

COCA CORE GROUP: 3rd August 2015

Present: Nathan Walton (NW), Caz Miles (CM), Gerald Miles (GM), Gabrielle Sloane (GS),
Stuart Johnson (SJ), Anthony Bullock (AB)

Skype: Dave Thomas (DT)

Apologies: Gill Lewis (GL), Anne Curran (AC), Rhiannon Tate (RT)

Previous minutes (July 14th) – Accepted

Growers Report

Lots happening. Tomatoes, kale, broccoli, onions doing very well. Carrots and potatoes continue to be harvested.

6-7000 plants transplanted.

6 -7 stages of salad growth in fields with 3 harvests taking place each week. £839 made from salad sales from 2nd of April although £291.26 to be deducted from this for costs. The Sound Café take around 8kg of salad each week.

Winter polytunnel projects soon starting: salad, broad beans, carrots. Squashes and sweetcorn at present doing well.

No need for irrigation equipment yet as has been a wet season.

Harvest & Distribution

Letter explaining delivery charge to Fishguard hub members shown to group and accepted. GS to put into veg boxes on next delivery - £4 delivery per month. **ACTION: GS**

Still buying in vegetables to compliment harvested items. Caz is becoming more adventurous with selection.

Finance & Funding

AB currently compiling tax return for December.

Was some confusion as to whether all income including grant monies need to be declared as this would put account into £8000 profit. Sharon from accountancy firm to advise.

The current account dropped by £400 in July although member's income was up by £200.

At least 10 members are still paying old rates. **ACTION: AB to chase**

Welsh Government's Small Project Grant for communities and charities of between £1 - 15,000 is available. Group decided that new polytunnel would be key item to apply for funding for. Costs needed and whether planning consent is still required. Closing date for application is 11th September. ***ACTION: GM to provide DT with costs***

Other projects that were discussed for funding included;

- Irrigation – water piston pump from stream to feed storage tanks at top of field. Then diesel engine pump to drive pressure to field.
- Winter storage facility – shipping container buried into ground.
- Borehole for polytunnels – ***ACTION: GM to provide DT with borehole costs of last installation.***

Membership

Membership continues to grow. Numbers as of 14th July: 26 full shares, 28 small shares and 6 non-share supporters.

Events

Harvest Party, 29th August

A good meeting was had by the Events Group. It was realised that roughly 40 volunteers are needed to cover all aspects of the festival. Offers have been received from UNA and Facebook contacts. Members to be contacted and availability calendar to be put online. ***ACTION: GM to contact Rugby club for help (£200 for support)***

We all need to 'share' the event on Facebook and help with leaflet/poster distribution. To be put in veg boxes/ shops/ pubs etc. the event also needs to be added to COCA webpage. UNA vols will put signs and leaflets in and around St Davids. ***ACTION: All***

Group agreed to fund purchase of plywood for signage.

Insurance for party needs to be extended to cover the use of the stage. SJ mentioned that we are paying £215 for basic cover and this he believes would rise to £265 to incorporate the stage and an increase in members (up to 60). It would rise to £350 if WWOOFers were included.

ACTION: SJ to contact Tennyson to confirm what the extra cost would be on our standard cover

ACTION: GM to contact NFU to obtain a second quote

It was unsure whether the farm's insurance would cover events. GM stated that the farm has none yet the B&B has public liability cover. There is a need to look into who and what is covered.

Volunteers

GM and CM extremely pleased with the current group of UNA volunteers. They are very keen to help out in all aspects of the farm. There are also 7 WWOOFers on site.

Accommodation:

- Yurt is still to be erected. It was agreed that £150 of timber is to be purchased for decking.
- Plumber from Milford Haven is not keen to use second hand material for fixing issues within caravan and then being able to sign off the work. There are 3 options to consider:
 1. £450 for fitted water heater/boiler
 2. £250 for a fitted gas oven with hob
 3. £150 for all three caravans to be certified as safe

It was agreed that 2. and 3. should be progressed with 1. done at a later date yet before winter.

- A checklist for cleaning the caravan is still needed. ***ACTION: NW and CM to draw up list***

There are still issues with vols using Wi-Fi around main farm house. Doesn't look good for B&B guests and GM and Anne Miles lack privacy. It was decided that this would be put on the agenda for September's meeting with the 'pay as you go' option to be discussed. It was also agreed that the statement of free WiFi in WWOOFer packs be removed along with any reference to it on the website. ***ACTION: SJ to remove reference from website. NW to update WWOOFer pack.***

DT progressing EVS volunteer placement. COCA will host two long term volunteers at 11 months a time if successful. Project to last 5 years. UNA will source volunteers, advertise and secure funding for the placements. COCA needs to update several of its policies to accommodate. These include equal opportunities, health and safety and lone working.

The bikes are being well used yet volunteers could do with more. There are 5 at present. We should keep our eyes open for any more and write a note to members to see if they have or are able to source some. ***ACTION: SJ to send mailshot out to members. GS to write Facebook post***

Cartref COCA

The tyre foundation to the building has been completed and Andy Gill and DT have looked at the detail of bales and the timber frame. Andy Gill and Ben Hughes to start with the carpentry of base of walls in August with 250 bales being delivered in September. Cost per bale is £3.50. Timber has been ordered and will arrive on site by the end of the week. The option of sourcing bales from COCA crops was discussed although in theory this is a nice idea, in reality it wont happen due to time, resources and uncertainty of weather.

AOB

With an increase in members there is a need to increase land used for vegetables to accommodate. Can COCA afford to pay GM rent for the whole field? This would mean an extra £600 a year. To be confirmed at next meeting when all are present yet agreed in principle. CM asked all to keep an eye out for a container (preferably shipping) on adverts/ listings for use as a cold store.

Rupert Dunn starting at COCA next week.

Lesley Davey declined employment due to adverse affects on her tax allowance/pension. She will be approached by COCA to see if she would be happy to let COCA invest towards her new car.

ACTION: NW

Date of next meeting: 7th September - TBC