

**DITTON ALLOTMENT TENANTS SOCIETY**  
**AGM – 30<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2011**  
**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, Brenda Smith, Clive Thwaites, David Pilcher, Jan McCormack, Maurice and Guisel Garrett, Harry and Rose Hall, Lesley Chinnery, Richard and Jackie Harris , Terry and Midge Smith, Mike Evans, John Craig

<b>Agenda</b>	<b>Apologies for absence</b>
1.	Mike welcomed everyone and introduced two new allotment holders, Lesley Chinnery (Jim Preskett's plot) and Richard and Jackie Harris (Arthur Dearden's plot). Apologies were received from John Elliott and Len Mace, who has not been very well and all our best wishes are sent to him.
2.	<b>Minutes from last AGM</b> Everyone was given a copy of last year's AGM notes, these were read and approval sought. All in agreement
3.	<b>Chairman's report and correspondence</b> Mike said that this year's report would be brief. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>BBQ</i> in the summer was very well attended. Mike thanked Alan, Margaret, Clive, Jane and Harry for organising the event and producing a very good evening. Great to use the Society's gazebo as central point for food, also weather was on our side so overall all who attended enjoyed the event.</li> <li>• <i>Robin Webb Challenge Cup</i> – Largest marrow competition, very exciting weigh in as the scales were not big enough so Mike's fishing scales were brought into service. Maggie's marrow was the heaviest (10.2 lbs) Alan told us it was a French marrow! Since the competition started we have had four challenges – sunflower; pumpkin; onion and marrow. The winner chooses the next challenge so this year it will be the longest runner bean</li> <li>• Mike thanked Keith and Liz for organising the seed and potato orders and for delivering the Allotment magazine. This year Clive will be organising the seed order and Anne and David will be delivering the magazines. Keith will keep us informed as to when the potato order needs to be placed. Mike thanked them both for all their efforts and support in the past.</li> <li>• <i>Christmas Social Evening</i> : Unfortunately on arrival we were double booked, but when Weightwatchers vacated the larger hall we were soon able to get things sorted out and everyone had a good evening and as usual the buffet was excellent. Thanks to all who attended.</li> <li>• <i>New Year Dinner</i>: Duke of Wellington again provided an excellent meal and lovely to have a get together in the winter.</li> <li>• <i>Correspondence</i>: there has not been much this year.</li> </ul>
4.	<b>Treasurer's report</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Keith circulated a copy of the accounts to all those present.</li> <li>• Keith thanked Clive, Anne and David for offering to help with the seed order and delivery of the magazines.</li> <li>• Generally the accounts similar to last year there have not been many changes: we raised £14.55 from the seed order and most other issues were self balancing. Keith did not want to go into too much detail but asked if there were any questions regarding the accounts. Allan moved to accept the accounts, all were in favour.</li> <li>• <i>Annual subscription</i>: although we have a balance of £390 in the bank £210 has been set aside for the toilet project. It was felt that £180 in hand is not really sufficient reserve. To cover statutory expenditure (fees, magazines, insurance etc.) £7.00 is not really enough. Over the last 3 years our net surplus has dropped. Magazines are our most expensive item. Mike and Keith had been discussing options and put forward a new package. Associate members would pay £5 with no magazines (if they wanted the magazine they would pay full membership). The existing subscription would be raised to £10 (including magazines); it was also proposed that if the magazines were not wanted a £7 subscription would apply. This package would be reviewed annually. Looking forward over the next 2 to 3 years it was felt that full membership would increase to £12-£13 max. The magazines are subsidised by DATS they cost £1.50 each (£6 pa), Ted asked if the magazines could be circulated prompting Keith to suggest that perhaps DATS purchase an extra copy to be available in the shelter. Mike pointed out that magazine always had useful tips and items. To be an individual member of Allotment Growers Association it costs £20 of which £12 is for magazines. There is a discount for societies.</li> <li>• The subscription covers affiliation to the AGA, public liability (now £5 million), hall costs (AGM). Hall hire for other events comes from the raffle money. Over the last 3 years our income has fallen whilst all our expenses have increased.</li> <li>• The proposed increase was accepted and passed. All in favour (Ted abstained)</li> </ul>

