

# St Thomas Allotment Association



## approved MINUTES

### COMMITTEE MEETING 1 : Tues Feb 5th 2019

(open meeting)

7.30pm @Royal Oak, Okehampton Rd. Exeter

#### 1. Attendance

🍏 **Committee** [quorum pres.] **Officers:** Rex Harris (Chair) | Fiona Keevil (Treas.) | David Solman (Sec.) | Gerald Tallamy (TradingMngr. & Local Allotment Mngr., Hylton) ; **Local Allotment Managers:** Sue Therrian (Pinces) | Rob Shields (Rackfields) | Tim Snell (Newman Rd.) | Paul Riggs (Ashwood Rd.) | Richard Brownbridge (Local Allotment Mngr., Clapperbrook) **Local Allotment Officers/Reps:** | Ron Blakey (Cowick Lane) | Rob Harding (Ide Lane)

🍏 **Committee Apologies:** Ruth O'Neale (Web & Data Mngr.) | Rodney Lascelles-Smith (Local Allotment Officer/Rep., Guys)

🍏 **Ex-officio attendees (non-voting):** Paul Tregoning (Lead Vol., L&I, Guys) | Sam Snell (Sec. Newman Rd.)

🍏 **Officer's Invitees (non-voting):** Angela R., Regent St Allotments (*status tba during mtg.*) | John Butler, Cowick La. Allotments (*status tba during mtg.*) | Alison Walker (*status tba during mtg.*)

2-3. **Previous Minutes & Matters Arising.** The cttee. agreed to RH signing the minutes as drafted. The Sec. updated members. On our first approach to ECC their officer had declined to pay towards the additional cost of insurance for Let & Inspect officers. However, the cost of cover for L&I officers has been significantly reduced by moving to a new insurer.

#### 4. Start of Year Confirmations/Documentation

**Confirmation of Cttee. Members & email addresses for 2019** *Noted. Members of the cttee. signed the circulated list, confirming an accurate opt-in record for communications.*

**Confirmation (enumeration) of STAA allotments** *Agreed. The Chair moved to a vote and the committee agreed to recognise Regent St. Allotments as a separate site.*

**Confirmation of Co-options for 2019** *Agreed. The Chair moved to a vote and the cttee. agreed co-option of Ruth O'N (as Data&Web\_Mngr.) and Angela R (as Local Allotment Manager for Regent St. Allotments); both for a year (until the close of cttee. mtg.1, 2020).*

**Confirmation of Let&Inspect Officers for 2019** The Sec. circulated a paper enabling members to (i) confirm Committee Level L&I Officers; & (ii) confirm Volunteer Level L&I Officers. The Secretary amended the circulated draft by hand on members' instructions (by addition of Sam S. to assist Tim S. with L&I at Newman Rd.; Don Hayes to continue as Lead L&I Officer for Rob Harding at Ide Lane; recognition of 'Regent St.' as a separate site; & addition to Pinces L&I for Sue Therrian of Trevor Starling- role to be further defined).

**Deferred (action: all):** *Members to send Sec. any further updates before approval & signature at next cttee. mtg.*

**Confirmation of Vacancies (incl. co-option vacancies).** *Agreed: The Chair moved to a vote; vacancies confirmed for: (i) Vice-chair ; (ii) a Local Allotment Rep. or Manager for Cowick Lane; (iii) a Publicity & Events Officer.*

**Confirmation of constitution as per website** - The Secretary asked committee members to ensure they disclose any variants they hold and pass these to the Sec. prior to the next cttee. mtg. since it is proposed they all then formally sign the published version of the constitution, to validate it. This is the version they have consistently made available to members, since some time before the current Secretary's appointment. Tim S. explained he had a version with an eighteenth point added; whilst he believed a committee had approved this, he did not think it was signed & dated with the approval of an AGM.

