

**Notes of the meeting with the Allotment Holders held on
25th October 2023 at 7.00 pm. at the Hartley Library**

Present: 11 Allotment holders

Cllr L Glander – Chairman of Amenities & Open Spaces Committee

Cllr A Oxtoby

Mrs J Tyrrell – Assistant Clerk

1. Welcome and introductions

The Chairman of the Amenities & Open Spaces Committee welcomed the Allotment Holders.

2. Note of last year's meeting and any matters arising

The notes of the previous meeting held on 26th October 2022 were accepted as a correct record.

3. Any other issues or concerns from Allotment Holders

When recapping the Minutes from the previous year's meeting in particular in regards to levels at the site, It was pointed out that the pathway between plots 18 & 20 couldn't be mowed.

Action Point –The Assistant Clerk to arrange a site visit in conjunction with the Chairman to look at the pathway adjacent to plot 18 & 20 and consider any action needed.

A tenant also advised that on plot 11 and plot 13, there was a large overgrown blackberry bush which needed to be contained as it was spreading onto the path causing a trip hazard.

Action Point –The Assistant Clerk to contact the tenant on Plot 11 and ask them to take action to cut the blackberry bush back as soon as possible

Concerns were raised regarding unworked plots and the impact that they had on the other tenants. The process of contacting tenants and considering circumstances leading to unworked plots was explained. It was also explained that this 'Notice to Quit' process had been reviewed and subsequently streamlined.

Tenants advised the Chairman that certain plots were not being worked and it was agreed that a site visit was needed to check on these plots.

It was also suggested that the Parish Office share a list of vacant plots with the allotment tenants to keep them updated. This could be added to the notice board on site.

Action Point –The Assistant Clerk to arrange a site visit in conjunction with the Chairman to look at any unworked plots and action accordingly.

Action Point –A list of vacant plots be added to the notice boards on the site once the new boards have been installed.

It was suggested that tenants should number their own plots. This had been considered by the Parish Council as a project but was abandoned as it was too costly. It was agreed that all tenants could number their plot either using numbered water butts or numbers on a post or a rock (ensuring these would not cause a trip hazard).

Concerns were raised that plot 37 was very overgrown and that many Ash trees had seeded within the plot. It was agreed that the tenant of Plot 37 be contacted and asked to remove the trees/saplings, before they grew too tall.

Action Point – Plot 37 tenant be contacted and asked to remove the saplings/trees that had taken root on this plot.

Cllr Glander reminded all tenants present that there should be a pathway surrounding their plot of approximately 1 metre (Allotment Tenancy Agreement 4.1) This is to allow for any maintenance and repairs to fences.

It was agreed that the water should be turned off on the plot as we approached the winter.

Action Point –Allotment holder 29 to turn off the water supply for the winter period.

One plot holder present offered to insulate the stand pipes to prevent any burst pipes. The Members of the Parish Council present thanked the plot holder for this offer.

An email had been received in the Parish Office regarding parking outside the allotment gates on Larksfield which makes it difficult if tenants are receiving a delivery. No one else had experienced this problem and other tenants suggested that if this happened again, the tenant should ask people on the site if they could temporarily move their vehicle for the delivery.

Action Point –The Assistant Clerk to reply to the tenant with suggestions to help with future deliveries.

An email had been received in the Parish Office regarding running a competition for the best kept allotment. A discussion was held but it was concluded that this could cause adverse competition between the tenants and also, it was additional work for the Parish Office to organise. Therefore, it was agreed not to pursue this idea.

Action Point –The Assistant Clerk to reply to the tenant thanking them for their suggestions but explaining why they would not be considered at this time.

As the meeting was drawing to a close, one plot holder asked if it might be a good idea to move the annual meeting to Spring or Summer in case people were less inclined to come out in the dark evenings. Everyone present agreed this was a good idea and could be trialled next year.

Action Point –The Assistant Clerk to set up a meeting of the allotment holders for Spring/Summer 2024.

The meeting closed at 8:00 p.m.

Summary of actions

1 Unable to cut the pathway Unable to cut the grass path between plots 18 & 20 due to site levels. The Assistant Clerk to arrange a site visit in conjunction with the Chairman to investigate.

2 Overgrown blackberry bush Overgrown bush from Plot 11 & 13 The Assistant Clerk to contact the tenant on Plot 11 and ask them to cut the blackberry bush back (Plot 13 is vacant so to consider arranging Graham to trim back).

3 Un-worked plots There is a need to reduce impact of un-worked plots. Site visit needed to review. The Assistant Clerk to arrange a site visit in conjunction with the Chairman to investigate.

Once the notice boards are installed, a list of vacant plots to be added to the notice boards.

4 Saplings/trees on a plot Trees having taken root on Plot 37 Plot 37 tenant be contacted and asked to remove the saplings/trees that had taken root on this plot.

5 Water Supply Water supply needs to be insulated and turned off for the winter. Plot 29 to arrange for the water to be turned off and the pipework insulated to prevent any burst pipes.

6 Parking issues People parking in front of the double gates at Larksfield entrance The Assistant Clerk to reply to the tenant and suggest they ask other tenants to move their cars if this happens while they are having a delivery.

7 Best kept allotment competition Suggestion to hold a “Best kept allotment” competition The Assistant Clerk to reply to the tenant explaining why this idea wouldn’t be progressed.