

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE MEETING HELD IN THE COUNCIL
OFFICES, 44 OLD STREET, CLEVEDON, ON MONDAY, 15TH OCTOBER 2012
AT 7.30 pm.

Present: Cllr C Wring (Committee Chairman) Cllr J Middleton (Vice Chairman)
Cllrs A Giles-Townsend, L Knott, C Hall & B Hatch
Committee Clerk – S Howard
Tenants Reps: W Rowlinson (ML), P Cornock (CH), J Clark (VR), K
Santo (ML) & R Cheek (HA)

Tenants: 31

SPEAKER

Mark Perry, an allotment tenant from Moor Lane provided a very interesting talk and visual display of produce on how to enter garden shows and how to grow prize winning produce. There was plenty of interest from the attendees of the meeting and the Committee Chairman thanked Mark for the wonderful talk and actively encouraged fellow tenants to enter next year's Clevedon Flower Show. Further details of Mark's talk are attached to these minutes.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received and approved from Cllr P McNeill, A Stephens (CH), N Foster (CEM), and the tenants from ML11A, ML27, VR71, VR82B, WA94 & CH116.

MINUTES OF THE LAST ANNUAL TENANTS' MEETING

The minutes of the Annual Tenants meeting held on 10 October 2011 were approved by Cllr Hall and seconded by Cllr Knott and signed by the Chairman as correct.

COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Cllr Carole Wring, Chairman of the Allotments Committee welcomed tenants, visitors and Councillors to the meeting and a special welcome to the Speaker Mark Perry, for the evening.

Cllr Wring felt that over the past year, the committee has continued to address the maintenance of allotment sites, and continued the proactive approach to encourage tenants to keep gardens tidy. Cllr Wring wanted to record her thanks to the Councillor Site reps and Tenants' reps for their continued vigilance, care, and encouragement in monitoring each site, and their on-hands approach to preventing gardens becoming so untidy and causing problems. It goes without saying that we do not achieve a 100 per cent success rate, but this approach has certainly diminished the number of gardens that cause extreme problems.

Cllr Wring would also like to record her thanks to: Will Rowlinson and Keith Santo on Moor Lane, Pete Cornock and Andy Stephens on Church Hill, Neil Foster on Cemetery, Dee Holladay and John Clark on Victoria Road, Richard Cheek on Highdale Avenue, and Dave Beynon from Westbourne Avenue - Dave has recently retired as Tenant rep after many years. We must record thanks to Craig Owens for his valuable work in setting up and maintaining the Allotments Website – Craig has

now given up his garden on Cemetery as well as continued maintenance of the website.

The committee continue to endeavour to improve facilities year on year, as funding allows, and to review from time to time management issues and improve the way we do this. Suzanne Howard our Allotment Clerk has been incredibly helpful and innovative with this, and has played an important part in this role – without her hands-on approach and efficiency the committee's work would be so much more difficult – thank you Sue for everything you do. Cllr Wring also recorded her thanks to Paula Heath, Town Clerk, whose guidance and help has been so valuable, and Isabel Johnson, Deputy Town Clerk for all her willing help too.

We are all looking forward to a new allotment year, and of course hope for a kinder growing season too, having experienced drought for the first months of the year and then what seemed to be a permanent deluge this year!

REPORTS OF THE COUNCILLOR SITE REPRESENTATIVES

CHURCH HILL

Cllr Knott advised that it has been a terrible year on site and expressed that the South side of the site this year is not looking as good as the North side. There are paths that are very untidy and the grass around the sites needs cutting back too. Cllr Knott is looking forward to the installation of the new car park on the South side of the allotment site.

Cllr Alex Giles-Townsend introduced himself as the new Councillor Representative for Church Hill Allotments, working alongside Cllr Knott. He very much looks forward to being on site and meeting and talking with tenants.

HIGHDALE AVENUE & WESTBOURNE AVENUE

Cllr Hall is looking forward to being the new Councillor Representative for Highdale Avenue & Westbourne Avenue.

