

CHORLEYWOOD PARISH COUNCIL

**INFORMAL REPORT OF THE ALLOTMENTS USER GROUP MEETING
TUESDAY 9TH NOVEMBER 2010**

MEMBERSHIP AND ATTENDANCE

Chairman:	* Mrs M Jarrett
Councillors:	Mrs W Boatman
	* T Edwards
	N Eve
	* Mrs A Hayward (ex officio)
	* R Kipps (ex officio)
	G Liley
	* Mrs A Preedy
	S Watkins

* Denotes Member present.

Also in attendance: Andrew Goddard (Parish Ranger)

There were twenty one allotment holders present.

MINUTES

10/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were three apologies from Cllr N Eve, Cllr G Liley and Cllr S Watkins

10/02 DECLARATION OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

10/03 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 10th November 2009 were approved.

10/04 MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

10/05 PUBLIC FORUM

(i) DOG KENNEL LANE

Dog Kennel Lane Allotment Representative, Mr McCarthy reported the concerns of the allotment holders regarding the hedge bordering the front of the site along Dog Kennel Lane explaining that as the allotment site was open to the public, the allotment holders relied on the residents opposite the site to report any issues of vandalism. With the hedge at the height it was currently and in his view likely to grow in the next six months, the resident's ability to see into the allotment site was considerably reduced. The Parish Ranger had inspected the hedge and advised that in his view no action was currently required. The hedge provided a haven for wildlife and was not creating a sight hazard for road users of Dog Kennel Lane. For the benefit of the hedge in the long term it was not planned to cut until next summer. If it is left to grow up it will form a better hedge providing suitable cover for the birds to nest. The Parish Ranger advised that the intention was to get the elderberry out of the hedge and replant the thinner areas as part of the work next year. Concern over the nettles in the hedge was raised however it was also pointed out that rubbish from the allotments was also being dumped in the hedges and photographs were displayed to demonstrate this. This rubbish was clearly freshly dumped turfs and crops from this year. This caused the Rangers considerable difficulty and potential danger when mowing close to the hedge. It was suggested that local skip companies could be approached to see if they would offer one free in the Spring. If this was the case allotment holders would be advised so that the rubbish and stones could be cleared before the grass cutting started. Mr McCarthy asked whether it would be possible to put an extra water pipe by Plot 16 to meet demand at this end of the site given the number of additional plots that were being added and the Clerk confirmed that this would be looked at. In response to the issues of plots not being cultivated, the meeting was advised of the process that needs to be followed in terms of the notice given and that this does take a number of months. The Allotments Administrator advised that 11 letters covering 14 plots had recently been issued and responses were coming in which had resulted in some action being taken on less well cultivated plots. The issue of vandalism of the plots by both humans and dogs were raised. Mr McCarthy suggested a planting scheme that would help deter dogs trampling across the plots. It was confirmed that even low level demarcation by a low fence was not allowed as the site is common land. It was suggested that an article reminding dog walkers of their responsibilities in the area of the allotments would be considered for a future issue of Chorleywood Matters.

(ii) COPMANS WICK

Copmans Wick Allotment Representative, Mr Sadler reported that plots at Copmans Wick were generally in a reasonable state of cultivation with only one plot giving cause for concern as nearby allotment holders were aware that it had been given up but had not yet been re-let. The Allotment Administrator advised that she was now aware of this plot and encouraged allotment holders to advise as soon as they wished to give up a plot and would make this clear in the Rental renewal letters in the New Year. Mr Sadler raised the issue of the fencing at Copmans Wick which was allowing people to get through. The question of the provision of water was also discussed with the Clerk advising that the water bills this year across all three sites had come to a considerable total barely covered by the allotment rental given the type of summer that had been experienced. The meeting was advised that grant funding was being looked as a way to address some of these issues. The question of whether new allotment holders could be helped by the Parish Rangers ploughing their plots on initial take up was raised. The meeting was advised that this was not possible as it was not cost effective. Mr Sadler also advised that residents adjoining the allotment site were, on occasions allowing their dogs through he

gates into the allotment site. Members were reminded that dogs are forbidden on this site. The Clerk advised that this should be reported in the future to the Allotment Administrator and letters could be issued to the Residents concerned

(iii) THE SWILLETT

The Swillett Allotment Representative, Mr Lazell reported that the problems experienced by the other two allotment sites were not as apparent at the Swillett with most plots being in a reasonable state of cultivation.

10/06 GENERAL

A request was made to all allotment holders to ensure that plots are clearly numbered. This assists in the task of following up plots not being maintained as well as facilitating the judging of the allotments for the Annual Allotment competition.

The Rangers were complimented on their excellent timing of the cutting of the grass this year.

It was suggested that this type of meeting was very useful and that site meetings had also proved useful in the past. It was agreed that a site meeting would take place in the Spring.

10/07 ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES

All three Allotment Representatives confirmed that they were willing to continue in this role for the next year and were thanked for their help to the Council in their management of the sites.

10/08 CLOSURE

The meeting, having commenced at 7.00pm concluded at 7.50 pm.