Glasgow Allotments Forum

Minutes of Annual General Meeting, 3rd November 2022

Committee Room 8, Glasgow City Chambers

In attendance:

From the committee: Jenny Reeves (Springburn) (GAF Chair), Judy Wilkinson (Kelvinside), Christine Kuhn (Hamiltonhill), Kate McKillop (Trinley Brae), Scott Ramsay (Sir John Stirling Maxwell), Iain Sutherland (Mansewood), Richard Sharp (Victoria Park)

Plus 25 plotholders from various sites around Glasgow

1. Apologies: Councillor Elaine Gallagher, Delia Henry, Morag Lau (Germiston)

2. The minutes of the AGM of 2nd December 2021 were approved. Jenny Reeves stated that these and the Annual Reports are available on the GAF website.

3. **Annual Report**: On behalf of the committee Jenny spoke about a mix of developments over the last year. In many ways the committee felt that we had lost contact with sites since going online. There had been a series of visits by committee members to allotment sites which showed that we needed to communicate better. We need to let people know about how GAF promotes allotments and can support plotholders. GAF has had some success in campaigning for new allotments at both local and national level and has worked with Glasgow's plotholders to develop recommendations about the way in which allotment sites are governed and their relationship with the GCC could be better managed. GAF should be representative of all allotments but communications with individual sites has sometimes been problematic. There is a lack of a clear agreement about the responsibilities of allotment associations and Glasgow City Council (GCC). GAF will be cutting back on its activities in 2023 but ensuring those it does run are better advertised to members. GAF welcomes suggestions as to what people would like to see us do in the future.

   Suggestions from the floor included further talks on soil, the offering the chance for association chairs to get together, more advice on Governance to be made available, how to obtain grant funding – information on available grant sources to be published on the website/newsletter.

4. **Natural Environment Officer's report from GCC**
   Judy Wilkinson commented that the report was a good summary of work on the Glasgow's Food Growing Strategy but that it contained little detail about

allotments. It was disappointing that GAF's frameworks for the rules and regulations for allotments and the delegation of site management functions to associations has not been acknowledged by GCC despite the fact that 14 GCC sites had been involved in their preparation. A positive development is that we now have a supportive Councillor in Elaine Gallagher who has agreed to serve as our link on the Council. GAF has been involved in the political field more widely and our submission to the Scottish Government's Allotments Inquiry into the Community Empowerment Act has raised our profile. Judy drew attention to the 3 workshops being run by the Council on the revision of allotment rules and regulations during November.

Scott Ramsay spoke about the subject of communications. FebFest took place online earlier in the year and was a great success. He appealed for assistance in managing and developing the GAF website. There are now 120 people on the mailing list for the GAF newsletter. Representatives from Budhill allotments said they wanted hard copy information such as leaflets and posters to go on their notice board. GAF has recently sent information about GAF and our Potato Day initiative with poster attachments to site secretaries, who can print them out and put them on noticeboards.

Potato Day will take place online next year rather than in person. Sites were encouraged to publicise the event. The prices for bulk orders of potatoes were explained.

There was a question about the role of Scottish Allotment and Gardens Society (SAGS) and how it can assist plotholders. SAGs is a national organisation, but it is undergoing a second period of reorganisation at present and organisations such as GAF and FEDAGA in Edinburgh are no longer able to be members at an affordable rate. SAGS should be more active at national level them they have been particularly when the issues of food growing and well-being have become so much high on everyone's agenda.

5. **Resolution to revise the constitution**: As the current GAF constitution dates from 2013 and is no longer fit for purpose, it was proposed that this meeting agrees to set up a working group to host discussions and write a new Constitution which will be presented to be ratified by the AGM in November 2023. The proposal was made by Kate McKillop and seconded by Judy Wilkinson. The subject of the length of tenure of office for committee members was discussed, and whether this should be of five years' duration. Judy proposed that the current committee remains in place for one more year until the new constitution has been agreed, and this was accepted.

6. **Allotment Development Awards**: One application was received. Iain Sutherland of Mansewood Allotments proposed using £500 for rainwater harvesting. Having previously bought 15 sheds for the new plots on their recent extension, the money would be used to attach guttering to the sheds

and link them to individual water containers. Those present felt this was a worthy ambition and voted them the award.

7. **Election of officers**: This did not take place – see item 5.

   Iain Sutherland (Treasurer) and Richard Sharp (Minute Secretary) are standing down from the committee. Jenny thanked them for their services, and asked attendees if any of them might consider joining the committee.

8. **AOB**: None.