

# NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL



## MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Monday 26<sup>th</sup> June 2023 at Normanton Town Hall

Present: Councillor M Jennings  
Councillor B Mayne  
Councillor P Mayne - Chairman  
Councillor C Parsons  
Councillor A Samuels  
Councillor R Seal – Vice-Chairman  
Donna Johnston – Town Clerk

Absent: Councillor E Blezard  
Councillor P Marchant  
Councillor T Morgan

### 001. Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED that apologies for absence be received on behalf of Councillor E Blezard, Councillor P Marchant and Councillor T Morgan.

### 002. Declarations of Interest

Members were reminded of the requirement to make an appropriate declaration at the meeting on any item in which they had an interest.

RESOLVED that the following declarations be received:

Councillor M Jennings  
Non-Pecuniary Interest  
Wentworth Terrace Allotments  
Councillor Jennings is a tenant on Wentworth Terrace Allotments and will not be involved in any discussions relating to this site.

### 003. Minutes

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Allotments Committee held on Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> May 2021 (Minute Numbers 1-5; Pages 1-2) be received.

#### **004. Site by Site review**

The Town Clerk provided an operational update on each of the allotment sites, detailing any ongoing issues, vacancies and waiting lists.

##### Cypress Road

There had been a complaint from a nearby resident regarding a possible leak – Nothing found upon inspection. Water bills to be kept under review.

Vacancies - 1 x full plot (9)

Waiting List 22

##### Edward Street

Access track repairs to be considered.

Vacancies - None

Waiting List 0

##### Ellins Terrace 1

There is no site Secretary on this site.

Viewings are to be facilitated by the Town Council.

Gate Repairs still required.

Potential Japanese Knotweed on ET1 – D.

Vacancies - 7 x full plots (21, 28, 29, 30, 31, 39, 40) 1 x half plot (E)

Waiting List 14

##### Ellins Terrace 2

The site is in a terrible state overall with some significant work required on some plots.

There is a right of way to a nearby field which was not detailed in our deeds. The landowner was previously a tenant but has now given up their plot but still has access through the site.

Vacancies - 9 x full plots (51, 54, 60, 67, 73, 74, 76, 81, 86)

Waiting List 16

##### Gilcar Street

This site is very quiet with little communication from the tenants.

Vacancies - None

Waiting List 8

### Gladstone Street

Some tree work identified after previous quotes were approved. Tree at entrance to be removed and tree at rear of plot 61 to be crown lifted.

WDH accessing site to clear back garden on Mackinnon Avenue.

Vacancies - None

Waiting List 20

### Heys Buildings

Request from tenant to plant dwarf fruit trees to be reviewed after inspections.

Complaints regarding rats received.

Complaint about overgrown path near Armstrong Close.

Fence to the rear of Armstrong Close to be replaced.

Vacancies - None

Waiting List 20

### Newland Lane

Japanese Knotweed coming from Railway Land.

Vacancies - 1 x full plot (16), 1 x half plot (40)

Waiting List 13

### Norwood Street

No Site Secretary.

Vacancies - 5 x full plots (2, 5, 20, 21, 23), 1 x half plot (18b)

Waiting List 12

### Station Road

The site is completely inaccessible and land locked.

Our right of access was through the old goods yard which is now a housing estate.

No tenants and no vacancies.

### The Grove

This site is very quiet with little communication from the tenants.

Vacancies - None

Waiting List 6

### Wentworth Terrace

One plot is completely untenable – 26.

Vacancies - 3 x full plots (3, 26, 39)

Waiting List 10

## **005. Administrative Issues**

Members were provided with an update on the following issues:

### Software Update

Changing to the new Scribe system which was a slow process with some operational glitches which have been fed back.

### Plot Number Signs

RESOLVED that plot number signs would be trialled at Cypress Road Allotment at a cost of £3.95 per plot.

### Plot Rents

There was an update on plot rents with a rent history and confirmation of previously agreed plans for rent up to 2025.

### Plot Viewings

There was an update on sites without Secretaries to carry out viewings. It was hoped that this could be addressed in the coming months with staff / councillors or by taking photographs at the inspections to circulate round the waiting list.

## **006. Allotment land at Edward Street**

An update was provided on the land issues at Edward Street and discussions were ongoing with interested parties regarding a possible transfer of the land.

This was being followed up with the Secretary of State and would be referred to Council before any agreements are reached.

Consideration would be given to repairs to the track once the inspection has been carried out in July.

## **007. Ellins Terrace – Land Registry**

Members were provided with an update on the verge outside the Ellins Terrace Allotments which was not currently registered in the Town Council's name, possibly due to an error with the registration in 2012.

Members agreed to review the position after the inspection in July.

**008. Japanese Knotweed**

It was reported that there were a number of sites with potential Japanese Knotweed creeping into the boundary from neighbouring land.

These sites were Ellins Terrace and Newland Lane.

RESOLVED that photographs be taken of the Japanese Knotweed at the inspections and contact be made with the neighbouring land owner to request that it is treated.

**009. Inspections**

It was reported that inspections had been scheduled in throughout July. The inspections would not include a competition any longer.

Inspection criteria would include:

Cultivation

Is the majority of the plot being cultivated, cropped and harvested?

Weeds

Are weeds going to seed or out of control?

Waste

Are there waste materials on site (in particular inorganic)?

Dangers

Is there anything dangerous on or around the plot (fires, structures, tools and machinery)?

Result

What is the result of the inspection.

Results would include:

- Pass with Commendation for good work.
- Pass.
- Pass with advisory note for small items of work required.
- Fail with written warning or eviction.

**010. Complaints**

Members gave consideration to a number of complaints that had been received including:

### Gladstone Street

Complaint about the tone of a conversation between two tenants.

Members agreed to take no further action and leave the tenants to sort things out themselves.

### Newland Lane

Complaint about the Council's policy on charging full rent for plots regardless of start date.

Members were satisfied that the policy was correct, given the rising costs of managing the allotments and administrative costs which are not included in the allotments budget.

### Cypress Road

Complaint about the use of netting causing harm to wildlife and a request to ban wide gauge netting on allotments.

Members considered the complaint but as this was a commonly used netting available at any garden centre, it would not be possible to ban its use. Tenants should take care to peg down netting properly to prevent wildlife from getting caught.

### Gladstone Street

Complaints from residents regarding the use of bonfires on site.

Tenants had been written to following receipt of the complaints and it was established that the bonfire was actually in a residential garden on the boundary of the site. This information would be reported back to the complainants and Environmental Health.

The policy on bonfires was reviewed and found to be sufficient at the present time.

In the absence of any further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.