

# Northern Region Allotments Association

## MINUTES OF THE NORTHERN REGION ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION 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.

**These minutes are from the Quarterly Forum part of the Annual General Meeting.**

### 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

Award to Langley Park Langley Park received the congratulations of the meeting for having received 'European Community Garden' award.

### Members' Forum

Colin Hemingway (Roddymoor Allotments, one of 4 sites owned by NSALG). Despite working very hard to make improvements to the site which was a mess in 2012 and gaining £40,000 in grants, Colin has been ostracised by the committee and threatened. The present committee are not managing the site in a correct way and a crisis meeting was called. The chair of NSALG offered little help and less useful advice and did not attend the meeting leaving Colin Smith to attend. He was excluded. The Head Office of NSALG has made no satisfactory reply to Colin's request for help and advice.

Joan Russell offered to Colin the sympathy felt by the meeting.

Tony Williamson stated that "if members don't understand how a committee works then they are in trouble".

Tommy Wood stated that NSALG have not had a meeting with government since 1998 and have done nothing to protect allotments. Vince Scott said that Scottish Allotments have achieved great things working with the Scottish Government to improve provision and security of tenure of allotments.

John Hayes Burn Valley Hartlepool drew attention of the meeting to Hartlepool's intention to triple rents from April 1st with no on-going dialogue or consultation. This raised some comments from the meeting including looking at the quality of service that you get for your money. If the NRAA was stronger then we could challenge this. Make sure that you find out what you get for your money. Tommy Shaw from Clydesdale site in Spennymoor have achieved self-management and get the site rent free from Spennymoor Town Council. Christine Taylor, councillor from Bedlington said what an advantage it is to a council if sites will self-manage but they have to be professional about it. Her sites have just been granted a 99-year lease.

The Northern Region Allotments Association aims to represent all Allotment and Leisure Gardeners in the North of England.

Web site: [www.nraaonline.org.uk](http://www.nraaonline.org.uk) Contact the Secretary at: [secretary@nraaonline.org.uk](mailto:secretary@nraaonline.org.uk) 0793 413 5470

Contact the Regional Representative at: [regrep@nraaonline.org.uk](mailto:regrep@nraaonline.org.uk) 0793 291 5768

The Northern Region Allotments Association is affiliated to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners.

Bird flu: An outbreak has occurred in the region and precautions are in force. More information from DEFRA.

Tommy Wood (Mulberry Allotments Felling) Northumbrian Water will check for leaks and help find any for up to 16 hours free of charge. Recently they found a leak on Mulberry site in half an hour, which had completely baffled the tenants for ages.

John Doherty advertised the trip to the Harrogate Spring Flower Show. April 23rd, Sunday, details soon.

**AOB:** Evelyn Leck passed around cards giving details of Northern Grid's provision for those who need electricity for medical or health reasons. You have to register with them but in the event of a power cut they will somehow make sure you are not without electricity.

**Date of Next Meeting**

**Saturday 22nd April, 2pm at Belmont Working Men's' Club.**