

**DITTON ALLOTMENT TENANTS SOCIETY**  
**AGM – 4<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2013**  
**DITTON COMMUNITY CENTRE**

**Attendance :** Mike and Carol Hawksworth, David and Anne Osbaldstone, Ted and Ann Brown, Brenda Smith, Jan McCormack, Maurice and Guisel Garrett, Terry and Midge Smith, Mike Evans,

<b>Agenda</b> 1.	<b>Apologies for absence</b> Mike welcomed everyone including those attending for the first time Ken, John and Janet, Dave, Darren all new members. Apologies were received from Rose and Harry Hall, Keith and Liz Holloway, Clive and Jane Thwaites, Mark and Norma Webb, Roy Jackson, Alan and Maggie Piper and Andy Peel.
2.	<b>Minutes from last AGM</b> The minutes of the last AGM are on our website. Acceptance of these was proposed and seconded. All in agreement
3.	<p><b>Chairman's report and correspondence</b> Mike briefly went through events of this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Len Mace</i> was the founding Chairman of DATS, a keen and very knowledgeable gardener, very eager for the allotments to keep going. Through ill health he retired from the allotments but continued to be interested in our news. Sadly in May 2012 he passed away.</li> <li>• <i>2012</i> – was a funny growing year, dry then wettest summer, some crops did well others not so good. Mike's potatoes were very good, his tomatoes not good and onions wilted. This was also experienced by others. Unfortunately this year has started even stranger with lots of snow and very cold weather.</li> <li>• <i>Diamond Jubilee celebrations</i> Mike thanked Maggie and Ann for organising the event. The day proved very windy but as the day progressed the weather improved. Attendance was not as good as hoped and the organisers decided early on that most events would be held indoors which meant that many people did not visit the stalls, but in spite of that the sale of plants produced a sum of £222.26. Thanks to all who contributed with plants and their time on the day, especially John and Ann Craig for their generous donation of plants and hanging baskets.</li> <li>• <i>General thanks</i> – to Liz and Keith for the onion sets and potatoes (very good quality this year): Clive for organising seed order (good value for Kings Seeds perhaps fewer seeds but very good value): Anne and David for delivering magazines (4 issues per annum, they are £2 per copy but DATS members pay £3 per annum): Ted and Ann for doing the raffle (helps to keep us self funding): and finally to Carol for all her help throughout the year and for organising the New Year meal</li> <li>• <i>BBQ</i> – our annual get together was cancelled due to bad weather, hopefully we shall be able to hold one this year.</li> <li>• <i>Gazebo</i> – Due to the very windy conditions on Diamond Jubilee day the gazebo was badly damaged. A new one has been purchased with the sides from the previous one being salvaged and able to be reused.</li> <li>• <i>Christmas Social Evening</i> – the year this was held at Ditton Bowls Club which proved to be a very good venue. All who attended had a very enjoyable evening. We hope to use the venue again this year. The bar is excellent and as it is local it means less driving.</li> <li>• <i>New Year Dinner</i>. Duke of Wellington again provided an excellent meal. Ann Brown suggested a change of venue with the Angel near West Malling Golf Club being an option. It was agreed further details would be sort and prices and menus compared with the Duke of Wellington and a decision made later in the year. Maximum £15.</li> <li>• <i>Correspondence</i>: Mike has received a suggestion from Mrs Chinnery as to whether it would be possible to bulk order manure, if there is any interest please let Mike know. Anyone wanting an allotment should contact the Council we have no idea of waiting times Mike had an inspection of the allotments with Clr Yearsly and raised the following concerns: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Size of skip too small we now have 12 more allotments. A quote for a larger skip was sort - to date no results</li> <li>• Pile of stones : new allotment holders have been requested to pile them by the hut and the ground staff will remove them when the weather gets better</li> <li>• Break in by the hut last year was caused by someone trying to get into Bowls Club. No-one reported anything missing or damaged on allotments</li> <li>• Problem with brambles encroaching onto allotments; ground staff will keep them cut down</li> <li>• Issues regarding activity on new plots one holder has given up so one vacant plot on new section</li> <li>• Preferable if all allotments had public liability insurance. The Council will be advising new allotment members to join DATS as insurance included, a letter will be sent with next renewal letter</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New allotments Ragstone Court end - the soil is very rough the end 4 plots being the most</li> </ul>

