



COTTONMILL AND NUNNERY ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

Minutes of the **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING** held on 3rd November 2020 by Zoom. All members had received the agenda, reports, accounts and proposed changes to the wording of the Constitution by email together with nominations for the vacant positions. Members were invited to comment so that they had an opportunity to be involved even if not attending the Zoom meeting.

1. **Apologies:** These were not recorded due to the unusual arrangements for this AGM.
2. Minutes of AGM held on 28th April 2019 were agreed by the meeting and will be placed on the members section of the CNAA website.

3. Chairman's Review of the Past Year and Forward Plans

The Chairman's overview had been circulated to all members in which he said that it had been a 'strange' year with the lockdown and disruption to everyone's pattern of life, thankfully our allotments have been our escape, our chance to retain some sense of normality. A strange year also for the weather patterns we've experienced, with periods of drought and periods of excessive rain, despite this, it's been generally a good gardening season, apart from the one blight on the year, pun fully intended, with the early season demise of our tomato crops!

Looking back at previous Chairman's reports reflecting on the CNAA's events, with comments on our Summer show, the Pumpkin festival, barbecue's, etc, so with the year we've had there's not a lot to report on! As for next year, it's difficult to present any plans and ideas, obviously we want to do all the 'normal' things, so let's hope for better times in the next year.

He provided an update to this at the Zoom meeting reporting on the Ver Improvement Project, which has gone very quiet and his efforts to speak with SADC have not been fruitful but he will continue to engage with SADC and is also working with the Ver Valley Society on these issues.

He showed a photo of one of the most severely flooded plots on Cottonmill and said that this was a combination of rising ground water, seepage through the river bank to the north of the site and the effects of blocked drains causing water to gather on Cottonmill Lane and then be washed onto the allotments by passing cars. So far, repeated efforts to get the road drains cleared have failed but Committee members will continue to press SADC and Herts County on this. The Chairman is looking into whether alternative plots for those most severely affected by flooding might be an option.

The Chairman thanked a number of people on behalf of CNAA for their work and support.

- Terry Beckett for a decade serving as Cottonmill Plot Officer
- Jane Fookes for many brilliant Newsletters. As we still don't have a Newsletter editor he also thanked Jim Standen for standing in to produce the next one, and he added if anyone thinks they could take this on then please get in touch.
- Terry Beckett for organising the compost delivery, and plot officers and others who turned out to receive it. And a huge thank you to Aylett's and in particular its chief driver John. With Covid restrictions Aylett's only have one person in a van and John offered to do all the sites on his own. A massive job and without his offer we would not have had the compost this year
- Terry Beckett for organising the Kings Seed order.
- Alison Shipperlee and Scott Bailey for scrutinising CNAA accounts.

4. Treasurer's Report

A copy of the accounts, signed off by Alison Shipperlee and Scott Bailey, were provided to members by email and circulated with the Treasurer's report which is included here for completeness. No comments were received by email.

The following summary highlights the major features of the annual accounts:-

CNAA's membership structure gave £1,100 (110 members)

Compost gave £1,663.60

Kings Seeds gave £733.00

Summer Show gave £81.90 (Entry Fees & Raffle)

Donations gave £22.05

Misc. gave £10.00

A total income of £3,610.55

CNAA's expenditure was:-

Royal Horticultural Society membership £35.00

National Allotment Society membership £360.00

Insurance £268.85

Compost £1,663.60

Kings Seeds £622.99 (early ordering & Discount)

Summer Show £56.75 (Raffle Prizes & Hire of the Sub Aqua Club)

Events £75.89 (Hire of the Sub Aqua Club & Expenses Pumpkin festival)

Stationary £11.99 (Filing Case for Paperwork)

Printing and Postage £10.02 (Postage Kings Seeds order, 12 x 2nd Class Stamps)

Misc. £240.92 (Hall Hire AGM, Website Renewal & Hosting, 100th Birthday Expenses & Membership Refund)

A total expenditure of £3,346.01

This gave us an Income over Expenditure of £264.54 Our Assets at the 31st March 2020 were £2,335.33

The accounts for 2020 were approved at the meeting.

One question was raised about the surplus carried forward and if there were plans to use this or if it was CNAAs practice to hold a surplus. Unfortunately Terry was unable to attend the meeting to answer questions but Alison Shipperlee, a former Chair of CNAAs, explained that it had accumulated over a few years in the absence of good projects to spend it on. This prompted several people attending the meeting to come forward with suggestions including replacing communal sheds if in poor condition, reserving for professional fees to challenge the Ver Project and compost. These will be discussed in more detail when the Committee holds its next meeting.

5. Election of Management Committee Members for 2020/2021

The Secretary explained that the Constitution allowed for Officers and Committee Members to remain in their role for three years and then they need to stand down and if they wish, to be nominated for re-election.

Vacant positions

Treasurer: Terry Beckett agreed to stand for re-election and was nominated by email.

Cottonmill Plot Officer: Margaret Harris was nominated for this position.

Sopwell Plot Officer: This is held as a joint role and Clare Norman and Jim Standen were duly nominated.

Newsletter Editor: no nominations received.

As there was only one nomination for each vacancy a block vote was agreed and the election of the above Committee Members proposed by Alison Shipperlee, seconded by Scott Bailey and agreed by a show of hands of those joining the meeting by Zoom.

We therefore welcome to the Committee Terry Beckett returning as Membership Secretary and Treasurer, Margaret Harris as Plot Officer for Cottonmill and Clare Norman jointly with Jim Standen as Plot Officers for the Sopwell Mill site.

6. Constitution

The proposed amendment to the Constitution, to include the following, was circulated to members and no comments received.

'Whilst CNAA will endeavour to provide informal advice in the event of disputes between plot holders, responsibility for adjudicating on such matters and determining appropriate action resides with the Local Authority as landlord.'

This was agreed and the revised version will be put on the Website.

7. AOB

Included under the Treasurer's report