**General Meeting 6th Oct 2016**

Present Howarth, Paul, Garry, Lyn, Rachel and Mick (later)

Apols Nigel and Maria

**Finances** - £6044 in bank. Gateshead capacity fund still £1443.38 to spend, Berwick grant for PV panels £2969, orchard windfall trust £207.44. In unrestricted funds £1424.72. We still have to pay Trevor for cutting the field and keep £200 for reserve. We have hit the income target and have underspent on some areas. Number of members = 24 (2 have paid for next year not this year)

**Planning day** – don’t want to clash with tree planting, so rearranged to 10th Dec. 10 – 3 share lunch. Try to have it in the stables Rachel to book room.

**Growers group**

Garry to check how much we still owe Iain. Ask him to come either 10 dec or early jan if there is further advise that he thinks we are in a position to use. Or ask Gateshead if we can use the money towards equipment that Iain has suggested or conversion. Or a skype meeting. Paul to talk Iain. Agreed to move the Growers group to October 28th from 21st Oct to accommodate Rachel and Howarth’s holiday.

**Marketing** – Newcastle CVS have offered to give us marketing advice for free. Agreed to ask them to come on 28th Oct either 10 or 12. All to think what questions we want covering in the meeting. For example is crowd funding worth doing. Send questions to Paul to send onto the CVS person.

**Funding group** – Bright Ideas – mick sent the guidance round – the funding group will meet to see what is required. Mick has applied again to woodland trust which will include an amount for a container. Or should we look at crowd funding?

**Membership fee structure** – Rachel had sent round a discussion paper listing various options for the membership fee for next year. It was suggested that the amount of labour and income required was put at the beginning of the paper then send to all members and ask them to comment and vote on which model they would prefer. And see what comes back.

**Publicity/members** – do we need a leaflet that works in black and white so it easier to print ourselves? We need better photos? Increase font size and less photos. What key image for the leaflet? Good veg and social/people and scarecrow? Mick to talk to Kath about the design. Garry has more photos if he needs them.

**Web site development** – discussed using a forum page to record when who is doing the shelf filling and recording what veg has been picked if we can’t get the pages to work. Also agreed to use the website for a newsletter. Mel is taking over the role of admin and is investigating how to add videos for quick how to do things. We need to ensure that facebook is integrated into the website so it appears on one side. Ask James to do this.

**Lease** – we now have a version that we agree but the date for the start is November 2015. Do we change it or sign it now? We need to negotiate with Julie hawthorn to do this. Rachel, Maria and Paul think we need to change the date as we have been restricted in our ability to fundraise or to start the entitlements or to apply for organic status. Paul will discuss with Julie Hawthorn. Garry thinks we should sign it now. Paul will try and change the date with Julie. Organic have to register at a specific time but would be next year now. Organic conversion money is defra money and is available until 2020. Lease is for 20 years, but power to change and woodland trust asked for 25 years. We need the lease by January to get the entitlements.

**Orchard planting** – Garry wants to go for bigger trees because of the deer on the field. This will cost us more, so will get a crop earlier and different varieties. All agreed. Need to put the next lot in blocks with tractor gaps.

**National Trust** - Julie hawthorn would like to come to a general meeting. Mick to tell her about next meeting on 3rd nov. One person from GCF to go to walled garden consultation meetings – Rachel to attend. Rachel to inform Mick W.

**Tractor** – need to insure the tractor now. Brian happy to teach us how to drive our tractor on our field. Mick will ask Trevor to see if he can store the tractor. Garry to talk to Jack about the motor home place.

**Drawings of buildings** – Howarth suggested we get one builder to do all the tasks required to put in the containers and building. Anyone know any builders who would be suitable? Mick to ask an architect who is based in Stanley who might know some builders. How much for hard core? The entrance and under the containers and under the water tank, but what about car park and the track from entrance to car park? The meeting approved Howarths drawings. Howarth to talk the plan through with Julie. Track and bit in front of north entrance and some of car park to be hard core.

**Field** – Could we grow broad beans in the university second year area? It would cost about £178 in seeds would give a cash crop and provide some nutrient to the soil and use the area once it has been ploughed. Yes agreed to do this. Mick agreed to buy 50kg of seeds from Tamar.

**Woodland trust** – Mick sent in new application for funding for £9,000 this includes £3600 for container with an office and a small storage area. The rest of the money is for training, visits, a strimmer, protective equipment and events. There is a separate fund to apply for money for trees and treeguards (PURE). We will get an advisory visit form Woodland Trust soon. We are likely to need £6000 for trees for shelterbelt and alley trees to be planted over the next 3 years. The decision will be made by 9th NOV.