MOOR LANE

Cllr Middleton advised there are some gardens on site that are superb and others need the tenants to do some work in tidying their plots. Cllr Middleton asked for tenants to please do the work to keep the gardens maintained. The Committee is also actively working to replace the very heavy gate for two gates to make it much easier to gain access to the allotment gardens.

VICTORIA ROAD

Due to the absence of Cllr McNeill, there was no site report for Victoria Road.

CEMETERY

Cllr Hatch is the new Councillor Representative and since being elected onto the Committee, has donned her wellington boots and taken her umbrella and met with a very friendly, supportive community of allotment gardeners. The YMCA led by Neil Foster, also Tenant Representative, has been very helpful in assisting tenants on site and also helping to clear plots when tenants vacate. There is also a resident rabbit by the name of 'hot lips' that has a fond liking for the tenant's beetroot!

ALLOTMENT ADMINISTRATION

The Committee Clerk advised that there are two projects currently in operation. The first being the work to replace the noisy and difficult Moor Lane gate. Secondly there will be a car park installed on the South side of the Church Hill allotment site with the assistance of the Tenant Representatives.

ALLOTMENT WATCH

The Committee Clerk advised that there have only been a couple of incidents this last year which is good news. Unfortunately, we did have a report of a tenant on Moor Lane who had some produce stolen from their polytunnel. Also, another visit from some hungry birds to some gooseberries on the Church Hill allotment site. The Committee Clerk asked for tenants to please store their tools away or take them home if they hold any value. To also be vigilant on their own and neighbouring plots. If an incident occurs to please report this to the Police in the first instance to obtain a crime reference number and then report to the Council offices so that Tenant Representatives can be made aware and any action taken if necessary by the Committee.

TENANTS' BUSINESS

A Tenant from Westbourne Avenue asked why the second judging date had changed this year to July. The Committee Chairman advised that it was a Committee decision to change the date so that the judging could be done before any produce was picked. Unfortunately, due to the weather this meant that a lot of crops had not come on as well as they should but it is hoped that we will have a much better gardening year in 2013.

A Tenant from Cemetery site asked if anyone was interested in the item in the Allotment newsletter concerning if any tenant has a glut in produce that this could be given to Transition Clevedon who can make use of the produce by giving it away free to anyone who visits their stall at the Farmer's Market. A Tenant asked what Transition Clevedon does as a group and the Committee Chairman advised that Transition Clevedon is a group that are trying to reduce energy costs and energy consumption. They maintain the Millennium Orchard in Clevedon where anyone can go and join in the activities they have planned.

A Tenant from Moor Lane asked why some plots grow a lot of produce and do not harvest it and that the tenant should be asked to terminate their garden as they are not using it effectively as it is such a waste of food. The Committee Chairman agreed with the tenant in that it is not good to see food going to waste, but that it was difficult to ask the tenant to leave when they are maintaining and cultivating the plot.

A Tenant from Cemetery site feels that the number of high rise cages on the site is making the site look unsightly. The Committee Chairman agreed that the cages can look a bit unsightly, but as long as the construction is safe, i.e. no protruding poles, then the cages are there for a purpose, i.e. to keep the wildlife out, especially the badgers.

The Tenant from Cemetery site asked if there would be a cull on the wildlife. The Committee Chairman advised that we are not looking to do this. Our efforts to keep the wildlife out have been the addition of wire fencing on the bottom of the entrance

gate, but unfortunately, it appears that this has had the opposite effect and trapped some wildlife onto the site.

A Tenant from Moor Lane site asked if anything could be done about the flooding that is occurring on the car park near to their plot, number ML57. The Vice Chairman of the Committee advised that the water table is very high around this area and we are also within a flood plain area. It may be that bore holes could be made to see if this could assist with drainage.

