

HANSLOPE PARISH COUNCIL – Allotment's Committee

Minutes

of the Annual Tenants' Meeting, held Monday 25th January 2021 at 7.30pm remotely via the Zoom App.

Present:

Allotments Committee:

C Walmsley (Chair), R Simpkins, J Cass, B Cass, P Cook. G Merry (recording)

Approx. 18 Allotment tenants

21.001 Introduction of new committee

CW thanked all for attending and introduced the allotments' committee as above. Tenants were encouraged to contact committee members with any concerns and contact details would be circulated following the meeting (*appended here on p3*).

21.002 Who does what and who to contact

CW explained the following roles and encouraged people to get in contact. There would be approx. 3 committee meetings per year which were open to the public and one annual tenant's meeting:

- Roland: Initial letting enquiries and allocation of plots
- Brian: Practical issues at the site and any help or advice needed.
- Charles, Pat and Jackie: Any practical issues and advice
- The Clerk: Rents, payments, allotment agreements, insurance and legal.

21.003 Rents and Rental Agreements

- Take-up, payment methods, signing and returning agreements:** Plots are now at full take-up and there is a waiting list. The clerk reminded that rents are now due, and BACS is the preferred payment method, although it is acknowledged that not everyone has internet banking. She reminded all to send signed agreements in the post, or by-hand into the mailbox at the Pavilion, or scanned and emailed as an attachment. Photographed screenshots cannot be accepted.
- Rents 2022:** RS reminded everyone that at the 2019 tenants' meeting, it was agreed that rents would increase at 10p per pole per year, until the £2 mark is hit. This year, rents are therefore £1.40 per pole, increasing to £1.50 in 2022.
- Public Liability Insurance:** RS reminded all that tenants are not covered for public liability where negligence is theirs and up to now, they had had to buy their own PL insurance. It had been agreed that group cover would be bought from the South West Counties Allotment Association, working out at £3.50 per tenant and is a mandatory item. The council will purchase the cover in March and RS will supply further detail in due course.
Q: It was asked whether this was an extra payment and RS confirmed that it had been included in annual invoices.

21.004 Allotments round-up

- Water issues:** CW stated that dipping tanks are not permitted at the allotments. This is mainly due to the risk to the public but also they would need frequent cleaning and

pipework would be required. For safeguarding, any tanks would need to be covered which largely defeats the object of them. The committee will regularly refill the water tank in the summer. CW reminded all that taps must not be left on, unattended or dripping, and that tenants should not attach hoses to taps in any circumstances, as stated in the signed agreements.

- ii. **Chickens:** Tenants were reminded that permission needs to be sought to keep chickens and any tenants with chickens must keep updated with legislation and health guidelines, especially in respect of Avian Flu etc.
- iii. **Car parking:** BC stated that the area outside the first gate is now very furrowed and impossible to drive. Plans had been drawn up to develop potentially plot 18A (close to the wooden gate) or 41A (close to the metal gate) as areas for parking. Views were sought and there was general agreement that this would be welcomed. CW reminded tenants to please not drive on the ridings within the site, when the ground is soft/wet. In dry conditions, tenants may park by their plot to offload and then re-park in the designated areas.
Q: It was asked what could be done about parking on the verge outside the site and BC confirmed that mesh will be inserted into the ground to shore it up. This forms part of the improvement project currently being planned.
- iv. **Other:** CW confirmed that he, BC and PC will be measuring some of the plots, in case any dimensions were inaccurate.

21.005 2021 Improvement project

BC and JC reported that the projects outlined at the 2020 meeting have had approval from MK Council, to be funded from Section 106 money. These are: a storage container for communal use, a composting toilet, 3 new gates, verge reinforcement, improvements to the entrance track and a rotavator for communal use. Planning permission will be required and this is being worked on. The toilet will likely be sited on Plot 27 and composting of solid matter is via use of wood shavings, urine being disposed of using a soakaway and in addition there will be rainwater collection from the roof for communal use. It hoped to complete the projects by summer 2021.

Q: Questions were asked regarding health and safety, cleaning and Covid-19 protocols for the new toilet. JC assured all that there would be robust signage regarding hygienic use of the toilet, as well as hand sanitiser/wipes in good supply at all times. BC and JC had viewed one at another site and there was no smell. The compost can then be used for non-edible plants. The clerk advised that a full risk assessment is to be carried out at the site, and a cleaning regime implemented once installed. BC and JC were thanked for their work on this project.

21.006 Tenants Q & A and feedback session

Q: Regarding plots that are not being looked after, how will enforcement be applied? CW stated there would be a tightening up this year. Inspections will be carried out twice a year and tenancies terminated where encouragement is unsuccessful.

Q: It was stated that in the recent high winds, a compost bin blew onto plot 63. This is currently stored behind the shed on 63.

BC and PC were thanked for help and guidance at the allotment site.

The meeting closed at 8.20pm

Contact details:

Charles Walmsley - General:

Mobile: 07879 440067 or email: walmsley302@btinternet.com

Brian Cass – Practical help/advice:

Mobile: 07818 095087

Email: brian.cass1@btinternet.com

Jackie Cass: General

Mobile: 07788 440959 or email@ Jackie.cass@hanslopeparishcouncil.gov.uk

Pat Cook – Practical help/advice:

Tel: 01908 510402

Roland Simpkins – Rents, Plot availability/allocation:

Mobile: 07973 772024 or roland.simpkins@hanslopeparishcouncil.gov.uk

Gill Merry (Clerk) – Payments, tenancy agreements etc:

Mobile: 07383 091319 (Mon-Fri office hours) or clerk@hanslopeparishcouncil.gov.uk