CDAS give each site a large degree of autonomy and independence, which preclude overarching policies. Gunsite is currently the only site with a beekeeping policy (revision agreed Nov 2023). The other two sites each have only one beekeeper. Their chairs have advised Mike P that they accept that under the new lease, they will need their own policies but that they do not need anything as detailed as ours.
- That CDAS should have a policy statement covering beekeeping. We don't see the need for a policy statement of this nature. It would diminish the independence of the three sites.
- That there be independent hive counts with the beekeepers present. Gunsite Committee supports the proposal but notes that SP is registered with LBKA not Bromley. The count would be of colonies/occupied hives not empty boxes. It is likely that not all beekeepers will be available on the day agreed with the independent inspector and it would be unreasonable to expect the inspector to attend multiple visits. Judith P has already asked Nelly T to act as 'Beekeeper Representative' and participate in bi-annual hive counts.
- Regular minuted meetings with beekeepers. The Committee doesn't see the need for regular minuted meetings for the sake of it. However, Nelly would be invited to attend part of the committee meetings or submit a verbal or written report that would be recorded, as would the counts.

Mike P agreed to relay Committee's responses to CDAS.

Action: Mike P

The discussion moved on to PM's continued reference to allegations of sale of honey from Gunsite. Committee wishes to draw a line under allegations of past sale of honey and concentrate instead on agreeing a robust inspection regime that will satisfy CDAS, DE and all beekeepers. Following further discussion of PM's stance, William M left the meeting in protest – at which point the meeting ended.

### 13. Dates of next meetings

Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024 at the Hut, at 10.00 am

Saturday 6th July, at the Hut, at 10.00 am

Sunday 6th October, at the Hut, at 10.00 am

Sunday 17th November, at the Scout Hut, at 10.00 am for the AGM