**Glasgow Allotments Forum**

**Minutes of Meeting, 19th September 2022**

In attendance:

Jenny Reeves (Springburn) (Chair), Judy Wilkinson (Kelvinside), Delia Henry (Springburn), Scott Ramsay (Sir John Stirling Maxwell), Richard Sharp (Victoria Park)

Apologies: Barbara De La Rue, Christine Kuhn, Sarah Henry

1. **Minutes and matters arising:** The minutes of the meeting of 18th August 2022 were approved.
2. **Events- Awards, Potato Day:** arrangements for Potato Day are in place. Scott said that we know the orders and what people buy in advance. The event will take place online. Jenny said that orders must be submitted differently online than in person. Jan has suggested that we cut back on the range of potatoes. Kate and Alastair will chase up the bulk orders. We need to liaise with the suppliers first.

Jenny circulated an email from Sarah about the new plotholder awards. The winner of the New Plotholder Awards 2022 is Michael Mullen from Growchapel, a new allotments site which opened in Drumchapel in October 2021. Michael has worked tirelessly on his plot, creating beds, improving the soil, and building structures such as sheds and polytunnels. His plot is immaculate. The judge, Angela Smith from the Royal Horticultural Society, was particularly impressed with the quality of the soil and the health of the plants. In addition, Michael has been one of the main drivers for the many community groups which have plots at the allotment, acting as a point of contact and a chair for the plots and liaising with the council, groups, plotholders and the local community. The second prize was won by Colin MacDonald from Mansewood Allotments. Angela also awarded two highly commended prizes to Sylvia Shumko at South Western Allotments, and to David Bacon at Mansewood Allotments. Growchapel have agreed to have the award presentation at their allotments, and we will agree a date for this. Mansewood Allotments is the only applicant for an Allotment Development Award. Jenny suggested that Mansewood and Scott from Sir John Stirling Maxwell could speak about their plans for spending the award money at the AGM. She also said that Sarah wants to step back from administering the new plotholder awards, so we will need a replacement for her.

1. **Communications:** Scott proposed a new method of collecting information by way of an Excel spreadsheet, and he distributed a print-out of this at the meeting. Jenny said we need to include information about publicity and posters in the spreadsheet. She thought posters are useful for site secretaries to distribute and also for site notice boards. After some discussion it was agreed that Scott can undertake the editing function for any articles received for the newsletter and social media. The next major event which requires publicity is the AGM in November.
2. **Constitution:** Delia spoke on this issue and asked if the 2004 version is the latest available. Jenny thought it was updated in 2011. Delia has benchmarked it against FEDEGA’s constitution and said it is still out of date. There are several anomalies: it does not mention awards, it says we administer competitions, it says SAGs have a vote, and we can call a Special General Meeting if 20% of the members agree. In reality, GAF is an unincorporated organisation with only four recognised officers. Jenny said we have trustee insurance. However, we cannot rewrite the constitution before the AGM. It was noted that we belong to the Glasgow Council for the Voluntary Sector. It was agreed that the revised constitution and the minutes of the meetings of the executive committee should be published on the website. Scott mentioned the year long revision of the constitution at Sir John Stirling Maxwell Allotments. Jenny suggested a Working Party should be formed to revise the constitution.
3. **GCC etc. developments:** Richard spoke about the visit by the GCC Food Growing Team to Victoria Park Allotments on 13th September. This was part of a tour to all council allotment sites to introduce a new member of the GCC team, Kristina Nitsolova. She will be responsible for sites in the south of Glasgow, Sandy Paterson in the north-east and Una Cassidy in the north-west. The exact nature of their roles is unknown as yet. Jenny spoke about the launch of the GCC Let’s Grow Together grant at Bellahouston Park on 22nd September. This is a small grant of up to £5000 to support the development of new allotments and growing spaces. Due to short notice no one from GAF can attend the launch. Jenny spoke about a potential FOI request to the Council, in conjunction with the Food Climate Action Group, asking for the budget for Phase 1 of Growchapel and the developments at Mansewood. However, she has not had any response from her contacts and will get in touch with Eleanor Dillon again. It was agreed that we should meet with Elaine Gallagher, the Green Party councillor who is affiliated with GAF. An evening meeting in October at Glasgow City Chambers was proposed. We should invite her to the AGM as well.
4. **AGM:** this is planned for 3rd November. It is intended to have presentations following their awards by Mansewood and Sir John Stirling Maxwell, as mentioned at point 2 above, as well as South Western Allotments and Centurion Way Growers on the same theme. Jenny will contact these sites by letter. She suggested a seven to ten minute presentation by each site. We need a poster advertising the event to be go out in the first week in October, and a short piece to raise interest in the event. Jenny said she would write this. We also require an alternative venue to Garnethill as the Chess Club meets there on Thursday nights. The City Chambers was proposed as a venue. Judy will ask Elaine Gallagher and Sandy Paterson to present at the AGM. Jenny said she is meeting Sandy later in the week so could raise this with him then. Scott suggested attendees at the AGM should register via Eventbrite so we have an indication of numbers, and this was agreed.Delia said we should publicise the event on Facebook, and Scott said he would do a podcast for the Facebook page.

**Action: Jenny, Judy, Scott**

1. **Treasurer’s report:** none in the absence of the Treasurer, Iain.
2. **Visits:** Richard said he had been unable to contact Beechwood Allotments through their generic email address. Jenny advised it is best to turn up at a site in person to make contact with the secretary via any individual who is working their plot. He will do this. Scott confirmed he has four sites to visit. Delia mentioned the new allotment site at St Rollox; Jenny said this is Sighthill Allotments, which is due to open in 2023. Delia spoke about her visit to Garthamlock and Craigend Community Garden, which was established in January 2021 on land owned by the Church. They have an orchard, a large commercial polytunnel and two shipping containers. They received grants for these projects. However, they have had an issue with water voles. They have a constitution and have joined SAGs. Delia said she was impressed, though they are not an allotment site yet. Judy spoke about her visits to two community garden projects, Woodlands Community Gardens and G3 Growers in Finnieston. She said both are interested in learning from the experiences of others. Jenny visited Yoker Allotments and will forward their contact details to Scott and Richard. She said that the secretary has had issues with the committee and the site has fallen into disrepair. However, the secretary has met Sandy and Una from GCC and they are providing advice. Richard said he would like to see Victoria Park, Yoker and Trinley Brae liaising to share information and experiences, as they are fairly close to each other.

**Action:** **Jenny**

1. **AOB:** Judy spoke about the spreadsheet from Nuno Vidal which she circulated prior to the meeting.This concerns the issues people have had in trying to acquire a plot. It was agreed it is a good piece of work but has more relevance to the People’s Plot and the FCA Land Campaign rather than GAF. Judy will contact these to progress the implementation of the interactive contact information, waiting lists and information about availability of plots.

**Action:** **Judy**

There was discussion of having a People’s Plot representative on the GAF executive and inviting them to the AGM. Jenny said that Ross is the main contact.

Delia said that SAGs have published the new board members on their website. Delia commented that they should now be in a position to respond to the joint communications from GAF and FEDAGA. However, it should be noted that the current SAGs’ membership criteria only allows individual members or sites to join. It does have a membership category for associations.

1. **Date of Next Meeting:** Thursday 13th October at 7.30 p.m.