

Minutes of the Allotments Working Group

Friday 24th September 2021

Held at Pinetrees Community Centre

Present:

Andrew Briggs CSNPC Estates Manager
Natasha Abrahamson CSNPC Admin Assistant
Hakan Armagan CSNPC Allotments Officer
Phil Nobbs Rodbourne Farm Rep
James Manley Pickards Field Rep
Mick Carter Pickards Field Tenant

1. Annual appointment of Working Group Members

All members present agree to remain apart of the Working Group and suggest that notices be posted on all allotment noticeboards in an attempt to recruit new members and also utilize the Salga shop.

2. Overview of allotments during the Covid period

The allotment sites were utilized during lockdown especially with the Furloughed staff, hand sanitizer was supplied at most gates and the 2M rule was adhered to by the majority. The original time limit imposed on tenants at the start of lock down was removed within a matter of weeks.

3. SALGA annual show

Members noted that there were less entries this year but the footfall had been similar to previous years, local engagement had increased due to the move in location from the Gorse Hill Community Centre. Covid restrictions meant that the outside space of Pinetrees was utilized which was enjoyed.

4. Remedial works & Key Issues

Rodbourne Farm

- The Tree work at the back of the allotment site has been completed.

Pickards Field

- Boundary work to continue the week commencing 25th November 2021.
- Fallen Willow Tree at the bottom end of the field.

Churchward Avenue

- X2 Trees to be looked at on external fence side – Possible TPO's.

Infrastructure

- Annual works to be carried out to cover pathway repairs such as filling in potholes.

Gates

- Locking of the gates is an issue as some tenants do not close or lock the gates.
- Site security, criminal damage and break ins have proved to be nuisance.

Members suggested that the Parish look into CCTV.

The Estates Manager advised that this would be looked into but there are things to consider such as a power point and a WIFI connection to enable this to work.

- Rodbourne Farm requires no extra security measures
- Rayfield Grove entrance gate is bent – **Estates Manager to look into this.**

Members suggested that the Rayfield Grove entrance be pedestrianized, replace the lock on the other entrance to redirect tenants to this entrance.

- Kiln Lane is secluded, dimly lit and surrounded by businesses.

Bonfires

- A few issues surrounding bonfires at Pickards Field, Neighbors of the site often complain, this is not always a fair complaint though.
- Members suggest that consequences are imposed when tenants disregard the allotment rules surrounding bonfires

Skips

- The skips have been good but there are some that are abusing them by disposing of non-regulated items such as baths and plastic tables and chairs.
- Members requested that notices be put in the notice boards outlining what can be disposed of in the skips.
- The Estates manager explained that should the skips continue to be misused, the Parish would then no longer provide skips for use at the allotment sites.

End of season guidance

- Members expressed concern regarding the mess of some plots when tenants have vacated and that this becomes an issue for the neighboring plots as well as the new tenants that then take over those plots and suggested that something be put in place to stop this.
- To consider introducing deposits for plots in an attempt to encourage a better end of tenancy condition.
- Members suggested that a booklet be provided to tenants containing winter guidelines.

Parish Tractor

- The Estates Manger informed members that the Allotments Officer is to undergo Tractor Training.

Allotment Sizes & Chargers

- The Administration assistant informed members that the Parish had recently installed a new software system to efficiently manage the allotment accounts.
- Revisions have also been made to the allotment sizes and prices by implementing a professional measuring system, all plots have been re measured and are now priced to reflect this.

- The price increase is the first increase since the Parish had taken over the allotments from Swindon Borough Council.