

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Sir John Stirling Maxwell Gardens on 12 May 2024 @ 2pm at Bankhead, 2060 Pollokshaws Road G43 1AT

All papers as issued by email 7 days previously were presented via projector screen.

Attendance:

Eric Brunger (Chair); Helen McNamara (Secretary); Liz Gibson (Treasurer); Lesley Blair (Auditor); Patricia de Vries (Auditor); Scott Ramsay; William Chambers; Ann Clingan; Martin Whelan; Michelle Jamieson; Andy Wright; James Ross; Karen Donnelly; Christine MacMillan; John Phillips; James Tait; David Corish; Ann Armstrong; David Orr; Tommy Lavelle; Dinah Robertson; Isabel Irving; Barry Stansfield; Bruce Corlett; Donna Bisland; Rebecca Whyte; Marjorie Phillips; Mike Duncan; Colin Fullerton; Alan Ferry; Clare Hughes; Catherine Turnbull; Yasemin Hasip; Colette Farrington; Niall Walker; Stella Watson; Nich Smith; Hugh Long; Michael Duffy; Michael Murphy; Janice Emanuel; Diane Derrick; Dougie McDonald; David McFarlane

Chair: Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed everyone and opened the meeting, requesting a show of hands for who is, in turn, an Associate, a Leaseholder, a member for more than 10 years, 5 years, less than 1 year, and a previous committee member. This gave a helpful context for the upcoming agenda. He also reminded those in attendance that there is one vote per plot, cast by the Leaseholder or, in their absence, by the Associate.

Minutes of the 2023 AGM

These were approved. Andy Wright proposed and Christine MacMillan seconded. All actions have been completed and the Rules & Regulations updated.

Secretary's Annual Report

The Secretary presented the report in slide form, summarised as follows:

Highlights:

- Open Day 797 visitors & £5.8k in takings
- 27 new Associate members
- Plot standards higher overall and great sense of community due to pavilion opening, gazebo for socialising and other projects as below
- Beekeeping project
- Women's Workshops using GCVS grant on ceramics and beekeeping, and the formation of a general crafts group and Open Day craft stall
- School visits by St. Conval's Primary
- Pavilion Team: thanks to volunteers Julie Duncan & Ann Clingan who keep the hall clean and tidy

Services Provided:

- New shed and tarmac to communal area (in October 60 votes for; 1 against)
- Septic Tank emptied
- 18 plots changed hands
- Plumbing upgrades to main supply pipe, stopcock and repairs to supply pipes at paths

- Outdoor socket reintroduced with risk register and monitoring in place that satisfies insurance
- Two full sized skips
- Council waste cages
- Compost bulk delivery taken up by 43 members
- GAF Potato Day bulk ordering on behalf of members
- Regular free bark deliveries
- Quarterly newsletters sent by email to all members

The Secretary asked if anyone had any requests for additional services to be provided, but there were none at this time.

Open Day Recommendations by those involved last year:

- More volunteers needed to allow for volunteers to have breaks with family and friends
- More signage & info: toilets, no parking, donations, directions
- Raffle prizes to be 1st, 2nd, 3rd etc.
- Count number of visitors leaving
- Crafts to be members' items only
- Bee information stand included if possible

Open Day Sub Committee with devolved budget to be proposed to Management Committee: (members' names in brackets have already provisionally volunteered) needed due to volume of work, delegation required, succession planning and knowledge transfer for future change in personnel:

- Member Comms Coordinator (Helen McNamara)
- Tombola & Raffle Coordinator (Julie Duncan supported by Anne and Robert Cunningham)
- Set Up & Gate Coordinator (Michelle Jamieson)
- Flowers & Plants Coordinator
- Cafe and Home Baking Coordinator
- Produce & Preserves Coordinator (Marjorie Phillips)
- Children's Events Coordinator
- Judging, Awards & Scarecrow Competition Coordinator
- Crafts Coordinator (Anna Thomson)
- Social Media & Signage Coordinator (Niall Walker)

Future Events:

- Open Day to be Saturday 17th August, 1.30pm to 4pm
- Plot Judging July
- Women's Workshops in June: arts & crafts; flower tying & bouquets
- Twice Monthly Bee Observations - update in next newsletter

Treasurer's Annual Report

The Treasurer presented the Annual Financial Report, which was approved. The report included an estimate for the year ahead, given increases in costs, e.g. electricity standing charge, water rates, skip hire, and that even with a successful Open Day, the projection is that expenditure will be c.£1k more than income. The Treasurer recommended a modest rise in rent.

