

**ALLOTMENT HOLDERS MEETING
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY 14TH JUNE 2024 AT 7PM
AT ST MARGARETS CHURCH HALL, OLD CATTON**

PRESENT: Mr. T. Cooke Mr. B. Sabberton-Coe Mr. B. Legett
 Mrs. J. Vincent
 Allotment holders: a list of attendees held by Clerk to Parish Council

1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Mr. T. Cooke introduced himself and fellow Parish Councillors who formed the Allotments Working Group and Mrs. J. Vincent, Old Catton Parish Council Administrator.

Mr. T. Cooke explained that the Parish Council had taken over the management of the allotments. There will be procedures and policies put in place to ensure allotments are run legally. He stated that it will be possible for allotment holders to raise issues at Parish Council meetings should they wish.

2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 16TH FEBRUARY 2023

No matters arising from the Minutes. Mr. T. Cooke signed the Minutes.

3. FINANCE

Parish Charity funds £1,791.12 were transferred to the Parish Council accounts and these funds are in an earmarked account specifically for the management of the allotments.

Allotment fees for 2024 have been added to this earmarked account – all expenditure in relation to the allotments will come from this account. Monthly accounts are presented to the Parish Council at the monthly Parish Council meetings.

Monthly accounts are also on the Parish website.

Allotment holders are welcome to attend Parish Council meetings.

4. TENANCY AGREEMENT, TERMS & CONDITIONS AND ALLOTMENT UPKEEP

Mr. T. Cooke explained running of allotments is governed by Law. There are requirements under this Law – such as the issue of Tenancy Agreements. New Agreements have been prepared and include the Terms & Conditions for the allotments. Mr. T. Cooke explained that these are existing Terms & Conditions but with more detail.

Under Law the allotment year runs from 1st October to 30th September and the Parish Council intend to move to this however fees will be pro-rata this year (as existing allotment year runs 1st January to 31st December). Fees will increase by £5.00 per plot from 1st October.

Mr. T. Cooke explained that there is a Tenancy Agreement available for all plot holders at rear of hall, addressed by plot number. Mr. T. Cooke requested that plot holders take Agreement and read it thoroughly. There is a covering letter with the Agreement – any queries should be addressed to the Clerk's Office.

Plot upkeep – Mr. T. Cooke reminded everyone that they are required to maintain their allotment. Failure to do so will result in warning being issued. It is appreciated that there are many different “levels of gardener” at the allotments but each individual plot should be kept weed-free and that plot holders do not encroach or cause problems to neighbouring plots/plot holders.

5. SECURITY

Fly tipping has occurred again. Mr. T. Cooke stressed that plot holders be vigilant when on site. Ensure that gate is kept closed and that holders on site question any deliveries.

Any deliveries to the allotments should be informed to the Clerk’s Office giving date, time and what is being delivered.

Close gate after entrance to site rather than leave it open as this will stop any unwanted or unauthorised visitors.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Car-park: Currently self-draining. Parish Council will repair when required. No funding for cost of resurfacing which in any event would draw attention to site.
- b. Bicycles: Bicycles are the responsibility of the plot owners and should be kept on their plot at all times. Bicycles should not block pathways or be left on main path. Parish Council accepts no responsibility for loss or damage to items brought to the allotments.
- c. Plots that have boundary hedging as part of their plot are reminded that they are responsible for maintaining the inside. Parish Council is responsible for the top/outside where this is on the highway.
- d. Boundary hedge along the north of the site, boundary with houses on Spixworth Road and Wrenningham Road is being removed on 31st October 2024. Those plots adjacent to this hedge must ensure full access to the hedge from their plot. Removal of any items, rubbish bins etc. and to ensure no items are leaning against the hedge. Contractors are not responsible for removal of any items and take no responsibility. A reminder of the date work will commence will be posted on notice board and sent via email to all plot holders.

7. PLOT HOLDERS QUESTIONS

- a. Plot1A: Concerned regarding state of hedges along path along highway. Mr. T. Cooke stated that this was Highways responsibility and had been reported and report acknowledged. We have no control/knowledge when this would be dealt with.
- b. Plot holder suggested that the fly tipped rubbish could be put behind the gazebo to keep weeds down.
- c. Plot23A: Concerned that Plot23B had been allocated to a new owner in April and that nothing has been done at the plot. His is concerned that the weeds are encroaching on his plot. Mr. T. Cooke stated that the owner of Plot23B would be approached.
- d. Plot holder enquired who was responsible for control of rat population and the eradication of this. Mr. T. Cooke stated that it was individual holders responsibility and that any rat infestation should be reported to the Parish Council.
- e. It was stated that there is a rumour amongst plot holders that the Parish Council having taken over the allotments/land from Charity now intended to sell the land to developers for redevelopment Mr. B. Sabberton-Coe stated this this was utterly denied and unfounded.
- f. Plot holder: Enquired how did Parish Council take over from Charity and asked about earmarked account. Mr. T. Cooke stated that this has been done between Parish Council

and Charity and that he had no further details. Details of earmarked account would not be given but as previously stated accounts were available on Parish Council website or at Parish Council meetings.

- g. Plot55: Is excess food still going to Food Bank? Where is the food box? Mr T. Cooke stated this was organised by plot holders and the Parish Council were not involved. No reply given by Plot holders.
- h. Plot holder: Can there be a rule that only one plot is allocated to plot holder? Concerned that some holders have up to 4 plots Mr. T. Cooke stated that this is what has happened in the past and nothing has been clarified. This would obviously need looking into.
- i. Plot holder: Are we having a BBQ? Mr. T. Cooke stated that this was for plot holders to organise not Parish Council.
- j. Plot holder: Is there a pricing structure for plots? How are we charging as some plots are larger than others. Mr. T. Cooke stated that there is a new plan being drawn up with each plot being measured and defined. No conclusion this year. Pricing is as stated in Tenancy Agreement.
- k. Plot21: Plot14 overgrown weeds etc. have been dealt with but there are saplings on the plot.
- l. Plot holder: Enquiry has to whether there was any Charitable status. Mr. T. Cooke clarified that there was no Charitable status.
- m. Plot66: Requested that Tenancy Agreement be fully clarified. Mr. T. Cooke stated firmly that he would not enter into any discussion or answer any queries regarding the Tenancy Agreement. Plot holder firmly stated that he would not agree the terms of the Agreement “there are numerous obligations for plot holder but no obligations for Council” and in his opinion this does not constitute a legal document. Mr. T. Cooke again made it very clear that all queries be made to Council Office and at this meeting. Plot holders asking for a further meeting to discuss tenancy agreements. Mr. T. Cooke state that he would speak to Clerk and other Councillors to organise a meeting and plot holders would be informed of date.

There being no other business Mr. T. Cooke thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7.55pm.

Mr T Cooke
June 2025