*Deferred (action all). All cttee. members to submit any variant constitutions to the Sec. by next cttee. mtg.*

**Confirmation of Data Protection Policy as published on the website** *Deferral (action all): STAA's Data Protection Policy to remain on website for consultation; all cttee members to contribute any final amendments before the next cttee. mtg.*

## **5. Outstanding/Pending Actions**

- 5.1 **Membership Lists.** The Secretary updated members about preparation of updated membership lists for each local allotment site. The Sec. had previously been advised by more long-serving cttee. members that plot-holders' have, in recent years, been granted complementary memberships. Rackfields' membership records had now been passed to the Secretary and he had checked these against data provided by ECC; they were complete & up-to-date. However, not all site reps have provided their local site membership records (in whatever form/state they are being kept) to the Secretary - so not all sites can yet be certified as holding correct records of the association's membership.

The Secretary explained that under the Data Protection Act and the association's Data Protection Policy (DPP), the understanding of both he and the association's Data Mngr. has been to regard the membership lists of constituent allotment sites as recording 'inactive members' until such time as the members 'opt-in' to the association's membership services and communications. The Secretary expects shortly to circulate a draft letter for L&I Officers to hand-out to new tenants, to provide them with information about association services incl. Trading Sheds and asking them to opt-in to active association membership.

Ron B explained that Cowick La. had been able to go through ECC when it needed to contact plot-holders about L&I matters; he could offer no direct knowledge, as yet, about the association's membership contact list at Cowick La. Tim S asked about the legality of him sharing local membership data (plot-holder data) for Newman Rd. allotments, with officers of the association. He was advised by the Secretary that Newman Rd. is bound by the same data protection policy as other sites; local membership data (plot-holder data) is not personal to a site rep but belongs to the association and goes to the the two officers (Secretary & Data Manager) who are named for data protection purposes in the association's Data Protection Policy.

*Resolved (action Site Reps): Tim S (and any other Site Reps on the Cttee. who have not so far completed the task) to send the Secretary and/or Data Manager their local membership lists (plot-holder data) by end Feb. (pls re-read the association's Data Protection Policy to understand the protections this affords consistent with the Data Protection Act).*

- 5.2 **Lists of Volunteers.** The Secretary had bought a draft list of volunteers. It was amended during circulation between cttee. members. *Deferred (action all): Cttee. members to pass to the Sec. any further additions e.g. vols at Trading Sheds) by next cttee. mtg.*
6. **Polytunnel (prices/estimates)** The Trading Manager updated members about his research into poly-tunnel repair contractors, which had led to him identifying a supplier from Tiverton who would complete the repair works, probably in March, for £3,260 inc VAT, supply and fixing. The committee asked technical and financial questions. *Agreed (action Gerald T). The Chair moved to a vote and the cttee. agreed that the Trading Manager proceed with the works on the basis of his quote.*
7. **L&I /Plot Issues.** Sue T asked for this item to be deferred. *Deferred (action - Sue T).*
8. **Update on TradingSheds/stock** The Trading Manager gave an update on stock and the opening times for the Trading Sheds. A draft poster showing stock and opening times was circulated. *Noted (action: Sec.) The Sec. to add Trading Shed details to the website and circulate the poster.*
9. **Update on finance & annual show** Fiona updated members on financial matters & the annual show. She would cover the Annual Show in more detail at the next Committee Meeting; so would concentrate today on finance. Sales income currently stood at £1,307 pa. Whilst Fiona had previously absorbed the cost of maintaining the association's accounts on her own business' Sage software, she proposed moving it to an account belonging to the association at Quickbooks (c.£3.50pcm /2yr contract). *Agreed (action: Fiona). The Chair called the matter to a vote; it was agreed to move the association's accounts to Quickbooks. Noted (action: all). Fiona ned help with the Annual Show - please encourage more volunteers !*
10. **Insurance.** The Secretary outlined the improved insurance the association now has in place. It incorporates Employers Liability cover to insure members carrying out unpaid work (e.g. the association's Let & Inspect volunteers); Trustee Indemnity cover is also provided. The cttee. requested these additional insurances to help attract committee members and volunteers (e.g. for L&I). *Resolved (action: Sec. & Rob H): The Secretary to pass a full copy of this year's insurance to Rob H. to assist the cttee. in gaining understanding of the new insurance and future options. Noted (action all). Cttee. members to remember to explain the new insurance benefits to volunteers and potential volunteers.*

The association would be in a better position to obtain competitive quotes for such insurance and be in a stronger position in the event of a claim, were it to follow best practice (i.e. be able to tell insurers how many volunteers it has, what they do, and how they are managed).