The Chair asked for attendees to give a round of applause for the Treasurer's excellent presentation.

Auditors' Report

The Auditors delivered the Annual Auditors' Report, and confirmed that the accounts were found to be immaculate and that the Treasurer had provided a comprehensive set of accounts with improved categorisation. Both auditors concurred that the current rent does not cover basic utilities. Other private allotments would have a higher fee to cover fixed annual costs.

Motions:

Proposal for Rent Increase 2025:

The Chair presented a motion brought forward by the Management Committee via a slideshow including a quiz to offer context for a proposed rent increase, including comparison with other Glasgow allotments, and to highlight the annual SJSM rent having not gone up since 2009.

The proposal is an annual increase from May 2025 for Leaseholders of £10 (up from £25 to £35) and for Associates an annual increase of £5 (up from £10 to £15). The proposal allows 12 months notice for members. One member objected to the increase. The majority did not agree with this viewpoint given the 15 year period since the last increase. A discussion followed on ways we can save money, e.g. recyclable materials going in skips inappropriately, and necessity or not for two skips per year. A Waste Management Sub Committee of volunteers to recommend and monitor better ways to recycle waste materials was agreed as an action. Committee to implement and ask for volunteers.

The motion for rent increase as proposed was overwhelmingly carried.

Proposal for Change to Rule 9:

A motion was brought forward by plot 16 Leaseholder and the Secretary, with regards to shed size in proportion to plot area, and removing greenhouses from size calculation as these are growing spaces, which has Committee support following a small amendment for ALL shed build proposals to come to the Committee for prior approval.

A vote on the following change to Rule 9 was unanimously carried:

Rule 9: All sheds to be erected shall have a footprint of no more than 15% of the overall plot ground area. All buildings must be at least 450mm inside common boundary fences. Any new build projects should be approved by the Committee prior to any works taking place. Perimeter fences must be erected around all plots, these to be not more than 900mm high and maintained in good condition. Each plot number should be clearly displayed. A gate is only required if a member regularly brings a dog to their plot.

Proposal for Change to Rule 11:

A motion was brought forward by the Secretary regarding improved timing of notifications and actions for plots requiring attention, and a subsequent point raised from the floor by one member around the timing of the February baseline inspection being too early, which was otherwise unanimously rejected.

A vote on the following change to Rule 11 wording was then unanimously carried:

Rule 11: Plot inspections will be carried out by Committee members four times per season, first during February as a baseline, then during the second weekend of April, June and August prior to Open Day, and results communicated confidentially to individual plot holders. Plot holders who do not meet the criteria and written comments will be given 14 days to address these or invited to meet representatives of the sub committee to discuss mitigating circumstances and offered help. Thereafter if the same plot fails to comply with the criteria on one more occasion in the same season, written notice will be issued giving 14 days notice to comply, after which time a notice of lease termination will be issued in accordance with the current Rules.

AOCB

- Member plot 38 updated members on the benefits of keeping up to date with Glasgow Allotments Forum and the services provided
- Member plot 100 asked that we contact the park management team regarding the overgrown trees at Bankhead Cottages obscuring light from the top end plots and ask that they be trimmed as they were last year. Secretary to follow up.

Vote of Thanks

The Chair proposed a vote of thanks to the Secretary and Treasurer for their work over the past year, which was carried. A vote of thanks was also given to the Chair and all attendees for their presence and input.