

## St Thomas Allotments Association Committee Meeting 20<sup>th</sup> August 2024 at The British Legion Club, Legion Way, Alphington.

**1: Present:** John Butler, Becky Wells, Richard Brownbridge, Ron Blakey, Andy Harris, Rob Shields, Andy Gordon, Chris Webb, Claire Richards, Bev Spragg, Moira Casey, Paul Collier, Bill Turner, Rosemary Brooks.  
**Apologies:** Jim Clark, Ed Noonan, Jonny Tooze.

**2: The Minutes** of the meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2024 were approved and signed.

**3:** there were no **Matters Arising**

**4:** Paul presented the **Treasurer's Report**, the receipts and payments October 2023 – end of July 2024 and the Accountants' Income and Expenditure Report for the year 2022-23. These were accepted and would be presented at the AGM.

**5: Trading Sheds Report:** Ron said that Guys & Hyltons were struggling to find people to help unload a delivery and the shed there may have to close mid-week when there were few customers. Ron would be standing down at the end of the year.

**6:** Rose gave the **Poly-tunnel Update**. The rents would be collected at the same time as the other invoices go out. There was some rubbish dumped at the back.

**7:** Chris and Claire reviewed the **Annual Show**, saying that, although there had been fewer entries, the Judges had been impressed by the standard of produce. Next year, the Show would take place within the school term to encourage children to enter. Claire would be resigning from the Committee but would continue as Show deputy.

Moira outlined the **Rainwater-harvesting Initiative**, an attempt to reduce mains water use and therefore the water bill. She had applied for £1000 from SWW for rainwater butts for Cowick Lane and would hear the result in mid-September. Andy H said that it was important to let ECC know that delaying the repairs to leaking water tanks, therefore wasting water, was unacceptable.

Becky outlined a **proposal to boost biodiversity** on STAA sites in order to support, especially, pollinating insects. Devon Wildlife Trust had offered to help and funding would be applied for. The initiative was endorsed by the Committee and would be presented at the AGM with a vote taken there on a clause added to the Constitution.

**8:Site Updates:** The trading shed at **Ashwood Road** will close due to lack of custom. Deer have been seen on **Clapperbrook** site and the Portaloo had still not been cleaned. The bamboo, sprayed by ECC, is re-growing. **Cowick** was fine. At **Guys and Hyltons** there had been some petty theft and there is some confusion about Plot-check reports reaching ECC. \*Becky would investigate. **Ide Lane** has no Rep but Richard will look after it in the meantime. Bill will do the same for **Newman Road** who has no Rep. **Pinces 1** is having an Apple Day. **Pinces 2** has no Rep. **Rackfields** thanked STAA for their new mower.

**9: The Agenda for the AGM** was discussed and the Reports required were listed. In John Butler's absence, the meeting would be chaired by Bill Turner.

**10: AOB:** John gave the Allotments Forum update saying that ECC would produce a maintenance plan within 12 months. As STAA is an Association, it was agreed at the Forum that ECC (Cat & Nick) will meet with STAA representatives to discuss ways to collaborate further, including paying for the maintenance of unlet plots. Becky commented on the Allotment Lease-Holder Consultation Outcome. Although the increases were to go ahead, thanks to the lobbying efforts of STAA, amongst others, the effects had been softened.  
Date of next meeting; TBC but in early December