Typically, this would need three documents:

- (i) updated Role Descriptions for committee members;
- (ii) signed/dated Volunteer Agreements between committee members & Lead Volunteers working for them; &
- (iii) a document for other (subsidiary) volunteers to read & accept, based on model Ts&Cs.

*Agreed: The chair moved to a vote; it was agreed that these 3 papers be consulted upon by members & via the website, prior to being adopted at a future cttee. mtg.*

*Noted. In the draft Volunteer Agreement, Angela R recommended we re-word para 4 such that volunteers should seek clarification, rather than step-down, if they are unclear who their Cttee Level Link Officer is.*

11. **New Website** The Sec. updated members about the change-over from the old website to the new one, coupled with the start of building up fresh design & content. The cttee. was asked to contribute ideas/material to Ruth and/or the Sec. and thanked Ruth for leading the process so well. Ruth had suggested the assn. may like a website opening event as soon as it looks sufficiently developed *Noted: This will likely be one of the topics on the agenda at the next committee meeting in April.*
12. **Updates/decisions on Vacancies** The Sec. drew attention to the vacancies on the committee (Cowick Local Allotment Officer/Rep | Vice-chair | Publicity & Events Officer). Ron B introduced John Butler as a potential new rep. for Cowick; Gerald T introduced Alison Walker (from Guys & Hylton allotments) as a potential Vice-chair. ***Agreed (action John B., Ron B., & Alison W.): The chair moved to a vote; it was agreed Ron B & John B. liaise re. handover and/or role-sharing and report their agreement back to the cttee.; also that Alison W. be nominated for Vice-chair, be invited to the next mtg. & to notify the Sec. if deciding to accept the post before that mtg.***
13. **Notice-boards** Angela R asked how she should go about requesting a notice-board. Tim S & Ron B recalled one had been made & stored in the Trading Shed, Cowick Lane; though had not been seen for some time. The Sec. explained he would welcome a discussion with each Allotment Rep. on how well they thought their notice-boards were working (sites rely to a great extent on notice-boards for comms. with members). Use/maintenance of boards would likely form part of the discussion of 'publicity & events' at next cttee. meeting. ***Agreed: (action Angela R & Ron B): Angela R and Ron B to liaise to locate the notice-board for Regent's St. allotments.***  
*Noted. Any Site Reps who have still to send notice-board photos to the Sec. to do so in good time for the next mtg*
14. **Forward Plan** The Sec. outlined a plan for this year's committee meetings; the Chair brought this to a vote and it was agreed.  
***Agreed: mtg 1 (Feb.) Priority for Governance Confirmations etc.  
mtg 2 (Apr.) Priority for Planning of Publicity, Events, & Comms  
mtg 3 (June) Priority for Updating of Governance  
mtg 4 (Aug.) Priority for Planning/Prep for AGM  
mtg 5 (Sept.) General Purpose mtg  
mtg 6 Oct. Priority for Finalising any Outstanding Business of the Year.***
15. **AoB (or deferrals of B/AoB)** Tim S reported mtg Newman Rd plot-holders /the National Allotment Assn. at the Town Hall & that though the mtg. had had no agenda/reports it had been a constructive discussion.
16. **DoNM: STAA Cttee Mtg 2 (open meeting prioritising Publicity&Events): Tues. 2nd April 7.30pm @Royal Oak, Okehampton Rd. | Next Year's STAA Show : 27th July 2019 @ St Thomas' Hall | ECC Allotments Forum : 4th April 2019, 7pm Civic Centre**

**David Solman, Secretary @ staacommittee@yahoo.com**

Cttee. signed: *R. Harris* ..... *Chairman* ..  
dated: *2/4/19* .....