

WELLINGTON TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Allotments Committee held on 21st October 2015 at 6pm in the Council Chamber, 28 Fore Street, Wellington.

Present: Councillors Lloyd, Critchard, Reed and Stock-Williams

9 allotment tenants

1. Apologies

Councillors Hunt and James.

2. Update on plots

At the time of the meeting – 6 plots had been re-let and 4 plots were being vacated and cleared by tenants.

There were currently 16 on the waiting list.

3. Inspections

After recent inspections the committee were happy to report only 1 warning would be sent out. 14 tenants would be monitored over the winter months and 11 tenants would be receiving comments commending their plots.

4. Lock & security

Tenants were asked whether the use of the gate had improved. Protocol is that all tenants must use the gate and lock it wisely, always closing the gate when entering or exiting the site. The committee also reminded those present that the site is private for tenants only and that their tenancy agreement only covered their plot. Access to other plots was prohibited without the permission of the plot holder or the office.

Tenants pointed out that some newer tenants were unsure how to unlock the padlock and that the gate may need some alterations.

It was also raised that recently a member of the public had been into the site selling goods. Tenants were asked to keep vigilant as the Basins Allotments are a private site for tenants only.

Resolved that a reminder of the site security be circulated.

5. Surplus Produce

WHERE (Northfield Centre) North Street, had said that they would value any surplus produce donated to them; 10am is the best time to deliver anything to the centre as that is when the cook is in.

Some tenants had commented that they had already done this and donations had been gratefully received.

Resolved a notice be placed on the board.

6. Tenants Matters

(a) Co-option of tenants

A recommendation of a possible tenant to be co-opted on to the committee had come forward. Some committee members felt that this may be a useful way of getting tenants views heard on certain matters.

Tenants felt that this was unnecessary. Since the large meeting of all tenants in 2013 they felt that they were well listened to and had multiple options for communication with both the office and committee. It was felt that a single or double co-option wouldn't be representative of their views.

Resolved that the committee continue to invite tenants to Committee meetings. Any tenants unable to attend these were invited to send their comments.

(b) Dumping of waste on site

Tenants were disappointed with the amount of waste being dumped on the site. Not only did this kill wild flowers on the banks but also once it had died down created access holes and threatened security. The waste was described as green waste, clippings and weeds as well as produce but also such things as plastics and plasterboard.

One tenant had also notified the office of waste such as flower pots and other items being dumped into his compost bin on his plot.

Resolved that tenants be asked to stop the dumping of any rubbish anywhere on the site. Any waste suitable for composting should be composted on plots otherwise the waste should be taken off site and disposed of properly. There is not a communal compost bin or a communal waste bin, therefore all waste must be dealt with by the individual tenants.

(c) Use of weed killer

Tenants asked if both other tenants and the committee would reduce the use of weed killer on the site and plots.

The committee explained that it now advised black plastic silage sheeting type material to prevent weed growth as this was better for the ground as well as easy to remove by rolling it back and working on bits of the plots at a time.

Resolved that tenants be advised to use the black plastic method rather than weed killer.

(d) Burning of plastic and tyres

Tenants raised concerns surrounding the burning of tyres and plastics on some plots.

The committee explained that this was against tenancy agreement conditions.

Resolved that tenants report anyone saw burning inappropriate items on their plots to the office.

(e) Plot inspection guidelines

Tenants asked for clarification on growth such as brambles and wild flowers on their plots and whether this would be a concern for them during inspections.

The committee commented that wild flowers in a small controlled setting on the plot would be a very positive addition for the entire site as it would promote pollination. The also explained that they understood brambled bushes produced a lot of fruit and were of use but asked them to be kept within the tenants plots.

Resolved tenants with concerns communicate with the office over what is acceptable on their plot. Also if tenants do not agree with inspection comments or wanted inspection teams to take certain things into consideration – let the office know, inspections were seen as a two way process for both parties involved.

(f) Badgers

Tenants informed the Committee that badgers were still causing problems for some. Although they accepted that badgers were a side effect of having an allotment in the countryside they asked that other tenants be vigilant and considerate.

Resolved that tenants be asked to look out for badger marks, holes and latrines and cover them where possible. As well as this tenants be asked to ensure boundary fencing was adequate. A diagram of once example of badger proof fencing would be circulated for those having problems.

11. Future dates

(a) The next meeting of the Allotment Committee would be in March 2016 – a date would be circulated and published in the New Year.

Debbie Bere
Deputy Town Clerk

23rd October 2015