5.	<p><b>Election of Committee members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no nominations for the annual posts therefore the existing Committee members were asked if they were prepared to stand for re-election</li> <li>• All members were individually proposed and seconded</li> <li>• Ted proposed thanks for officers over the last year.</li> <li>• As mentioned earlier additional duties i.e. seed order (Clive); magazines (Anne &amp; David)</li> <li>• Social Secretary: Liz has decided not to continue, Mike thanked her for all her help. At present the post would not be filled, when needed specific groups for different events would be formed.</li> <li>• Raffle : Ted and Ann</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>Update of Society Rules and Constitution</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mike has been investigating the possibility of obtaining grant money.</li> <li>• We need a written constitution. A copy was given to each member setting out what is already in place. A move was made that the Society Rules be adopted/proposed and passed.</li> <li>• Mike also explained that should our balance exceed £1,000 we would need an independent audit from someone from the membership.</li> </ul>
7.	<p><b>Social events for the year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Summer BBQ:</b> new team, Clive/Laurie/Harry would be happy to organise. Two dates were proposed <b>Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> or 20th July.</b></li> <li>• It was decided not to hold a late Sept/early October (previously Autumn Seed meeting) as we could contact Clive individually to place our orders. Keith will notify us when he needs orders for potatoes and new for this year onions.</li> <li>• <b>Christmas Social:</b> this has already been arranged the East Malling and Larkfield Parish Hall has been hired for <b>Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 7.30pm -10.30pm.</b> It is a bigger hall and we can take our own drinks. It is necessary to book early as it is very popular. It was proposed that this year we play "Higher/Lower" card game, Liz and Keith can obtain the game.</li> <li>• <b>New Year meal:</b> All agreed same venue (Duke of Wellington Ryarsh) as the food is very good. Date proposed is <b>Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2012.</b> More details at the Christmas meeting.</li> </ul>
8.	<p><b>Robin Webb Challenge Trophy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As the winner Maggie has chosen the longest runner bean as the challenge. It must be grown on the allotment it can be either seed or plant. Measurement will be from tip to top whether it is straight, curved or circular. Measurement day end of September tba.</li> </ul>
9.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Water metre update. Last year Ditton PC were concerned about water usage. Our meter reading as of Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> March was 138cu, estimated annual usage 150cu at a cost of approximately £1 per cubic metre. Council have said our usage is as expected it seems there was a calculation error last year. Our usage will continue to be monitored <b>No sprinklers are allowed on site</b></li> <li>• Allotment extension has been postponed due to bad weather, also no funds for fencing. Gallagers may still clear the site this year but no top soil will be laid until site is secure.</li> <li>• If proposed housing goes ahead at East Malling Research it has been suggested that about 18 new allotments would be made available but would be offered to those in the Eco houses first.</li> <li>• Composting toilet (update): Costs for a well constructed toilet could be £4,000 - £8000 (example Hastings allotments). Grants are available from Lottery for community projects and other sources for projects on quarry sites. Funds of £3,000 - £10,000 could be available. We would need to get planning permission in advance. Mike has spoken to Council to see if they would help us get planning permission. It may also be possible to include cost of fencing in grant application. If we open the site to access for all, keep 2 plots divided into mini plots for individuals to grow salad crops and children from local schools to be involved it may go in our favour. Also if we apply for a disabled toilet it would mean our site would be "access for all" another plus point. Mike will put our suggestions in writing and pass it to Nicola and she will relay it to the Open Spaces Committee of Council.</li> <li>• Temporary measure would be a privacy screen either semi fixed or portable for use by the ladies. Proposed by Mike all agreed, if approved Maurice said he would produce the screen.</li> <li>• Website: our website address has been purchased <a href="http://www.dittonallotments.org.uk">www.dittonallotments.org.uk</a> and will be up and running very shortly. All information has been carried over from previous site.</li> <li>• Feedback from sale of potatoes: Keith reported that the potatoes equated to £2.80 for 3kgs (Kings were £7.25 for same quantity). This year he will be able to get onion sets from Herne Bay Allotment Society the larger the order the cheaper approximate price 78 onion sets .85p (Unwins £2 for 50 sets). Keith will notify us when he needs the orders for potatoes and onions and they should be delivered mid/end January. Other potato varieties are available approx. £3.50 for 3kgs.</li> <li>• Mike thanked everyone for their generosity for raffle donations and tickets bought.</li> </ul>
	<p><b>Meeting closed at 9.40 pm</b></p>