

MINUTES OF STANWICK COMMUNITY GARDEN MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

Special meeting On 28th July 2021 Held in the summerhouse

Note: *This was a special meeting to discuss specifically the subject of volunteers as we can no longer keep on top of the weeding in the garden*

Present; Dave Cox (Chairman), Clare Annable (Treasurer), Brenda Marshall (Secretary)
Carolyn Brawn, Lucy Speirs

1. **Apologies:** Janet Carrington

Following a recent meeting with community support workers from Northants Adult Social Services which Clare attended and Jenny Hodgson arranged we felt that we should discuss the offer of volunteers from this source to help keep the garden tidy.

Natalie Ogdon from NASS said that they have clients who would benefit from volunteering and had this to say, *"we have several individuals that may find coming along to this a good experience. They want to connect more with their community which helps them lead to friendships etc. and feeling part of something."*

Clare understood that these would be adults that want to gain in personal development/confidence and would be happy being 'told what to do' and, therefore, would want to come to the Gardens when we were there.

The committee commented that we do not go to the gardens at regular times and no longer meet regularly on a Monday afternoon. This is largely because the retired members amongst us are getting older and have health issues or have other commitments.

It was pointed out that these volunteers would be supervised initially, but if felt appropriate, some may be able to attend eventually on their own. They, in particular, have a client in Raunds that lives with his mum and *'their garden is fantastic'*, he enjoys gardening and would be quite happy to weed! It would be the responsibility of NASS to risk assess their visits to the Gardens but they, if I understood correctly, considered them able to visit as members of the community – not as an organised group (and therefore they would fall under our normal member rules) as they pointed out, we do not ask members if they 'vulnerable' and currently, the Gardens are open to anyone to enter at any time.

We do have an inclusion policy in that the gardens are open to members and non-members alike and it was said that one of us could arrange to be there for the induction period. There was a concern that the volunteers would not have a chance to socialize so we decided to have a regular monthly work party along the same lines as the Pocket Park, who are also going to be involved in this scheme. We will advertise for helpers on the second Saturday of each month. This means that any of NASS clients can come along with their supervisor and meet other people on these occasions. The first work party will be on Saturday 14th August between 10am and 12noon.

Brenda explained that we have had other requests from different groups, some of which want to use us to be responsible for their clients. We will not and cannot do so and a letter will be worded to reply any of these emails explaining our set up.

Serve are still interested in bringing people to the gardens but these will be completely supervised by themselves and be their own responsibility.

The decision was that we would welcome the help and will try this scheme on the basis that NASS will be assessing their clients and they will be responsible for them. We will not supervise but will be there for an induction period.

We did discuss the possibility of employing somebody to help with weeding but as Clare pointed out, we may have £994.00 in the bank at present but we need to keep some for our annual budget and £200 is put aside towards the eventual replacement of the polytunnel cover.

There were some AOB subjects raised. ...

Mini plot holders will be asked to help with general weeding when they tend their plots.

The welcome sign, which was prematurely deteriorating, has been replaced by the sign man.

A stall at the Church Country Fayre on 4th September has been booked despite the cost of £15. We can't sell cakes as the WI will be doing that so we will sell savouries.

There is some fruit, although not as much as usual, in the fruit cage that can be picked for Janet to make Jam to sell on our stall.