Action – Agenda item for next Allotment Committee Meeting

BEST GARDEN AWARDS 2012

The Chairman of the Council, Cllr Jon Middleton presented the Best Garden awards; a list of winners is attached to these minutes. A special award was also presented to a tenant on Moor Lane who has continued with their allotment garden even though they were nursing a broken collar bone. A photograph was taken of the prize winners to be included in the next Council Newsletter in the local paper.

The Committee Chairman thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN.....

Meeting finished at 9.15pm.

DATE:

CLEVEDON TOWN COUNCIL - ANNUAL ALLOTMENT TENANTS' MEETING
15 OCTOBER 2012

BEST GARDEN AWARDS 2012

ORDER OF PRESENTATION

COMMEMORATIVE COASTERS

FOR LAST YEARS' WINNERS, REPLACING THE CUPS THEY HAVE RETURNED

1 ST	Mr A Stephens	(CH128)
2 ND	Mrs C Price	(CEM155)
3 RD	Mr Baker	(WA89)

COMMENDED AWARDS: (Voucher)

Miss Williams	(ML28)
Mr & Mrs Pearce	(ML57)
Mr Proud	(WA94)
Mrs Price	(CEM155)
Ms Daniels	(CEM154)

HIGHLY COMMENDED AWARDS: (Rosette & Voucher)

Mr Beynon (WA96)

BEST GARDEN ON SITE: (Rosettes & Voucher)

Mr C Hodges	(ML27)
Mr Bailey	(HA62)
Mr & Mrs Jermain	(WA97)
Mr Wait	(CH112)
Mr Foster	(CEM158)

SPECIAL AWARD: Gift only

Mrs S Elliott (ML37)

OVERALL WINNERS: (Cup/Rosette & Voucher)

THIRD PRIZE: Mr Clark (VR83)

SECOND PRIZE: Mr Bigwood (VR82B)

FIRST PRIZE: Mr & Mrs Pain (ML13)

Minutes taken from Mark Perry's talk on – From seed to First Prize

Mark advised that he has been a tenant on the Moor Lane Allotment site for the last 17 years. He actively enters shows and provided the tenants at the meeting an insight as to how he grows and shows his produce.

Mark grows crops such as carrots and parsnips in plastic drums. The base is cut off and they are about 4foot high. The mixture in the drums is both sand and soil and he sows the seeds in late February/early March.

The schedules for shows are usually available in the Spring, so this allows you to make time to plan what you want to grow and when it needs to be ready. You are either a chancer or a planner, i.e. you can either chance when you plant your seeds or you can plan ahead.

When you have your show date, work back in your diary when you need the produce to be ready and use this as your sowing day.

There are five points to be sure of.

1. Always read the schedule.
2. See Point 1! Check and check again what the schedule asks you to do, i.e. check nos. of produce, do they want four runner beans or five, colour of the potatoes etc.
3. Take your time with the harvesting. Keep lots of the tap root on carrots etc. Never pick runner beans – cut them and use a junior hacksaw to cut cauliflowers from the ground!
4. Wash and clean your vegetables.
5. At the show, stage for effect. Lay it out well. 'Show the produce off', neat rows, all facing the same way. If you are not sure of anything, then ask for help at the show.

The Judges of each show mark your produce on a points system. There are a maximum number of points for difficult to grow crops, i.e. carrots, potatoes. Easier crops score lower points. Judges score on condition, uniformity, size, shape and colour. Condition awards top marks.

Why would you want to show? There are no top prizes, i.e. fast cars, but it's the reward you get when you obtain a red card which is first prize, to know that you are the best in town, area etc. Sometimes there are small monetary awards.

Seed varieties – the seed varieties that Mark uses are – Medwins, Select Seeds and Thompson & Morgan.

Show dates and seeds that Mark uses are available from Mark if interested. Please contact the office for contact details for Mark.

Also useful to be a member of the National Vegetable Society as this provides you with a quarterly magazine and lots of information.

Mark has gained friends all over the country through entering shows.

Enter the Novice classes first and move your way up the classes. It's a great way to be part of the community activities and it's a great way of growing better produce, that you can still get to the eat after showing your produce.