

Central Scotland Smallholders Association

7.00pm 18th March 2009
Alloa Town Hall, Alloa.
General Committee Meeting

Present:

Rosemary Champion(Chair), Dan Champion, Jane Coull, Carol Johnson (minute taker), Karen Evans, Sandra Foxon, Anne Massie, David Campbell, Gillian McKay, Lindsay McCann, Lucinda Elrick, Morag Fletcher, George Fletcher, Jo Lennon, Gillian McBain.

Apologies:

Graham Johnson, Paul Evans, Andrew Sharpe (Treasurer), Janis Sharpe, Daye Tucker, Tom McBain, Clare Hebbert, Ali Hibbert,

Tabled Papers:

➤ Minutes 18/02/09

1. Minute of meeting 18th February 2009.

Agreed with the following changes - apologies from David Campbell and Gillian McKay to be inserted. Also costs of adverts were £100 in total and not each.

Rosemary mentioned that a couple of members were unwell and not able to attend the meeting today. On behalf of all the members she wished them a speedy recovery.

2. Matters Arising

- Equipment Pool - Following the announcement by the Big Lottery that the association had been successful in the grant application. Plans can begin in earnest. There followed suggestions, such as a hand driven petrol small hay cutter and baler, fruit press, rotvator, shredder, harrow, incubator, generator, claving jack. Items will now require to be researched (models/prices etc) so that we can decide what to purchase. We will also need to agree where these items will be kept and whether we will charge for their use (help with maintenance, damage and eventual replacement), insurance etc. Members to email Rosemary with other suggestions as soon as possible.
- Website - It was hoped than Dan would be able to do a demonstration of the website. However due to technical difficulties this wasn't possible. .Suggestions were invited for the website - eg sale/swap board. Also members only area.
- Logo - .Clare has a broken elbow at the moment but will produce a prototype of logo for consideration in due course.
- Smallholder advert - Rosemary confirmed that adverts had been placed with two smallholding magazines costing £100 per annum for both adverts (£65 and £35). Rosemary passed round the advert in the Country Smallholding magazine. The aim is to increase membership, and the application form will be amended to include details of where new members found out about the association - this will enable us to monitor whether this expenditure is value for money.

3. Press Officer

Rosemary asked for a volunteer to take over this role, please contact Rosemary if interested.

4. Fat Marrow

The association has received an email from the smallholding website Fat Marrow.com, looking for an article. Annie agreed to do something.

5. Events

There is now a new page on the website which gives local information on shows and events. If anyone wants information added then contact Dan and he will put it on. Rosemary explained that part of the money we received from the Lottery was to enable us to advertise the association and it's mission. It is intended to purchase display boards to attract new members, which could be taken to local shows such as:

- Drymen on 30th May
- Central & West Fife Agricultural Show on 6th June
- Stirling Show on 13th June
- Doune & Dunblane on 4th July
- Scone Game Fair on 3-5th July
- Braco on 25th July
- Kinross on 8th August

A stand costs £20 for example at the Stirling show, and it was felt that these events would be useful to raise awareness of the association, and raise funds. There followed a discussion around fundraising ideas:

- Guess weight or name of the pig. Could we have a pig in a pen?
- Guess the grid that the chicken will poop on.
- Have hen & chicks/bottle fed lambs on show in puppy cage? What are the regulations around animals?

Annie offered the use of her free standing gazebo and table, Sandra offered to organize some fund raising ideas. Action: Sandra

6. Visits

- Sat 18 April - visit to West Moss Side. Post meeting note - this visit was cancelled by the host. However Clare & Ali have offered a visit to their smallholding at Sheardrum Farm in Saline. They have a wide range of things to see including Highland cattle calves, hens/ducks/geese/??, sheep, as well as some very sensitive renovations of outbuildings using traditional methods and materials such as green oak. They are great hosts and well know for their good cooking - you wanted get bored or hungry. Contact Clare with numbers.
- Sun 19 July - Dog Whisperer (Groveshill Dogs). Rosemary has now confirmed date and numbers are limited to around 10 members. There was keen interest in this event, members to contact Rosemary. Total cost is £160 for the day, members will pay £5 with the association picking up the difference.
- Cairn o' Mohr country wines. Rosemary has contact them regarding a visit and wine tasting. It was thought that October would be a good time for this. It costs £65 for 10 people (£6.50 per head) or £95 for the deluxe version. Numbers to Rosemary.
- RWAS show. Rosemary asked for someone to organize this trip. It is intended that people will travel down on the Friday and back up on the Sunday (via the Centre For Alternative Technology). The association will pick up the transport costs but members will have to find and pay for their own accommodation. The show has a camping pitch and facilities are good. There is also lots of B&B in the area. Annie also has a motor home she is prepared to hire out.

Suggestions for other events:

- Visit to Herb specialist such as Scotherb or Scotia Seeds?
- Alpaca place at Balfron station
- Deer place at Cupar

7. Courses

There has been no contact from Oatridge lately. To be continued.

8. Publicity

Rosemary handed round a copy of a newsletter from the Devon Association of smallholders. Morag also passed round some work she had done on possible flyers for the association. It was felt that these were all good ideas that could be used.

9. Funding

The lottery funding that we received totaled £5,400. This was to include items such as:

- Lap top
- Display boards
- Annual trip
- Machinery/equipment

It was also noted that Daye and Ali had made suggestions on other funding streams. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

10. Speakers

There followed a discussion about inviting a planning consultant to talk to the group. Karen stated that her husband (Andrew McCafferty Associates) might be willing to do something if he knew in advance what members were looking for. There was also Robin Thomson at Warren Consultants. To be considered at a future meeting.

Other suggestions were; beekeeper, or herbalist.

11. AOB

- Carol passed round some photographs of geese and sheep in the snow and asked for members to remember and send her photographs for the calendar. Now that spring is here she would like some pictures of lambs, calves and piglets.
- Lending library. Information from Gillian Brown who has two books she is willing to lend. Carol to distribute details with a reminder to members to send her details. This info will be held on the website.

12. DONM – Check www.smallholders.info for further details.