

**MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN REGION ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
28th January 2017, 2pm held at Belmont Working Men's Club**

Present: Vince Scott (chair), John Monkhouse (treasurer), Evelyn Leck, Neil Storey, Tommy Wood, David Banks (Regional Rep), Karen Minter (DCC Allotment Team), John Doherty, E Wheeldon, Derek Lindsay, P Wattam, D Horley, J Croker, A Bell, J Barker, C Taylor, C Fennelly, F Ramshaw, D Jarman, G Wood, W Bellamy, Kay Wilson, Terry Taylor, Michael Brown, Irene Brown, Joan Russell, Tony Williamson, Colin Hemingway, Tommy Shaw, A Clark, M Ellison, John Hayes.

1. Welcome from the Chair

A welcome was extended to all present especially to the newcomers:
Eddie Wheeldon and Joyce Barker from South View, Newfield
Christine Taylor West Bedlington T.C.

2. Apologies Richard Burton, Colin Smith, Colin Campbell, Red House farm Allotments, John Outhwaite

3. Minutes These had been circulated and were taken as read.

4. Matters Arising The dispute with the NAS were raised and will be dealt with later.
Moved that the minutes be accepted; Neil Storey: Seconded, Charlie Fennelly – passed.

5. Adoption of Minutes Moved that the minutes be adopted. Passed

6. Chairman's Report On the positive side our regular meetings have continued and we have run two outings to the Harrogate Flower Show plus the 'Basic Principles of Rodent Control' course. Disappointments have included the continuing dispute with the NAS and David Banks still not being accepted as Regional Representative. The procedure followed at their AGM last June to gain acceptance of the new rules was 'shocking and disgusting'. We received our rebates very late in May, which showed lamentable administration as they might reasonably be expected in February. Also, we were sorry to note the resignation of Elizabeth Allnutt as ADI Mentor.

7. Secretary's Report Due to the absence of the Secretary there was no report.

8. Financial Report Copies of the balance sheet had been made available to those attending. This past year's expenditure does include some 'one off costs' not likely to be repeated; setting up the website and IT expenditure. David Banks has been visiting a lot of sites and this creates an impression of caring. He is especially good at constitutions and advising on legal issues to do with achieving self-management. The money has been well spent and those members going on the trip to Harrogate have got their subs back. The rebate does depend on us spending the money we get back, currently 30p per associate member and £3.00 per individual member. Joan Russell queried why the balance sheet did not have an actual balance. This was explained because money had been carried forward from last year. Motion that the accounts be accepted.; proposed Neil Storey, seconded John Hayes. Passed

9. Appointment of an Independent Examiner John Gordon-Clark has been appointed as in previous years. The meeting accepted this.

10. Appointment of Officers

Chair Evelyn Leck Proposed John Hayes, seconded John Doherty, passed

Secretary John Doherty spoke against the re-appointment of Colin Smith on the grounds that he has not been doing the job properly. No minutes of meetings, no agendas or notice of meetings circulated. The meeting accepted this. As there was no other member prepared to stand the post was left vacant.

Treasurer John Monkhouse to be re-appointed Proposed John Hayes, seconded Neil Storey, passed.

John Doherty will do minutes secretary with Karen Minter as standby if he is not present.

Committee Neil Storey, Vince Scott and Tommy Wood All accepted nem con.

11. Regional Rep's report

David reported the following statistics:

Helped over 40 allotment sites/members on disputes, constitutions, rules, devolvement etc.

Consulted and advised 6 local councils, two of which were regarding Section 8 disposals.

Managed the Web Site.

Started the NRAA Blog.

David announced the first association to use our web site to host their own allotment web site, this was Northfield Allotments in South Shields, see <http://northfield.nraaonline.org.uk>

11. NSALG and the Northern Region.

Annual General Meeting June 2016 was attended by several of our members including David Banks, Colin Smith, John Monkhouse and Vince Scott. David and Colin were able to speak to the Standing Orders Committee prior to the meeting. At the meeting they were handed the response to the 182 changes the Region had recommended to the Rules, this response should have been sent back to the Region in March. The Chairman had over a hundred card votes in his pocket so he did not give the meeting any opportunity to discuss the rule changes, which in our view had many flaws. David had 32 card votes from our region plus 8 other members' votes against the acceptance of the rules. Tony Williamson commented that in the past he thought our region used to send in many more than that.

Regional Rules NSALG wants to impose their rules on the regions.

The situation with NSALG and David Banks. David is still suspended from attending the national management committee allegedly for not being a member when he attended his first meeting. Despite joining within 90 days (in compliance with NSALG Rules) David was still excluded.

Tony Williamson asked whether we as the Northern Region are affiliated to the NSALG. Yes, we are.

John Monkhouse stated that in his view we ought to stick with the NSALG in the hope they might improve.

Colin Smith was acceptable to NSALG as a substitute attendee at national meetings but has only attended one meeting.

No one else from the meeting expressed any interest in going to the national meetings.

12. Changes to NRAA Constitution David explained that as it is now 2 years since the constitution was adopted we now need to make a few simple changes. Mostly were a 'tidy-up' but the main changes were:

The Region; Borough, Town and Parish councils were included in the area.

Clause added to show we can participate in events, shows etc.

The post of Events Organiser added to the committee.

The reason for calling an EGM was defined more clearly

After some discussion it was moved that non-NSALG sites and members be asked to join NRAA at the same rate as the rebate we get. That would be 30p per site tenant and £3.00 for individual. Proposed Neil Storey, seconded John Doherty passed. 1 abstained.

13. Appointment of a new ADI Mentor We understand that Mike Brannigan has been appointed ADI Mentor by NSALG. Mike will be known to many in the region through his work on allotments in N. Tyneside. Despite the lack of a courtesy by the NSALG in not informing us of this we welcome Mike joining us in the region and hope that with his vast knowledge of allotment matters he and David will be able to work together to support allotments even better in the region.

Date of next AGM Saturday 27th January 2018

End of AGM