

Minutes of 2014 Annual General Meeting At Hugh Miller Institute, Cromarty, on Thursday 1st October 2015 at 6.30 pm.

1. Apologies for absence: Maggie Dove, Elaine Hodgson and Steve Elwood

2. Minutes of 2014 AGM: proposed by John Wood, seconded by Barbel Dister

3. Reports:

A. Chair - summary of years progress

B. Secretary - summary of years communications and memberships

Membership: has fluctuated a little, but we end the year with several new members, and the taking-over of several plots by new members from three plot-holders leaving.

Communications: In this main this has focussed on problems of neglected plots, and for the first time the warning process as outlined in the allotment rules has had to be enforced. This appears to have been effective in encouraging the tidying of specific problem plots.

C. Treasurer - summary of financial status: Balance c£257.86. Main costs due: refund of shd wasp destruction fee of £50 due to Barbel Dister; refund of wen domain fee of £18 due to Colin Dunn

Treasurer highlighted longstanding issue of Co-op Bank service and problems of online banking access. Proposed once accounts finally up to date (shortly) that bank account moved to TSB. Agreed unanimously.

4. Membership Subscription Rate 2015-16 to remain at £5 still. Plot fees to be increased to £15 half-plot and £30 full-plot per annum to enable flexibility for unexpected costs such as the wasp infestation this year.

5. Proposed amendments to rules - summary of proposed changes

- Dogs: plot-holders dogs to be confined to plot-holders pots. Visitors must keep dogs on leads, and ensure clean-up of dog waste (Notices on gates to be updated to reflect this)
- Locking of gates: unnecessary and section should be deleted.
- Non members enter at their own risk (and delete reference to non members having to be accompanied by members)

- weeds: remove species and leave simply as pernicious weeds.
- health and safety: add that removal of dangerous pests or hazards on plots (i.e wasps) is responsibility of the plot holder.
- Manure: delete section about delivery of communal manure
- Wheelbarrows: delete reference to communal wheelbarrows Drop the communal wheelbarrows.
- Change so that signing of riles by plot-holders not required each year, just when they get a plot

These changes to be updated in new rules by the Secretary and circulated to the committee for final vetting.

6. Management Committee - election of Chair, Secretary & Treasurer

Current officers Chair: Barbel Dister, Secretary: Colin Dunn, Treasurer: John Keiller. All are standing down. Thanks tendered by members for their service. Colin Dunn and Barbel Dister proposed Marjorie Paterson for Chair, Steve Elwood for Secretary, and John Keiller for Treasurer. Unanimously agreed.

7. Date time and venue of next AGM: Hugh Miller Institute on Thursday 22nd September at 6.30pm. (It was noted that Estelle Quick at the Post Office is now responsible for the key and booking of the HMI meeting room. Marjorie Paterson as new chair will organise booking and key collection.)

8. Any other AGM business: none.

Cromarty Allotments and Gardens Society

Agenda of Normal bi-monthly Meeting - October 1st 2015

1. Apologies for absence: Maggie Dove, Elaine Hodgson and Steve Elwood

2. Minutes of last meeting: proposed by Barbel Dister, seconded by John Wood.

3. Membership: one new member - Sheila Currie (added to waiting list for a plot)

4. Allotments:

- Old Tennis Courts: Plots being vacated by Craig Fraser, Martin Gostwick and Ewan Garratt have been assigned to new members - Steve Elwood, Alistair Grieve and Bob McLean.

As per the rules, second warnings were issued to the holders of neglected plots previously noted, giving the holders a further 14 days to provide evidence of genuine commitment to managing and using their plots. Although some clearing work has been done on all neglected plots, and two fruit trees added to one of them, the feeling was that these plots are still not being used productively. It was decided that they should be monitored over the next month by the Chair and Secretary and, if necessary, further warnings should then be issued. It was agreed that the Secretary should also issue a general reminder to all plot-holders that they must ensure that their plot and adjacent communal paths are kept in good order.

Wasp Nest: Brian Lowe was notified that there was a very active wasp's nest in the wooden compost bin on his plot near the entrance gate. It was suggested that he should consider having this destroyed as it was a hazard to plot-holders who suffer from wasp sting allergy. Two plot-holders who are allergic to wasp stings have now requested that, as the problem continues and makes using the main entrance problematic, prompt destruction of the nest should be organised by the plot-holder. Secretary to write to Brian Lowe accordingly.

5. Forsyth House Beds: as discussed, a temporary sign has been affixed to the railings of Forsyth House outlining the bed project and highlighting the fact that fruit is for community consumption. Feedback has been positive. Anne Fraser at Forsyth House is amenable to a more permanent sign if this is desirable. The beds will require their usual clean-up at the end of October, and the Secretary should contact all members to invite volunteers to undertake this on a suitable Sunday afternoon.

6. Courthouse Orchard: due for scything by Colin Dunn in the next 2-3 weeks depending on weather. It was agreed that the Spring?Autumn mowings are proving successful in encouraging the display of meadow flowers and plants in the Summer. Sheila Currie and John Wood have planted a Bramley Seedling apple tree in the west corner of the orchard, and it was agreed that this should be a valuable addition. It was noted that the plum tree has suffered several snapped branches due to an over-abundant crop this year, and Colin Dunn will prune as necessary. It was suggested that thinning of the plum crop in fecund years may be necessary to prevent further damage.

7. Date, time and venue for next meeting: Hugh Miller Institute on Thursday 3rd December at 7.00pm. (It was noted that Estelle Quick at the Post Office is now responsible for the key and booking of the HMI meeting room. Marjorie Paterson as new chair will organise booking and key collection, and the switching on of heating 30-60 minutes before the meeting if necessary.)

8. Any other business: Town fruit trees - it was agreed that efforts should be made by the society to plant more fruit trees at appropriate locations throughout the town.