



WARMSWORTH PARISH COUNCIL ALLOTMENTS FIRST OPEN MEETING

**Notes from the Meeting held on Wednesday 3rd. July 2024 at
6.30pm at Warmsworth Stapleton Road Centre.**

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

In Attendance: The Clerk, Mr A. Bosmans

There were also 25 Plot Holders in Attendance

The Parish Council Chair explained as to why he was not chairing this meeting and handed over to Cllr Bennett.

The Chair opened the meeting with concerns about fly tipping, excessive use of hosepipes and certain visitors to their plots locking the gate.

Comment : There are not enough keys

Answer : The Parish Council have spare keys and will be ordering more. The gate should only be locked by the last person on site at night – the problem was someone had locked the gate and left someone else inside and they had to climb the gate.

Question : what happens to the keys of individuals who relinquish their plot, they have paid a deposit, and the key should be returned or at least efforts should be made to get the key back? Also, as we have some keys left – perhaps they should be issued to those who require them.

Answer : We do make efforts to get keys back, but people disappear, and the deposit remains with us – no return key and the deposit goes back to the allotments.

Cllr Pattison suggested the formation of a full induction pack with the offer of a key – this would be implemented in the near future.

Comment : Fly tipping at huts – stuff left there – is this out of the old skip?

Answer : There should be no dumping of rubbish – skips or not – however the Parish Council was investigating the possibility of having a skip at certain times of the year, but these were **NOT** for domestic rubbish – merely for waste items incurred during gardening. It was also noted that a vast majority of plot holders take their “rubbish” away with them.

Question : What has happened about the state of “dirty gardens”

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.

Cllr Maxey informed everyone that they had just had a committee meeting which would undertake to inspect every 6 to 8 weeks and we will tackle neglected gardens, however if there is some valid excuse such as illness / bereavement etc, the occupant will be given reasonable time to rectify.

Comment : If there is to be an inspection, plot holders need to be notified

Answer : This is not a necessity and is noted.

Idea proposed : why not give prospective plot holders a trial to see if they can cope with the plot especially if they are not “experienced” gardeners.

Answer : This is a good idea and will be considered

Question : Is it not possible to have a database of all plots and who owns them, with contacts such as an email address?

Answer: Because of GDPR the Parish Council is duty bound not to disclose names, addresses, or contact information of any databases it may hold. There is a database of plot holders and not everyone is on email so it is rather tricky contacting everyone consistently, however a new noticeboard has been ordered and will be installed on receipt plus information will always be posted on the Parish Council website www.warmsworthparishcouncil.co.uk – to get the information click on the tab for allotments.

Question : Has a position been selected for the new noticeboard? **Answer** : Not yet, but it will be placed so that everyone can easily gain access to it.

Question: will the plot holders get the keys back to the blue cabin as this was previously regarded as a place to “socialise”?

Answer : we have yet to investigate the state of the cabin, but we have a set of keys and will re-examine the feasibility of this

Comment: The cabin was always opened at 9 and closed at 5 – no one was refused entry. The place was open for people to be able to have conversations and a cup of tea and the tools were paid for from a grant.

Question : Why is the Parish Council retaining the tools in storage – when they were clearly for allotments usage?

Answer : The tools are locked up and are the responsibility of the Parish Council. They are designated for use at the allotments and they will need a service and to be assessed for suitability to use but the Parish Council will investigate this with certain plot holders, if the tools need servicing the Council will sanction and pay for repairs and then, under Parish Council permission, if a particular tool is required, then a request to use it will need to be placed by filling in a form and it will be expected that the tool used is returned within a certain timeframe and in a workable condition for the next person to use.

If it is deemed necessary for training to be given before the tools are loaned out, this will be assessed at the appropriate time.

Question: Can we have a list of those assets and a timeframe?

Answer: A list is possible but checking and verifying would have to be with Allotments Committee members at a suitable time – say around 1 month and before the next meeting of this body.

Question : Where has all the fertiliser gone which was bought out of our own pockets?

Answer: Before Mavis was Chair it can be recalled that some was unsold so anyone could help themselves to be rid of the pile.

Question : How many allotment holders are there and is there a waiting list?

The questioner made the point that he knew someone who could prove that they had applied but others had been since the application was made.

Answer: the exact number of plots is recorded but the number is uncertain for this meeting (*its actually 91large, small and medium including sub-divided larger lets*)

Cllr Bennett keeps a waiting list of contacts and names but was not aware of the highlighted case. A central list is not currently kept of potential plot holders, but the Parish Council would duplicate Cllr Bennetts's list and hold it centrally.

Question : Some people are using the water via a hosepipe in the summer for quite an amount of time – can you clarify the policy?

Answer : The policy has not changed, and hosepipes are not allowed – the water will be cut if this is abused – the policy is to allow the filling of buckets, watering cans etc but the water is metered and will be monitored.

Question : Would it be a good idea to have a probationary period for new applicants of...say 6 months to ensure that they can cope with the requirements of having a plot and then confirm later, or a bond put down to stop them leaving the plot in a state which would then be non-refundable if this was the case?

Answer:

The procedure we adopt is to charge them a years rent if it is in a bad state and if it is in a satisfactory state after the first year – the reward is the second year free but subsequent years at the normal plot size price, and it is monitored throughout.

Cllr Maxey then indicated that he thought that this was a much better process than bringing grievances to a Parish Council Meeting and he thought that progress was being made which seemed to be the general consensus.

The Meeting was closed at 7.45pm – the next one set already for mid-September and would be publicised on the Allotments noticeboard and the website.