

DITTON ALLOTMENT TENANTS SOCIETY

AGM – 26th MARCH 2009 DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE

Attendance : Mike and Carol Hawksworth, Keith and Liz Holloway, David and Anne Osbaldstone, Mark Webb, Laurie Caine, Alan Piper, Ted and Ann Brown, John Craig, Terry Smith, Brenda Smith, Jim and Lyn Preskett, Arthur Dearden, Clive and Jane Thwaites, David Pilcher, Ann Brierley, Jan McCormack, Maurice and Guisel Garrett, Mike Evans

Agenda	Apologies for absence
1.	Mike welcomed everyone apologies were received from Norma Webb, Len Mace, Andy Peel, Jackie Proud and Gurt Struyen.
2.	Welcome to new members Mike welcomed Arthur Dearden, Mike Evan, David Pilcher, Maurice and Gusel, Jane and Geoff McCormack. We have a total of 27 whole plots and 26 DATS members (24 full members, one Associate (Laurie Caine) and one Honorary (Len Mace). A total of 52 including husbands and wives.
3.	Minutes from last AGM Everyone was given a copy of last year's AGM notes, these were read and approval sought. All in agreement
4.	<p>Chairman's report and correspondence</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •1 A good growing year, weather wet and warm. BBQ had to be cancelled but hope to have one this year •2 Seed swap went very well, everyone who attended enjoyed exchange plants and a few beers •3 Autumn meeting was well attended, a very good atmosphere and excellent raffle •4 Xmas Social was very enjoyable and all who attended enjoyed the beetle drive! •5 New Year dinner was very good, lovely meal at the Duke of Wellington, Ryarsh •6 Pumpkin Competition was well supported with lots of entrants and fun. (Mike admitted the pumpkin lasted into February) •7 Allotment inspection – Mike and Richard had had a walk round. It was noted that the path had not been relaid yet. It should be made safer (Health and Safety). They are looking at ways of finding a cheaper process. Possibly a cinder path with shuttering. A small section may be laid as a trial to see if it works. We are still waiting to hear from them as to when. The fencing has been done although Richard felt it should have been higher. Some of the trees and shrubs were not removed before the second fence was put up and are now beginning to shoot. It does not seem to have stopped the vandalism. •8 Open Spaces Meeting – they are still looking to extend the allotments, there are 26 people on the waiting list (some have been waiting for over 5 years) It is possible they will extend into the bramble patch as the rest of the quarry is a Designated Nature Area. •9 Waste disposal is an ongoing problem. Generally most people compost. As there has been abuse of the sacks in the past they will no longer be provided. We are also only due to have one skip per year (Mike has requested a larger one). Keith had telephoned TMBC asking if we could have any substandard or broken wheelie bins for our allotment use (we would walk them to the fortnightly bulky refuse collection from the Community Centre ourselves) but this was declined on the grounds that they did not want assorted bins around the parish with their logo on. We are trying to make it easier for those who do not have transport to remove their waste. It seems that the Parish Council will not support allotments regarding waste disposal. We are constantly thinking of ways around this problem. •10 A representative from DATS can attend Parish Council Meetings, but the opportunity to put our views is limited either by questions earlier submitted or a few minutes in the interval. We have to be careful not to loose out to the nature reserve. •11 Mike expressed his thanks to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Alan for his notes (it was suggested that perhaps they could be published) ○ Liz for organising the social events ○ Ted and Ann for doing the raffles ○ Anne for doing the minutes ○ Carol for helping him throughout the year and for organising the New Year Dinner.
5.	<i>Treasurer's report</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1 Keith circulated a copy of the accounts to all those present and asked for questions. ●2 He pointed out that the start and end balance were the same – a concern that we had not made any money – balance had accumulated over the years mainly through good raffles – it could have been a worse situation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●3 He proposed to increase the subs from £5 to £7; there has not been an increase for 5 years. He has been able to absorb essential costs and some room hire fees. Last year affiliation fees including magazines increased and room hire costs are going up. The question was raised as to whether we needed the magazines but they only cost £2 per annum (4 magazines) and overall it was felt to be worth the outlay. ●4 Subs will cover our affiliation fees and some room hire. Due to members generosity the revenue from raffles covers the rest of room hire costs and also adds to DATS finances ●5 If everyone finds that the seed potatoes that were sourced from Herne Bay Allotment Society are a success then perhaps a larger order can be placed next year. The varieties which are seen to be favourites are Desiree and Charlotte at a considerable saving. ●6 Profit from the seed order was £15.52 Kings only discount seeds (vegetable and flowers) no discount is given for potatoes ●7 The Accounts were agreed proposed and seconded
6.	<i>Election of Committee members</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1 There were no nominations for the annual posts therefore the existing Committee members were asked if they were prepared to stand for re-election ●2 Chairman : Mike Hawkesworth was nominated to remain, unanimously carried ●3 Treasurer : Keith Holloway was nominated to remain, unanimously carried ●4 Secretary : Anne Osbaldstone was nominated to remain, unanimously carried ●5 Entertainments : Liz Holloway is willing to continue assisted by Ted Brown ●6 Social Secretary : Liz Holloway ●7 Raffle : Ted and Ann Brown
7.	<i>Social events for the year</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1 BBQ date mid July : proposed date Wednesday 22nd July ●2 Autumn Seed Meeting : Wednesday 28th October 7.30 pm to 9.30 pm Acorn Room, Ditton Community Centre ●3 Christmas get together : Tuesday 15th December 7.30 pm to 10.30 pm East Malling and Larkfield Parish Office, Church Farm, New Hythe Lane (booking has been confirmed)
8.	<i>Robin Webb Challenge Trophy</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1 This year the challenge will be to grow the largest onion, any variety of seed or set grown on the allotment. ●2 It can only have a 3" stem, roots trimmed for weighing. ●3 If you are entering please let Mike or Keith know.
9.	<i>May Day 2009</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ●1 May Day Fete – Monday 4th May : All local societies have been offered a stall free of charge for a May Day event being run over the Bank Holiday weekend. This will take place on Bank Holiday Monday, football matches, demonstrations, bands, fancy dress for children. DATS will sell plants to raise funds, advice on vegetable growing, plant seeds for children to take home etc. A sub-committee (Gusel, Maurice and Terry volunteered) was formed to arrange and coordinate arrangements. Further details will follow with volunteers needed for the day to run the stall and what plants can be contributed for sale. John Craig generously offered £50 worth of plants for sale on the day. It was noted that the stall if possible should be near to the Community Centre for ease of access to water.
10.	<i>Any other business</i>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">•2 At the October meeting it was suggested that the society purchase a gazebo for use either on the allotment for BBQs or for members to borrow•3 Both Mike and Keith have researched the cost and a reasonable one with four sides can be purchased for around £70 - £100.•4 It was suggested that a small fee could be charged for members hiring the gazebo to add to DATS funds•5 Lyn and Jim had obtained a table and some chairs which were behind the shelter for anyone to use.•6 Mike had talked to Richard Baker about toilet facilities on the allotment. But as we have no main drains this was not viable. In the allotment magazine a society had a compost toilet, this could be built as a DIY project Mike will put together a proposal setting out how this could be achieved and if agreement is reached will pursue it further with the Parish Council The cost would be approx. £250 and it seems that no planning permission is needed. He will also find out from SE Allotment if any funds are available to societies wishing to do this.•7 Funds from the May Day event and possible future raffles will be put aside to finance this.
	Meeting closed at 9.35 pm