

**ALTON TOWN COUNCIL  
ALLOTMENTS ADVISORY SUBCOMMITTEE  
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD 16 OCTOBER 2018 AT 9:30AM**

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|          |                          |   |                                       |
|----------|--------------------------|---|---------------------------------------|
| Present: | Councillor Sharon Cullen | – | Chairman                              |
|          | Councillor Pam Jones     |   |                                       |
|          | Samantha Brown           | – | Allotments Officer                    |
|          | Alexandra Bond           | – | Property & Grounds Administrator      |
|          | Maggie Martin            | – | Alton Allotment Association Treasurer |
|          | Marion Morgans           | – | Site Representative, Hawthorns        |
|          | John Pritchard           | – | Site Representative, Whitedown        |
|          | Yvonne Thorne            | – | Site Representative, Wooteys          |

1 **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Mrs Pat Harding, Allotment Association Secretary and Site Representative at Borovere and Mr Steve Herbert, Site Representative at Spitalfields.

2 **Minutes of meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on the 11<sup>th</sup> July 2018 were accepted.

Councillor Jones asked the Allotment Association if they had appointed a chairperson. Mrs Martin informed the subcommittee that a new chairman would be elected by the members of the Allotment Association at next AGM scheduled in April 2019.

Mr Pritchard enquired about the possibility to modify footpath 26C and advised that nobody uses the end of the path. Councillor Jones responded this would require asking the county first. Mrs Martin said that people use the end of the path to walk their dog.

The subcommittee asked Mrs Brown about the situation with regard to the hedge between Spitalfields and the cemetery. Mrs Brown reported having spoken to the Contracts Monitoring Officer who advised that the old part of the cemetery was not on the contractors' job sheet. Councillor Cullen said she would raise the issue with East Hampshire County Council.

3 **Issues arising**

Mrs Morgans advised that the membranes put by Alton Town Council's contractor on Hawthorn's empty plots tend to be blown away and that she regularly has to secure them as the ground is too soft for the stakes to hold in. Mrs Brown said she would contact the contractor so that he comes back and make sure the membranes stay in the ground.

The subcommittee raised Alton Town Clerk Mrs Coney's email advising that vacant plots would be re-allocated in the new year. It was suggested that some of the empty plots could be allocated straight away.

*{Post meeting note – The suggestion was declined by Alton Town Council as the vacant plots had been sprayed and weed suppressant had been placed on the vacant plots and therefore the plots should be left to rest for the time being.}*

Councillor Jones mentioned Alton Harvest Show. It was advised that the event was not well attended and entries were down due to the weather conditions.

Councillor Jones wished to discuss site security and asked if additional padlocks had been received, which Mrs Brown confirmed. Councillor Jones also asked who was responsible to inspect the fencing. Mrs Brown believed that this was part of the grounds team duties, which Mrs Bond confirmed. Mrs Morgan informed the subcommittee that the metal fencing at Hawthorns started collapsing.

The need for new notice boards was raised. A sample had been sourced by Mr Pritchard which is acceptable. The supplier's details are required to enable the Council to purchase seven in total, being funded by allotment budget.

Councillor Cullen asked if there had been any improvement on the possibility to convert the grassed area in front of Wooteys main entrance into a car park. Mrs Brown responded that at this time East Hants District Council wishes to retain the area.

Councillor Cullen enquired about the opportunity for an allotment site at Holybourne. Mrs Brown advised there is little interest from Holybourne residents and the subcommittee concluded that this would only lead to more vacant plots to look after.

The subcommittee raised the question of the plot inspections. At last subcommittee meeting it was suggested that site representatives could help reporting plots that were not kept up to standard. Mrs Bond said that the plan for next season was for her to carry out three official inspections instead of seven: beginning of season, mid-season and end of season. The time freed will be used by Mrs Bond to send out inspection letters to plot holders and process new applications, as suggested by the Town Clerk in her correspondence with Mrs Harding and Mrs Martin.

Mr Pritchard disagreed with the prospect of site representatives taking over other inspections as in his opinion it is not the role of a site representative to perform this function. Councillor Jones asked Mr Pritchard what was therefore the role of a site representative – reminding the subcommittee that some site representatives are not members of the Allotment Association. Mr Pritchard argued that the role of a site representative was to represent the association. Councillor Jones responded that on the contrary the main role of a site representative was to act as a link between the Council and plot holders.

Mr Pritchard thanked the Council for promptly sorting out a leaking tap at Whitedown. He also noticed that the hedge adjacent to plot WH69 had been cut, however the southern half of the hedge near plots WH67 and WH68 is still very overgrown. Mr Pritchard finally expressed concerns about the shade caused by an overhanging tree on plot WH24.

Site representatives were asked if there was any other issue they wished to bring up. Mrs Thorne considered herself happy with the letters that had been sent. Mrs Morgans said that the tap near plot HA27 was leaking at Hawthorns. Mrs Brown responded that she would inform the grounds team.

The subcommittee enquired about Borovere and Mrs Bond confirmed a termination letter had been sent to plot BO17. Councillor Jones asked what happens when plot holders do not return the key. Mrs Brown responded that it was unfortunate however a plot holder who has not visited the site for a year is unlikely to come back once the tenancy is terminated.

Mrs Brown confirmed to the subcommittee that the tenancy renewals would be sent in November. Mrs Brown announced that she was handing over the reins of the allotment administration to Mrs Bond in her role of property and grounds administrator.

4 **Date of next meeting**

The date of next meeting is 5<sup>th</sup> February 2019 at 9:30am.

The meeting closed at 10:45am.

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