

**INFORMAL REPORT OF THE ALLOTMENTS USERS MEETING  
HELD ON 11<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2014**

**MEMBERSHIP & ATTENDANCE**

**Chairman:** \* **Barbara Green**

**Councillors** \* **Jo Clark**  
\* **Barbara Dickens**  
**Tony Edwards (ex officio)**  
**Raj Khiroya**  
\* **Jill Leeming**  
\* **Alison Preedy**  
\* **Martin Trevett**  
\* **Steve Watkins (ex officio)**

\*Denotes members present

There were four allotment holders present.

**14/01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

**14/02 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Martin Trevett declared a non-pecuniary interest as an allotment holder.

**14/03 APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES**

The Committee

RESOLVED

That the informal notes of the Allotment Users held on 12<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be accepted.

**14/04 MATTERS ARISING**

The Allotment Administrator confirmed that the padlock had now been placed on the top gates at Copmans Wick.

Investigations had been made into having bees at the allotments but it was unlikely that an bee keeper would be interested due to the cost of the equipment and a difficulty in securing the hives. If a willing bee keeper was found it would then also need a consensus of allotment holders.

**14/05 REPRESENTATIONS FROM ALLOTMENT HOLDERS**

**Dog Kennel Lane:**

The allotment representative thanked the Rangers for their work at Dog Kennel Lane throughout the year and the wider Parish Council and advised that there were no real issues at Dog Kennel Lane. He was aware that there had been an occasion where the cattle had visited the allotments and whilst no damage was caused he asked whether the two gaps in the fence at the top of the allotments could be gated with two swing gates that he was aware the Parish Council had in store, not being used. He also asked

whether it would be possible to have the gate at Dog Kennel Lane padlocked to give some security to the plots and also act as a deterrent to any possible fly tipping.

### **Copmans Wick:**

As there was currently no allotment representative for Copmans Wick, the two allotment holders from that site were asked for their views. As new tenants they felt they did not yet have a lot of experience but given the overgrown state of their plot when they took it on, they did ask whether the Council would consider strimming vacant plots prior to new tenants taking them over. Concern was raised over the ranger resource that would be unavailable for other work if this was undertaken.

### **The Swillett:**

The allotment representative for The Swillett had recently given up the role and his allotment plot and there were no other tenants of this site at the meeting

### **Councillors Visit to the Allotments**

A number of Councillors had been on a visit to all allotment sites in September during which a number of issues had been raised:

### **Sheds**

Current rules of tenancy allow a small storage box but some tenants had requested that the Council consider changing the rules to allow small sheds. Concerns were expressed by both Councillors and allotment holders that sheds may attract theft and inappropriate behaviour at the sites. There were also questions as to whether a shed would shade an adjacent plot and what would happen to the shed when a plot was given up. It was noted however that it was an issue for some taking tools to and from the plot on every visit. The issue would be taken at the Open Spaces Committee following this meeting.

### **Dog Kennel Lane Allotment Site access by car**

Concerns over the state of the track within the allotments becoming muddy and waterlogged had been raised and the suggestion put forward that gravel or bark be put down to facilitate access during the wet months. The site representative expressed the view that the site had always been subject to these problems and that even if any materials were put down they would disperse.

### **Non Cultivation of Plots**

The Allotment Administrator was congratulated for her efforts and success in reducing the number of plots being held on to by tenants but not being cultivated and the consequential reduction in the waiting lists. She advised that during the growing season she would be aiming to undertake monthly inspections.

### **Skips**

Discussion on the possible provision of skips for a limited time period (one day or over a weekend) covered concerns over:

- costs and whether they would be paid for by the Parish or allotment holders,
- rules for the disposal of waste having changed and therefore mixed waste disposal being an issue
- the message this gave by not encouraging people to be green in using green waste in compost bins etc

### **Carpet**

A new rule had been added to the tenancy rules the previous year prohibiting the use of carpets on plots but some was still present from before this rule was introduced and it was felt that the practice was still being used as a means of smothering weeds. It was agreed that a notice be put on the gates and notice boards emphasizing the no carpet rule.

### **Dogs**

It was agreed that dogs should be kept under control at all sites and notices requesting this were being progressed.

### **14/06 ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES**

The Allotment Representatives for Dog Kennel Lane, Mr P McCarthy, confirmed that he was happy to continue in the role of representative for Dog Kennel Lane Allotments. The Allotment administrator advised that she had been made aware of a couple of people who might be interested in picking up the Allotment Representative role at the other two sites and agreed that she would contact all plot holders at the other two sites to seek new representatives for these.

### **14/07 CLOSURE**

The meeting having commenced at 7 pm closed at 7.52 pm.

Minutes checked by Chairman Open Spaces by email 01.12.14