

EXETER ALLOTMENTS FORUM

Thursday 16 August 2018

Present:-

Apologies:-

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APOLOGIES

Rob Shields – Rackfields
Andrea Shelly - Trews Weir (Canal side)
Cllr David Harvey
Cllr Catherine Pierce

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MINUTES

Minutes of Forum Held on 17th. May 2018 read and agreed a true record.

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MATTERS ARISING

Skips have been supplied to several sites and, budget permitting, further provision could occur. However, plot holders are requested to only place material that would be anti-social or illegal to burn (old carpet/plastics etc.) in skips in order to maximize removal of rubbish from sites.

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ALLOTMENT SERVICE UPDATE

Waiting lists

Waiting lists have been much reduced. Letting inspecting working well and contributing to the fast re-letting of vacant plots.

West of the river has the shorter waiting lists and correspondingly shorter waiting times. East Of the river has longer lists/times due in part to longer tenancy times affecting plot availability.

Approximate Waiting list times will be published on the allotments website.

Site security

Following a recent burglary at Cowick Lane and a robust attempted burglary at Guys and Hilton plot holders are requested to vigilant when on site noting any suspicious persons on or in the vicinity of sites and to

ensure the gates are kept secured when not in use.

Becky Wells - Cowick Lane

Cowick Lane is particularly vulnerable with bridle paths at each side and an insecure field across the top. One of the paths is wide enough for vehicular access and used to have a lockable bollard at the Cowick Lane end.

Enquiries to be made to ascertain who "owns" the bridle path and the feasibility of bollard reinstatement.

Data Protection

Following advice from E.C.C. Data Protection there is no need to contact plot holders to obtain their permission to hold elements of their personal data as they would have given tacit permission when applying for a plot and sufficient detail is already held on their tenancy agreement.

Dan Hayward- Smith - E.C.C. Frequency of forum meetings

Proposal that due to the current length of and attendance by site representatives the frequency of the Forum meetings be reduced from **four** to **two** per year.(Spring and Autumn). Also that elections for Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretary should take place at the spring meeting and offices be held for a period of **two** years. All attendees were in agreement.

Budget

Approximately half of this year's budget remains.

David Hayes - Topsham.

Renewal/repair of Trading sheds when required.

Dan Hayward- Smith, Shed are owned/maintained by the E.C.C. estates team and are covered by their budget.

Smartwater kits

A letter of appreciation to be sent to P.C.S.O. Ellen Holah thanking her for her work in distributing Smartwater kits to plot holders.

David Hayes - Requests that P.C.S.O. Holah be approached to ascertain the feasibility of a rolling program of Smartwater kit distribution to ensure that new plot holders have an opportunity to obtain a kit as soon as possible.

Faith Stafford and Becky Wells will liaise with P.C.S.O. Holah to try and arrange above.

Kew garden wildflower seed kits

Those sites that had the kits recorded mixed results. Faith will request more kits for next season.

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ADVANCED TOPICS RAISED BY FORUM MEMBERS

Margaret Grapes - Marypole

Requested guidance on the use of grass cutting equipment and insurance implications.

It would appear that each site approaches this issue in their own way, but the need for public liability insurance was deemed to be essential.

Daniel Hayward-Smith reminded the Forum that if a tenant strims a plot/area other than their own and in the course of which damage or injury is caused to a third party they could be liable for damages. If however a site has signed up to Level two agreement with E.C.C. the site could take out public liability insure and E.C.C. would cover the cost of the premium.

Becky Wells - Cowick Lane. Should a association take out public liability insurance non- committee members would become associate members.

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ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Catherine Jowett - Trews Weir (Canal Side)

Grass cutting of sites.

Should take place quarterly, but had been suspended during the long dry spell. Following recent spells of rain cutting has now resumed.

Richard Bainbridge - Clapperbrook

Requested current number of vacant plots.

Approximately 50-60 citywide.

Clive Wilson - Hamlyn Lane

Requested and information on rent increases for 2018/19

Rents will rise by 20pence per rod in September.

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DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Next Allotment Forum Meeting will be on the 4th April 2019. Doors open from 6.30pm for a 7pm start at the Civic Centre.

There being no further business the Forum was closed by Chair at 20.00 hrs.

(The meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 8.00 pm)