



Crediton Town Council



Report of the Allotment Sub-Committee meeting held on 19 June, 2006

Present: Councillors Miss J Harris (Chairman)
Mr R Adams
Mr F Letch

In Attendance: Clerk Mr M Maggs

1. Election of Chairman & Vice-Chairman

- a) Councillor Harris was elected as Chairman.
- b) No Vice Chairman was elected.

2. To receive apologies

None.

3. Declarations of Interest

None.

4. Chairman's Announcements

None.

5. Public Question Time

None.

6. Inspection Report (*appended*)

The inspection report had been completed and circulated by the Assistant Town Clerk at the last General Purposes Committee meeting. Additional copies and further information had been provided for this meeting.

For the benefit of Councillor Letch, the Chairman provided a brief update and explanation on the current situation with the tenancy agreement and liability insurance.

- *Tenancy Agreements*
Approximately half had signed the new agreement.
- *Rents*
As report.
- *Insurance*
Verbal confirmation of tenants' personal liability had been received. Councillor Adams requested that written confirmation be circulated to members – when received. A full explanation would be provided at the proposed tenants' meeting.
It was recommended that a letter and invitation be sent out to all tenants to attend a meeting with members of the Allotment Sub Committee. The invitation should contain a ballot on whether to accept the Clerk's suggestion of group membership of the National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners which would include insurance cover – as detailed in inspection report. A decision would be made - based on a simple majority of tenants. Information should also be sent on the advantages of joining NSALG.
The Clerk explained that it would not be possible to administer a system where some tenants agreed to join and others not. Equally, it was not possible to allow two versions of the agreement to exist. It was agreed to recommend that, ultimately, failure to accept the new tenancy agreement should result in termination of tenancy.
It was agreed to recommend that when the Finance Committee reviews the budget and annual rents for 2007, consideration should be given to the additional cost of providing insurance.
- *Site Security*
Noted – see item 8.
- *Operator Signage*
Deferred to end of meeting.
- *Gates & Fencing*
Noted.
- *Taps*

It was recommended that no action be taken, for the time being.

- *Hedges*

It was recommended that further changes be made to the tenancy agreement next year to clarify responsibilities.

- *Pathways*

Noted.

- *Sheds*

It was recommended that action be taken on this issue (letter to tenants).

- *Cultivation*

It was recommended that action be taken on this issue.

- *Hazardous Waste*

It was recommended that no action be taken on this issue but the situation monitored to ensure that no further use is made of this material.

- *Water Storage*

It was recommended that no action be taken on this issue but tenants should be provided with a further reminder of the danger.

- *Vacant Plots*

Noted.

7. **Tenants Meeting**

It was agreed to recommend that a meeting with tenants be held on Wednesday 26 July at 7.00pm at the Old Town Hall. Draft documentation to be available for approval at the General Purposes Committee meeting to held on 4 July.

8. **Moffats Land Security**

The Clerk explained that the repair to the wall had been carried out following professional advice and that the height had been reduced to ensure greater stability. Quotes had been obtained for a wooden fence to be placed on top of the wall.

It was agreed to recommend that quotes be obtained for increasing the height in brick and that further professional advice is sought – if possible at no cost.

9. **Operator Signage** (*deferred item 6*)

Agreement could not be achieved on this issue and Councillor Adams left the meeting. Consequently, the meeting became inquorate and closed.

Signed:

(J Harris – Chairman)

Date:

(The meeting closed at approximately 8.30pm)

1. 2006 Tenancy Agreements.

39 plots with new agreements o/s out of 99.

2. 2006/07 Rents.

10 rents o/s.

3. Insurance Update.

25/05 - Insurance

NFU - Unable to offer a group policy - group policies for all nature of insurance is becoming onerous to administer due to the FSA regulations requiring detailed information on those participating in the insurance (money laundering rules are driving this). As part of household insurance for an additional figure typically approx. £20 they could extend the household policy to cover allotment liabilities.

National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners - www.nsalg.org.uk offer a group policy through Newspace Insurance Services Ltd (Richard Church - 0870 411 6622). The policy must be taken out by an entity totally separate from the Town Council (eg allotment association). Members of the allotment association need to be members of NSALG (£1.75 per person). The policy costs £65+IPT per allotment site. It would be possible for the Town Council to invoice NSALG/Insurance costs on top of the annual allotment rent on behalf of the tenant members of the separate entity, and pass the receipts to the separate entity to settle the insurance costs.

23/05 - Mr Sherwood has spoken to those who signed the petition and they would still wish to meet with the Council. Recommend the calling of a meeting of all tenants to discuss the insurance issue with a view to take soundings on an allotments association. If majority vote in favour of the strategy then membership of NSALG/Group Insurance would be a condition of allotment tenancy agreement and costs would be automatically invoiced for settlement as part of rent demand annually.

4. Site security.

Two reports of trespassers Exhibition Road + shed breaking.

Report of trespassers Barnfield & Moffats no damage.

5. Operator Signage.

Draft signage for review (attached).

6. Gates & Fencing.

All existing gates in good working order. New gate installed Willow Walk.

7. Taps.

Two taps at Barnfield are not "push/stop" taps.

8. Hedges.

Generally in reasonable state. Willow Walk hedge is generally not being maintained along the bottom of allotments.

9. Pathways.

Overall these are being maintained.

10. Sheds – Security (Tools/Pesticides).

Most sheds are now locked. Six were identified unsecured, some with pesticides & tools easily accessed by children, and one with petrol stored on site.

11. Cultivation.

10 plots are in an unsatisfactory state.

12. Hazardous Waste.

Two plots at Exhibition Road are using asbestos sheeting to frame compost heaps.

13. Water Storage.

A good number have taken action to ensure water butts are covered, however most typically the 50 gallon drum variety remain uncovered.

14. Vacant Plots.

5 notice to quit later in year. 4 currently officially vacant Exhibition Road. 5 uncultivated paid for.

Barnfield Allotments

Access Restricted - Tenants ONLY.



Crediton Town Council own and operate this site.

To report damage, accidents or for general enquiries contact:-

The Town Clerk
Council Chambers
Market Street
Crediton
EX17 2BN

Tel: 01363 773717 (www.crediton.gov.uk)

EMERGENCY RING 999, state emergency, give your location as:-

Cherry Gardens, Crediton, EX17 3HS. OS Ref 283508,100050.

(emergency vehicular access to the allotments is available at this entrance).

Keep Dogs on lead.

No fly tipping.

This site is regularly inspected.