

WHEATHAMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Allotments Committee

Tuesday 2nd December 2008

Present: Cllrs. S. Walford (Chairman), G. Clark, J. Turner
Mr. Michael Wing (replacing David Watson, Glebe rep)
Mrs. Mary Cheale (Folly rep)
Max Wade (Hitchens rep)

In Attendance: Mrs. Irene Casper, Assistant Clerk
Ms. Fran Shortt and Mr. Trevor Barton

- 1) **To receive and accept apologies for absence**
Mr. Copland, representative for Baxendale Field, attending another meeting.
The reasons for absence were accepted by the committee.
- 2) **To confirm the minutes of committee meeting 18th August 2008**
RESOLVED that the minutes, which had been previously circulated, be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the proceedings and be duly signed by the Chairman.
- 3) **Consideration of an Allotments Association**
Mr. Barton spoke on a proposal to instigate a Management Committee of allotment holders. *Note: This document had been previously circulated to members of the committee.*
The Management Committee would remove some of the administration from the Parish Council and give allotment holders a greater sense of involvement.

The Assistant Clerk reported the rules of the Local Government Act 1972 and Wheathampstead Parish Council's Standing Orders governing committees and sub-committees of Councils.

The Parish Council lease Hitchens Field from Hertfordshire County Council and Gelbe Field from the Diocesan Board.

Cllr. Turner informed members that there are national guidelines for Allotment Associations and a half way house would not work.

Mr. Wing then spoke on his proposal for an Advisory Committee. A number of allotment holders would sit on the Advisory Committee and members would be given an allocation of plots to represent. The committee would communicate, through the members who sit on the Parish Council Allotments Committee (one member for each field), on matters such as vacant/un-worked plots. They would also welcome new allotment holders. Each field would submit a report, to the Chairman of the Allotments Committee, whenever required. Communication between the Parish Office and the allotment representatives could be improved.

Folly Fields and Baxendale Allotments could be involved in an Allotment Advisory Committee, but the priority is Hitchens and Glebe fields.

After discussion it was agreed that the Committee would need formalising. Regulations would be needed to protect the interest of both sides – the Parish Council and the allotment holders. Action: Mr. Wing and Mr. Wade to get together to produce a list of regulations to put before the committee at its next meeting.

3) continued.....

Cllr. Walford proposed – This committee permits the foundation of a group of allotment holders, to be made up of tenants, to look at plots and distribution, reports to be submitted to the Chairman of the Allotments Committee, seconded Cllr. Clark.
SO RESOLVED.

4) **To receive a report on Baxendale Field allotments**

The Assistant Clerk read out a report submitted by Mr. Copland.

a) Plot 36 – The tenant of this plot has moved away from the district. The demand in the parish for allotments is so great that the committee RESOLVED to inform the tenant that in April 2009 the plot will be re-let.

ACTION: Clerk to write immediately to inform the tenant of this decision. *Note: Clerk to check if a letter has already gone.*

b) A hole has been made in the hedge and has become a footpath. When it rains the water drains off of the road through the gap and onto the allotments.

The committee RESOLVED to instruct Mr. Dawes to stop up the hole with stout hedging and branches when he delivers hoggin to the site.

ACTION: Clerk to notify Mr. Dawes.

5) **To receive a report on Folly Fields allotments**

Mrs. Cheale reported on work taking place.

Scrub is being removed from the bottom corner of the field. The hedge has been cut down to a height of 5'.

The committee agreed to the removal of an old tree and to cut the hedge (mid field) down to 5' from 15'.

Gaining access to the field the tractor has gone over plot 33 and ploughed up the path between plots 31 and 33 – path may need re-defining.

Allotment plot no. 26 to be split in into two plots.

Mr. Scutt to phone Mr. Mundy regarding repairs to fencing.

Plot 20 would be ideal to turn into car parking if needed.

The laurel on plot 16 is too high. The tenants have had a letter requesting them to cut it down to a height of 5'. The committee RESOLVED to inform the tenants that there is an opportunity to remove the tree while the workmen are on site.

ACTION: Clerk to write to tenants and report response to Chairman.

6) **To receive a report on Hitchens allotments**

Mr. Wade reported that a very successful bar-b-cue was held on the field.

Some thefts have occurred.

Cllr. Turner has received advice on security on allotments from the police, which she will pass onto allotment tenants. The police are sending posters for display on the allotments noticeboards.

Mr. Wade has received a letter from a police liaison officer warning residents to be alert and providing a telephone number.

Mr. Wade enquired if all the letters that were due to be sent off after the last committee meeting had gone. The committee RESOLVED that confirmation is sent to field representatives when letters are sent. ACTION: Clerk.

Plot 45 is in a poor state. As there is a waiting list the committee RESOLVED a letter should be sent informing the tenants the plot will be re-let. ACTION: Clerk.

The committee RESOLVED that warning letters should go to tenants of plots:

61 (***NB check if this tenant has two plots***), 69, 7, 12, 31.

RESOLVED that letter of removal go to tenant of plot 81 (***Check 1st letter has been sent***).

Max to liaise with Clerk regarding plot 43.

6) Continued.....

There are brambles bushes on half of plot 41 – Advisory Committee to consider this problem.

Gate – has been ordered, will be recessed for safety.

Hoggin has been ordered for the car park, allotment holders to spread in position.

Tap to be repaired. Mr. Canfield to be consulted - he knows where the tap is and where to turn the water off.

7) **To receive a report on Glebe allotments**

Mr. Wing (standing in for Mr. Watson) gave the report.

New noticeboard - Mr. Scutt to liaise with Mr. Wing regarding the specification for quotation.

Plots 3, 4, 5 have been ploughed. There is a query regarding the tenancy of plot 5.

Mr. Wing will call into the Parish office and update the field plan from the manual.

8) **To consider new Allotment Rules**

The committee considered draft notes on allotment regulations (circulated to all members). The regulations need time for consideration and comment.

The committee RESOLVED that Mr. Wade will collate comments and bring the final version to the next meeting. ACTION: Members to e-mail comments/changes to Mr Wade.

9) **Date of Next Meeting**

The committee is set to meet on 3rd March 2009.

9.20pm the Allotments Representatives left the meeting.

10) **To consider the budget for 2009/2010**

The committee discussed whether allotments have to be self financing.

ACTION: Clerk to liaise with HAPTC.

Budget for 2009/2010 attached.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 10.10pm.