



WARMSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL ALLOTMENTS FIRST OPEN MEETING

**Notes from the Meeting held on Wednesday 20th. November 2024
at 6.30pm at Warmsworth Stapleton Road Centre.**

Members Present: Cllrs. A. Bennett (Chair), S Beech & D Maxey (Parish Chair)

In Attendance: The Clerk, Mr A. Bosmans

There were also around 12 Plot Holders in Attendance – notes from the last meeting were given out and would appear on the website.

Cllr Bennett opened meeting and stated that a contractor had been approached by the Council and would tackle the hedge per the quote he had given the council, This would be done hopefully and weather permitting in December.

The rent collection had been a success with only 7 plot holders to chase – at least five were working or ill and the remaining were due to be evicted, and the plot relet.

The way in which the rents were advertised for renewal was questioned – what about the noticeboards@

They would be used next year but ALL plot holders were notified either by direct post or the email which they had given on their application and in some cases confirmed at a later date.

Question : The taps have been turned off – why have the plot holders been notified?

Answer : It was assumed that as this has always been done in the week after bonfire night and then switched back on in March to safeguard the supply, all plot holders knew, however, since there are new tenants, the announcement would be placed in the noticeboards next year before the event.

Comment : We receive the minutes at this meeting – how about those who do not attend

Answer : To clarify they are not minutes as this meeting is a consultation event for plot holders only – they are merely notes to facilitate comments, clearance and guidance, and they are usually published after the meeting on the website. A copy would be placed for everyone to look at in the Main (new) notice board in future as well.

Comment : What has happened to coming down to inspect the tools and equipment locked away in one of the containers?

Answer : The Council hit a snag with priorities, and the main one was to collect all the rents in October – this will be done as soon as time can be allocated for Rob and the Chair to get into the container and examine the items in there. An inventory of what is in there has already been provided so we do at least have something to go with.

Comment : This has been stated before – why has there been continuous delays on this?

Answer : We have undertaken to give people with plots in an unacceptable state a chance to rectify, however we are now at the stage of eviction and reletting some of them – the rest will be considered – and again the “occupants” will be given a chance to rectify before eviction and reletting.

Comment : DMBC is actively encouraging committees of plot holders on Allotments, we sent a suggestion about involving a small group of volunteers, but nothing has come of it.

Answer: There are no plans to do this at present, however we believe we have started a better engagement process with these meetings, and we have actioned a number of outstanding concerns. We will of course continue to review how we manage the allotments.

Question : Are we still a member of the Allotments Society – it was confirmed that Warmsworth parish Council pays an annual fee for this privilege.

The toilet was again raised, and it was unsuitable for all members to use and certainly needed a good clean. It was also suggested perhaps to look at a replacement perhaps with a composter

Answer : It is very true that the toilet has not been cleaned since covid ended and does need a thorough “overhaul”
The toilet would be serviced, and possible alternatives would be sourced.

There was also mention of a new First Aid kit and somewhere suitable to put the pest inspections by the Pest Control Company – this was noted.

Certain tenants also noted that the rats were running “rife”

Answer: It was conceded that rats can be a problem and that new and better “stations” had been placed for baiting which are inspected monthly, however rats can also be a problem if animal feed is not contained appropriately and anyway all elimination processes are both risky and seldom do the job permanently, however the Pest Control company would be advised to keep an eye on this.

Question: Why are the unattended or poorly attended plots not re let to someone else?

Answer : It is not always that straightforward – whilst it is conceded that some do not pay and will be evicted, others are either ill or away for “difficult circumstances” family etc. The Council is being proactive and has relet some of these already and will do more regular inspections to keep on top of this.

It was also pointed out that although not immediate, the council was looking at a person to be employed with responsibilities for keeping the area tidy and for keeping an eye on underused / neglected plots – this would have to be affordable.

Tenants present stated that there was a need to be tougher with those neglecting their duties – this was noted – and it was pointed out that a review and inspection will take place in January 2025.

Question : Will someone check the rules on livestock as there is a feeling in some cases this is being abused.

Answer : Every new applicant receives a copy of the rules and at the inspection there will be specific attention paid to the rules including the keeping of livestock.

A couple of attendees asked if the Allotments were marketed and whether people knew about a waiting list or available plots?

Answer: There is the website which does give out all the rules and what is happening, but it was conceded that this was not used enough but would be going forward. There has always been contact information and people do email the Clerk asking about availability. Rules regulations and notes etc from this meeting would be made available both on the website and in the noticeboards subject to all the information fitting in.

An introductory pack was also being planned for new leases signed in 2025.

On availability – there is a waiting list – which is not too large at present and Cllr Bennett keeps and allocates accordingly.

There was then a short and slightly unpleasant exchange between two or three attendees – the specifics will NOT be recorded but it was agreed that a meeting would be planned at which certain views could be expressed but this was not the forum for it.

It was also pointed out by one tenant that an allotment is where people can relax and share views and come together as friends and there was, anyway, a need to move forward not back.

Following this exchange The Chair sought to end the consultation and thanked everyone for coming, reminding everyone that this was a forum at which Parish Council rules on public attendance **MUST** be respected and the date and time of the next meeting was already established as Wednesday 15th January at the Hub at 6.30pm.

The meeting closed at 7.45pm