	<p>badly affected by blue/white clay. Council say they will provide these plots with leaf mould to help break it down, please speak to Nigel or Mike</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mound behind new allotments – lots of weeds and seeds, Council ground staff will strim weeds before they set seed. This should help with this problem.</li> </ul> <p>Next inspection will be in the autumn if we need to ask for funding hopefully by having the inspection before the new year our request can be put forward for next year's budget.</p>
4.	<p><b>Treasurer's report</b></p> <p>Keith was unable to attend but has provided Mike with a breakdown of his financial summary.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Balance for previous year £520.25 with funds at April 2013 £885.85</li> <li>• Expenses during the year amounted to £661.94 this covered seeds, magazines and room hire an increase of £223.91 from last year</li> <li>• This meant we are just about self-funding and therefore subscriptions will remain at £10 per plot with magazines and £7 per plot without.</li> </ul> <p>Acceptance of the accounts was proposed, seconded and passed. Mike expressed his thanks to Keith. A full breakdown of the figures will be available on request.</p>
5.	<p><b>Election of Committee members</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There were no alternative 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 proposed and seconded and voted for on block.</li> </ul>
6.	<p><b>Social events for the year</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Summer BBQ:</b> proposed dates are <b>Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> or 17th July</b>. Please check website or allotment notice board. If weather is good it may be possible to hold 2 BBQs this year.</li> <li>• <b>Autumn Meeting :</b> Mike suggested reinstating the seed order meeting and social evening early in October. He suggested 7.30pm to 10.30pm at the Bowls Club, enquiries would be made and a provisional date of <b>Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October</b> has been suggested.</li> <li>• <b>Christmas meeting:</b> hopefully this will take place at the Bowls Club and <b>Thursday 12<sup>th</sup> December</b> has been suggested.</li> <li>• <b>New Year meal:</b> Dates proposed <b>21<sup>st</sup>/22<sup>nd</sup> January 2014</b> venue to be decided</li> <li>• <b>Possible mid June meeting</b> – a boules evening at the Duke of Wellington was proposed. A leaflet with details will be circulated later, it is understood that the evening includes a help yourself supper</li> <li>• <b>Village Show</b> – a few more entrants from the allotments would be appreciated. The Show is held second week in July, the date will be on the website and a schedule of categories. Ted was successful again with his entrants.</li> </ul>
7.	<p><b>Robin Webb Challenge Trophy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This year's challenge was largest tomato grown on site. Unfortunately a lot suffered with blight but there were three entrants the winner was Andy Peel (308 gms), second Mike (240 gms) and third Clive (188gms). As normal the winner gets to choose the next challenger and this year it will be ugliest root vegetable again grown on the allotment (the most licentious will win). Please photograph your entry when it is dug and email entry to Mike. The cut off date will be end February 2014. Judging will be by a panel of experts chosen by Andy.</li> </ul>
8.	<p><b>Any other business</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extension allotments now working, the soil is poor. Everyone has worked hard and the ground appears very fertile.</li> <li>• No further information on East Malling Research allotment site</li> <li>• We have sufficient funds for minor improvements on site i.e. composting toilet if we are to proceed we now have money for planning and then apply for grant.</li> <li>• If interest is shown we could continue to save for the purchase of a metal box 8' x 6' for storage. (approx. £1,000 but if possible we could research getting a cheaper one.)</li> <li>• Is it feasible to get electricity on site? – any views or opinions please contact Mike</li> <li>• Also can we obtain a couple of wheelie bins which could be emptied at the Saturday Bulky Refuse Collection at Community Centre? – we will research cost.</li> <li>• If anyone has any ideas on improving amenities to our site please contact Mike</li> <li>• Our website is now running but it needs contributions i.e. photographs, recipes, gardening hints, information regarding forthcoming events</li> <li>• <b>A question of safety has arisen now we have a larger allotment site, please make sure there is no-one still working when you leave – on two occasions the gate has been locked when there was still someone on site. Not everyone comes by car therefore there is no obvious indication of site occupancy; also the lock is very difficult or even impossible to open from the inside.</b></li> </ul>
	<p>Meeting closed at 9.25pm and £26 was raised from the raffle.</p>