

Appendix A

Update from Allotments Working Party for PC information and discussion

This is a progress report from the WP to the Council. No decisions are asked for at present but we would like the PC to give comments, suggestions, advice on the proposals so far.

1. The Wigan Council Handbook.

Members have acquired the Wigan Council Allotments handbook and have highlighted regulations and advice which could be usefully incorporated into the Forest Fold Tenancy Agreement. This would also be useful on the Vicarage Lane Site.

Eileen has agreed to collate these inclusions for discussion and decision by the Parish Council. This document will come later.

2. Report on Gates and Gate Security.

Wigan recommends, and allotment holders would like, gates to the area to be closed at night. Andrew has examined the existing gates and reports that they can be made good and brought back into use.

After some discussion it was decided that a combination locking system was the best option. Andrew would look into a suitable type of system which could function from inside and outside the area.

It was also thought that a table could be set up outside the gates where excess produce could be placed. The produce could be picked up by members of the public. This would stop people wandering into the allotment to randomly take produce, and therefore increase security.

3. Couples allowed only one allotment

It is proposed that in accordance with Wigan ruling two persons, married couples, partners etc. living at the same address should be allowed only one allotment tenancy. This would not be enforced retrospectively. All those on the waiting list should be made aware of this and the ruling should become part of the Tenancy Agreement regulations.

4. Forest Fold Insurance Cover

Only PC employees and volunteers are covered by PC insurance. It was felt that Allotment holders should be clearly informed that they must provide their own insurance.

The Gardening Club have offered insurance cover to tenants who are members of the Club. This would be considerably cheaper than individual insurance. However, only a few members are also GC members. The GC would like to encourage tenants to take advantage of this arrangement. This information could be included in the Tenancy Agreement/ Handbook so that all tenants are aware.

5. Charges for Raised Bed Allotments.

The difficulty of collecting the very minimal charge of £1 for raised bed allotments was discussed. It was proposed that this should go up to £5.00 per annum and should be paid in the same time frame as other allotment fees.

Eileen has written a piece for the PC Newsletter which will hopefully help gauge the local interest in raised bed allotments ... This has not been done before. It will help also to raise awareness of the new Vicarage Lane Allotments and gauge the level of interest for raised bed allotments on the new site.

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6. Diagram of Allotments lay-out and numbering

It is proposed that Chris's diagrammatic map should be used as a reasonable representation of the lay out of the site. The diagram would include Plot 30. There is gate access to Plot 30 for inspection purposes .

Existing plot sizes would also be marked on the diagram.

Jean hopes to draw up a more precise map which it is proposed will be included in the allotments official documentation. She needs access to official OS maps for this purpose.

It is also proposed that Plots should be clearly numbered. (Allotments society recommendation)

It is the responsibility of the Parish Council to provide the numbering. Manner of numbering to be decided by PC/ allotment holders.

7. Tenants Association

Interest has been expressed by some plot holders in the setting up of a Tenants Association. This would serve to

A) give all tenants a voice for complaints and for reporting problems, thus giving tenants stakeholder status.

B) An Association Committee could carry out more frequent inspections of Allotments. (Wigan inspects their allotments every 3 months). This might encourage more frequent tidy up efforts.

C) liaise with the Clerk re problems.

It is proposed that letters should be sent to plot holders to measure the level of interest and suggest a date and time of meeting.

Ira Whiteley