

1. ATTENDING:

Margaret Davis - Chair
Abi Grute - Trading Secretary
David Mogg - Membership Secretary and Webmaster
Steve Elliott - Sheet Rep
Slaney Hopkins - Tilmore Rep
Georgie Thurlby - Association Secretary

2. APOLOGIES:

Alison Carling - Treasurer
Jerry and June Germey - Tilmore Rep

3. MINUTES AND ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING

A brief update was provided on the actions from the last meeting, as follows:

It was confirmed that the bank account signatories were being updated to reflect the new committee positions - Georgie was also being set up as a signatory in addition to Alison, David and Margaret to provide some additional resilience

Agreed that Steve, David and Georgie would meet in person to go through the Constitution and bring forward any suggested changes to the committee

The committee approved the minutes of the last meeting.

4. MATTERS ARISING

Poster for noticeboards

Slaney had created a poster for both sites' noticeboards to direct ploholders to where they could find different information, provide contact details etc. Some of the committee members had met before Christmas to feed into this. It was agreed that it needed to be eye catching and big enough to read from a short distance away. Agreed that once it was finished it would be good to get it laminated at Peta Print if the new STAA laminator cannot handle A3 paper.

ACTION: Slaney to finalise poster for noticeboards.

Retailer discounts

No updates to report since last meeting.

Newsletter

Alison had asked for contributions for the newsletter, which would be going out in the next few weeks. Slaney was going to write something about soil biology. Other contributions such as recipe ideas, hints and tips, interesting articles or podcasts are always welcome.

ACTION: all to send any items for inclusion in the newsletter to Alison.

Talks and events

David had spoken to Colin, the secretary of the Gardening Club, who had said it might be worth linking in as they have a programme of talks which we are welcome to attend for £2 each. David has put a list on the STAA website so we can direct members to that. They also occasionally do coach trips to different gardens so we could potentially piggyback on that if they had spare seats.

Discussed the viability of us arranging our own talks and events. The general feeling of the committee members present was that the attendance would not be sufficient to make it worthwhile, given the financial liability of paying for a speaker. Agreed that it would be best to continue to signpost other talks, events, articles, podcasts, etc rather than hosting our own, at this stage, and we can revisit this option in future if it transpires that there is a substantial audience for this type of event.

Tilmore noticeboard

Discussed the noticeboards at Tilmore which are in a poor state. Abi's previous investigations had revealed that the council are possibly not aware who the noticeboard belongs to, in which case we would be more likely to be allowed to carry out our own repairs/improvements.

ACTION: Georgie to ask PTC whether they are happy for us to repair/improve the noticeboard.

Tilmore fencing

A member had raised an issue about some gaps in the fencing at the bottom of the Tilmore site through which deer might be able to enter. There had been a suggestion that the association could pay for the materials required to patch up these gaps and that the member would carry out the work for free. Discussed the best way to resolve this and agreed that it would be a matter for the council to decide and that we would raise it with them, but ultimately it was not appropriate for the association to get involved with paying for or doing any of the work because of liabilities/risks and because it might set a precedent.

ACTION: Georgie to raise the fencing issue with PTC to find out whether they have any plans to fix the gaps.

5. CHAIR'S REPORT

Nothing to report.

6. TREASURER'S REPORT

David provided a brief update as follows, in Alison's absence:

Current Balance (£)

Deposit a/c: 146.56

Community a/c: 605.99

Money gone out (£):

1107.14 Shed supplies

35 RHS Affiliation

25 SPC – money paid to us in error

50 T Dilks

75.78 Kings seeds

Money in (£):

75.78 Kings seeds

20 members

500 from the deposit account into the Community account

Abi gave a heads up that there will be another payment required for around £300 from KG Loach for potatoes and growbags.

7. TRADING SHED UPDATE

Abi provided an update as follows. The stock is coming from a different supplier this year as there had been some problems with the previous one. Steve has reorganised the shed and added new shelving so it is all ready for the first opening of the season on Sunday 6th March.

Posters, pricelists and labels for the inside of the Shed are all ready, and David had printed off some new member forms.

Confirmed that the Shed will be opening every Sunday in the earlier part of the season, from 10-11am. Abi and Steve were happy to staff the Shed during these times but it was noted that other committee members were happy to do a shift if needed.

All new prices have been done based on a 15% profit.

Potato pre-orders have been much lower this year than previously - discussed what might have caused this. Possibly due to the change of process for placing seed orders, possibly due to miscommunication. Agreed on the need to do a greater push for potato orders next year (for example, promoting them more at the AGM) as this is an area where we make a decent profit.

Discussed whether to purchase a laminator for STAA (around £30 plus ongoing cost of laminating pouches) - this would be used for weatherproofing posters for the noticeboards and in the Shed etc. An alternative would be to use Peta Print in Petersfield for one-off laminating jobs though this might be inconvenient to use on a regular basis.

Agreed that Abi would speak to Alison and subject to her agreement, would purchase a laminator.

ACTION: Abi to arrange laminator purchase.

Agreed that the waterproof boxes used to store the seed catalogues on each site would be retrieved and placed in the Shed so that they would be easily located next autumn.

ACTION: Georgie to retrieve Tilmore box and bring to Shed; Slaney/Steve to retrieve Sheet box from Adhurst allotments (!).

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Georgie had been in communication with Angela Tull at Petersfield Town Council who had informed us that there have been no new ploholders confirmed at Tilmore this year yet, though they had been trying to fill vacant plots. They still had around 30 people on the waiting list so there was no shortage of potential tenants but it was taking some time to schedule appointments to view the available plots and follow up afterwards. Angela had also asked about the fences at Sheet as she had heard from a colleague that the plots have fences in between them and was wondering whether those were originally paid for by ploholders or by the parish council. David explained that they had been put up around 15 years ago by individual ploholders because while work was being done on the railway embankment there had been an influx of rabbits onto the site which had wreaked devastation on the plots.

Abi raised the issue of broken glass at Tilmore lying around from greenhouses that had been damaged in Storm Eunice and suggested that we could ask the council whether they would consider providing a container for broken glass as a one-off gesture to allow ploholders to dispose of the glass easily and maintain a safe and tidy environment for all the site users.

ACTION: Georgie to raise with PTC.

Steve raised the possibility of having a member of the committee accompany the PTC staff when they do their inspections. He had offered to do this previously as he already does the same thing at Sheet and the parish council are very appreciative of his guidance when they do their inspections, and as Slaney (as the Tilmore rep) is often away for work at the moment he would be able to cover.

ACTION: Georgie to ask PTC if they would like to take up our offer of having a committee member accompany them when they do their plot inspections.

The meeting was closed at 9pm.

Date of next meeting: 29th March 2022