

# BRICKHILL

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## PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of a meeting of the Allotments & Open Spaces Committee held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> September at Brickhill Community Centre, Avon Drive, Brickhill

**Present:** Cllrs Bowler, Chrusciak, Reeve, and Holloway and the Assistant Clerk. In addition 3 members of the public.

1	<p><b>Election of Chairman</b> Cllr Reeve proposed Cllr Chrusciak and all members supported the proposal. <b>It was resolved</b> to elect Cllr Chrusciak as Chairman.</p>	
2	<p><b>Apologies for absence</b> None</p>	
3	<p><b>Declarations of acceptance of interest in items on the agenda</b> None</p>	
4	<p><b>Public Open Session</b> <u>Maintaining a 2m gap at the end of the allotments and the boundary fence with Curlew Crescent properties</u> Could the committee confirm what rights the residents in Curlew Crescent have to access the allotments to repair/maintain their garden fences? Is it a requirement for tenants to have a clear 2m strip at the rear of their plots to allow for fence maintenance? The brambles at the rear of my plot have been cut back considerably since I took over the tenancy some 6 years ago and I do not see why I should be asked to cut these back as I harvest the fruit and they provide a wildlife habitat. The chairman asked for clarification from the Assistant Clerk regarding this matter. It was confirmed there is no requirement in the tenancy agreement to maintain a 2m gap with the fences belonging to neighbours in Curlew Crescent. However, there is a section in the Allotments Handbook which does ask tenants to keep a 2m gap clear and not to lean anything against the fences. In doing so the parish council is seeking to act as a good neighbour to the residents in Curlew Crescent. The chairman proposed that since it is not a requirement within the tenancy agreement the committee should not be seeking to enforce this. However, perhaps a fair compromise could be found which would allow the neighbour access to repair his fence and also the tenant to retain his blackberries. <b>It was resolved</b> to contact the neighbour in Curlew Crescent to request the telephone number of the fencing contractor. This would then be passed onto the tenant who would liaise with the contractor to establish what access is required to carry out the work. This was agreeable to all parties.</p> <p>Is the parish council responsible for the concrete sheds at the allotments? It was confirmed that any repairs are the responsibility of the tenant.</p> <p>There were no further questions from members of the public.</p>	Assistant Clerk
5	<p><b>To confirm minutes from meeting held on Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2014</b> <b>It was resolved</b> to accept the minutes as a true record of the meeting.</p>	

6	<p><b>To receive a report on the management of Brickhill allotments</b></p> <p>It was reported that there were 4 vacant plots at the moment. These require clearance and will then be offered for rent. There is a small waiting list for Brickhill residents. There had been a break-in overnight on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September and the Assistant Clerk had contacted the tenant to inform them their shed had been broken into.</p> <p>A skip would be provided for tenants in the Autumn and this would be advertised to tenants on the allotment gates . The allotment renewals are due 1<sup>st</sup> October 2015.</p>	
7	<p><b>To consider correspondence received from Bedford Borough Council regarding potential transfer of allotment storage hut to Brickhill Parish Council</b></p> <p>The Borough Council own the building and land which was leased to Bedford &amp; District Gardeners Association. The Association no longer wish to lease the land/hut due to lack of helpers and the Borough Council have offered the hut and land to the parish council. Currently the hut has no plumbing and a shared electricity supply with the neighbouring Scout Hut. It is constructed from brick and concrete blocks and the roof is made of steel and asbestos. Members considered whether there was a use for this building. Two proposals were considered:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(i) To ask for the land and not the building</li> <li>(ii) The parish council had no use for either the land or the building</li> </ul> <p><b>It was resolved</b> to write to the Borough to decline the offer of the building but if the building was demolished (paid for by the Borough) the parish council would be prepared to take the land which could be used for additional parking for allotment holders.</p>	Assistant Clerk
8	<p><b>To note the spend against budget for Brickhill allotments</b></p> <p>The report was noted – projected nil spend against the budget heading for Defensive Planting for 2015-16 since there were no other areas on the allotment perimeter that required additional planting. In light of the recent break-in members may wish to consider combining the budgeted amounts for defensive planting and security which would give a total budget of £400. This would be considered at the November meeting.</p>	Assistant Clerk
9	<p><b>To receive a report on the management of Waveney Green</b></p> <p>The report was noted – this highlighted two section of footpath where footpath repairs were recommended. <b>It was resolved</b> to obtain a minimum of two quotes to replace the section of footpath from the top of Waveney Green heading down towards Falcon Avenue and these would be considered at the November meeting. Members would also look into alternative surfacing options which may be more cost effective but agreed that a rolling programme of repairs should be planned and budgeted for over the next few years.</p>	Assistant Clerk  All
10	<p><b>To note the spend against budget for Waveney Green</b></p> <p>The report was noted and all budget items were within budget. There was a projected underspend against the budget heading for litter and dog waste disposal since the Borough are no longer charge for emptying the dog waste bins (approximately £200 saving). This would be reviewed at the November meeting.</p>	
11	<p><b>To consider a 3 year plan for Waveney Green for 2015-2018</b></p> <p>Members reviewed the previous 3 year plan. However, with the exception of a 3 year rolling plan for footpath repairs members agreed that any large scale projects i.e. an outdoor green gym, youth shelter etc would require public consultation. <b>It was resolved</b> to see if any suggestions for improvements to Waveney Green come out of the public consultation process linked to the Neighbourhood Development Plan.</p>	
12	<p><b>To consider the revisions to the Allotments Strategy</b></p> <p>Members considered the revisions which were mainly minor alternations such as number of plots currently let and the fact that the site now has a number of half plots. Section 3.4 –self management <b>it was resolved</b> to remove this paragraph and replace with the</p>	

	wording “There is at present no element of self management of the site however the Parish Council would consider any requests for self management in the future.” A copy of the revised strategy is attached to these minutes.	
13	<b><u>To confirm date of next meeting – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015</u></b>	

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 Approved by Chairman  
 25<sup>th</sup> November 2015