

**DITTON ALLOTMENT TENANTS SOCIETY
AGM - 10th APRIL 2014 DITTON
COMMUNITY CENTRE**

Attendance : Mike and Carol Hawksworth, David and Anne Osbaldstone, Liz and Keith Holloway, Ted and Ann Brown, Brenda Smith, Jan and Geoff McCormack, Terry Smith, Mike Evans, John Craig, Mark Webb, Roy Jackson, David Pilcher, Clive Thwaites, Bob Kendall, Harry Hall, Richard and Jackie Harris

Agenda	
1.	Apologies for absence Mike welcomed everyone though no new allotment holders were present this time. Apologies were received from Andy Peel, Ken Knight, Maurice and Gusel Garrett and Darren Cox. Mike also took the opportunity to inform everyone that there were 39 plots, 9 full plots and 30 half plots (2 half plots belong to one holder making a total of 38 available plots. DATS have 28 members and if possible can those members encourage the 10 non members to think about joining the society.
2.	Minutes from last AGM The minutes of the last AGM are on our website. Acceptance of these was proposed and seconded. All in agreement
3.	Chairman's report and correspondence Mike briefly went through events of this year. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2013 started cold hence everything was late, then it became hot and dry but overall it was a good year, the sweet corn growers said it was brilliant. • <i>General thanks</i> - to Liz and Keith for the onion sets and potatoes, though the onion sets were poor this time, Keith's supplier has apologised and hopes for better sets next year: Anne and David for delivering magazines (4 issues per annum, they are £2 per copy but DATS members pay £3 per annum, the official price is £8): Ted and Ann for doing the raffle (helps to keep us self funding): Clive for doing the seed order (this will be discussed under AOB and finally to Carol for all her help throughout the year and for organising the New Year meal • <i>Summer BBQ</i> - thanks all round for a lovely evening, the gazebo worked well and we now have a BBQ and charcoal ready for this year. • <i>Christmas Social Evening</i> - again this was held at Ditton Bowls Club which proved to be a very good venue. Unfortunately we did not have as many people as previously, but the cost of hiring the venue is good £35 and the bar is inexpensive. • <i>New Year Dinner</i>. Duke of Wellington again provided an excellent meal. • <i>Correspondence</i>: Mike has received correspondence from PCSO Sally Dougherty regarding a break in at Rocky Hill, Maidstone site it seems they had sheds broken into. They will be keeping an eye on ours and if anyone sees anything suspicious would they contact the Police on 101. He also received and email from Jan (McCormack) regarding vouchers available on NSLAG website, If anyone is interested they can use the link on our website you will need a user name and password (contact Mike). • <i>Allotment inspection</i>: the next inspection by Cllr Yearsly will be in the autumn, it is requested that he look at the possibility of spraying the hedge and weeds on the fence line, this is normally done in June and November so if you have a plot against the fence please leave space before planting out. The pile of stones by the hut has been removed and he said in view of the condition of the new plots they will continue to provide top soil. Mike also discussed with him a request he had received from the local cubs asking for a plot on the allotments, Mike thought it was a good idea but the Council were not in favour as they would have to join the waiting list and there was no guarantee that all the cubs were from the Ditton Parish. • <i>Further requests</i>: a) Mike had also received a request from Communigrow a scheme where an allotment would be used to grow communal vegetables which would be distributed to the poor and disadvantaged. It seems they have a site already on Brampton Fields (the old Blue Cap Site) and in this instance Mike thought that it was not something that DATS could become involved in. b) Mike also received an email from Kent Shed partnership offering a grant of £5,000 for a shed which would be used to support ex-service men, but more as a meeting place rather than the growing of plants. Again not something that we could get involved in. • Mike had also contacted TMBC rubbish collection for second hand wheelie bins to keep on site and when full to be taken to the Saturday Refuse collection at the Community Centre. He is still waiting to hear.
4.	Treasurer's report Keith did not have much to report this year, it was the usual expenditure, fees for membership, affiliation fees to the Allotment Society, public liability insurance and Christmas venue costs. The money received from our raffles covers incidental amounts. We started the year with £744 and ended with £740.45 the year was therefore self balancing, so we have a nice buffer not excessive but sufficient back up for minor things. Our fees are balanced correctly and would not need to be increased. £7 per plot/£10 per plot with magazine. Proposed/seconded/ All in agreement

