



AGM Minutes 14th March 2023

1. **Chair** welcomed everyone and went through agenda. Thanks everyone for their help with volunteering and especially Helen for all her efforts with the site. Thanks to Good Gym for all their hard work in clearing away lots of the rubbish. They also burned lots of brambles on two occasions. Rob has asked for more volunteers to help out with site initiatives going forward. Carriage decking has been cleaned and washed off. **Paul** has recently fitted a new kitchen. There is still work needed to replace the felt on the roof.
2. **Treasurer** reported decent financial position, with £3200 in the bank and a further £1000 to come from Benenden Health as part of their community fund. Money has been spent on orchard with plenty still in the bank to allocate for our future plans. Excess funds mean there will be no need to take fees for membership/discounts cards. Sarah thanked all the people who have volunteered their time. This has really helped in keeping costs to a minimum. A question was raised asking if HAA and the Orchard have separate bank accounts. Sarah advised they are the same.
3. A question was raised about the ongoing anti-social behaviour. **Chair** advised we need to make sure the gate is locked after entering and leaving. **Chair** advised he has asked police about the issue and has been advised not to confront them and to report any instances to them. The council have been informed about damage to the new orchard. We keep repairing the work when damaged but there is a potential for more instances during school holidays.
4. A question was raised on how we will manage anti-social behaviour in the orchard, as it's a community venue? **Site Sec** said that the hope is that as it is a nice space people will respect it. **Chair** advised orchard is patrolled by the community police and Calum Taylor (councillor) has offered to visit the Millthorpe school should it persist and address them directly. **Site Sec** advised she also been in contact with the police and local councillor and has direct contact with the PCSO.
5. **Site Sec** advised Yacio paid for the removal of two loads of plastic, and trimmed trees on the boundary of plot 28B.
6. We had four manure deliveries which were well taken up, and a small profit was made for the association.
7. The recent pruning workshop with Louise was well received last weekend.
8. A new contractor has been appointed to deal with hedges and pathways on the site. People have been asked for feedback on how this goes.

9. The orchard has now been planted with apple trees. **Ali** and **Julie-Ann** thanked for all their efforts and contributions in organising this.
10. Honeycomb raised beds have been built and planted, paths are laid, bulbs planted - all with the help of volunteers. Good Gym have dug beds. We are due to build pergolas for the orchard entrances and a circular bench for the bottom of the garden. Some local residents have offered to help build them, which is lovely. Apiary plot clearance continues.
11. **Site Sec** introduced some of the new plot tenants. There are currently no vacant plots, with circa 180 people on the waitlist. Site inspections w/c 17th April.
12. West Bank Park fair will be held 25th June – **Chair** advised we have always done very well and made some money for the association. Last year we sold books, plants and ran a tombola. This made around £200. We will run a stall again this year and plot holders have been asked for donations for the tombola, and books and plants to sell. There is a possibility of having a splat the rat game as well.
13. 21st May will be the plant swap.
14. **Chair** announced we will be running a growing competition this year and have never had one before. It will be a small affair to start with. A potato weight and sunflower growing competition with possible further events if it proved popular. Volunteers were asked to judge the entrants. **John Dowson** to judge potatoes. Sunflower judge to be **Paul Graham**. Details will follow. **Jen** advised free bags available for potatoes. It was proposed that judging is held on the 17th September with a BBQ to follow.
15. A question was asked if the Orchard open days could be combined with the plant swap 21st May. Callum Taylor may be asked to open the orchard garden.
16. A question was asked by John about better using the carriage garden. It is proposed that we would open on a Saturday morning for a couple of hours. This would give plot holders a chance to meet and discuss things, and provide a much needed social aspect. There was a lot of support for this idea. Volunteers would be needed to open up on a rota basis. Details to follow.
17. **Treasurer** advised manure deliveries will be in the Autumn again.
18. Election of officers. Christine proposed continue with same, seconded and voted unanimously to continue.
19. Question raised regarding YACIO AGM 25th March. Increase of 4% on site fees proposed. Concessions will be means tested for senior citizens. Does that mean some will pay more including the 4% increase? Proposal is about being fair. Feeling is that concessions are increased for those on benefits to help out. Concessionary discount proposed to increase from 40% to 50%. Pensioners will not automatically get concession. **Treasurer** pointed out that current concessions tend to be for the more senior plot holders and that if something is not done then this will impact on YACIO income in the longer term. Anyone on means tested benefits including pension credit will get concession.