5.	<p>Election of Committee members</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There were no new nominations for the annual posts therefore the existing Committee members were asked if they were prepared to stand for re-election. A block vote was taken on all members. Proposed Terry/ seconded Bob all in agreement. • Mike asked for everyone's agreement that the raffle money should go to charity on this occasion, Darren Cox is running the London Marathon for Mid Kent Cancer Research and it was thought we could support him. Ted although in agreement felt that we should be careful as requests may be made in the future for further sponsorship. On this occasion the request was accepted by all.
6.	<p>Social events for the year Mike asked if everyone was happy with the present arrangement of summer BBQ, Christmas social and New Year meal. The consensus was to stay the same but if the weather was favourable to have two summer BBQs. Bob asked how the BBQ worked because he had a contact that would enable him to purchase meat in large quantities. Mike said we had tried providing the food and with each attendee bringing their own, and had found the latter way to work better in view of last minute cancellations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summer BBQ: proposed dates are Thursday 24th July or 31st July. (Dependant on weather) • Christmas social: Thursday 11th December at Bowls Club • New Year meal: Date proposed Wednesday 21st January 2015 other suggestions were made regarding the venue but after discussion and the quality of the food at the Duke of Wellington it was decided to stay with the Duke of Wellington
7.	<p>Robin Webb Challenge Trophy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The challenge for 2013 was to produce the most ugly or controversial vegetable. There were only two entrants with Mike coming 2nd and Dave Pilcher winning the trophy. Dave is given the choice of next year's challenge. It was commented that the challenge has been running for eight years so the usual choices may already have been used but the final decision is the current winner. We hope that there will be more entries this year.
8.	<p>Any other business</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The question of seed orders was discussed, last year there were so few participants that each individual ordered their own. It is not known if Kings will accept individual orders from the group order catalogue as the prices are different with the group orders being substantially cheaper. Mike is to order more catalogues for anyone interested. Keith suggested Browns via the Heme Bay Society as they are a good seed merchant too. If you want to order seeds let Clive know, but ideally it would need 8 to 10 orders to make it viable as a bulk order. • Village Show prospectus are available from our website to download. We did not have many entrants last year; there are lots of different classes so plenty of variety to choose from. The date this year is Saturday 19th July 2014. • Our website has lots of information and is always looking for additional copy from allotment holders, Mike thanked Harry for his article on a soil plug tool, and so if you have anything of interest - photographs or recipes etc please send them to Mike. Also there are lots of links to other websites of interest. • Mike also asked for ideas for improving our allotment site - such as refurbishing the existing shed, Mike has already mentioned he is trying to acquire two wheelie bins. • Could we suggest to Council we could use two skips, perhaps April and end of season to help with waste removal. • Ted said we had no First Aid kit on site, this would be looked into and somewhere to keep it. • John Craig also suggested that perhaps we could purchase new wheelbarrows • Regarding the purchase of a 8 x 10 container to keep tools etc was raised, together with the question of a compost toilet and also if anyone was still interested in pursuing a grant (we could also build our own shed for the toilet and purchase the toilet kit separately No conclusions made. • The gate lock can be a problem, the key is very awkward. Please make sure the site is clear before locking on leaving. Mike will ask the Council at the next inspection about the lock and first aid kit to see if they are their responsibility. • Keith asked that the spraying of weeds could be avoided along the car park fence both he and Geoff are prepared to weed their car park side. • Can the area also be strimmed more often? • Mike also raised the point of sending out meeting notes and other general notices by email, those in favour please let him have your email address. • Finally Keith suggested a possible visit to Thanet Earth; he has a contact and will find out more information regarding the feasibility of a visit.
<p>Meeting closed at 9.45pm</p>	