

ALDERHOLT PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL ALLOTMENT TENANTS MEETING

MONDAY 18TH SEPTEMBER 2017 7.00PM
ALDERHOLT VILLAGE HALL

The meeting was chaired by Mrs Maria Humby (Parish Clerk) with Cllr Adrian Hibberd, Allotment Representative for Alderholt Parish Council and Mrs Kerry Brooker (Assistant Clerk) also present from the Parish Council. There were 13 allotment tenants present.

Mrs Humby thanked tenants for attending and apologies were noted from Cllr Janet Walker, Mr & MRs Edwards Plot 21, Mrs Baulch Plot 23, Mr Martin Hull Plot 14, and Mrs & Mrs Cole Plot 15.

PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

1. Allotment Competitions 2017

- Following the 2016 Tenants meeting, it was agreed with the AAA that the competition would be revised with one winner to be chosen by the Parish Council using the same criteria/judging system as previously applied and a "Tenants Special Prize" to be awarded by fellow tenants. As per allotment information, there would be one vote per tenancy agreement (not per plot or per individual tenants). Prizes of £ 30.00 of garden vouchers to be awarded per winner. Winners of both prizes will be left out the competition the following year, in order to give all tenants a chance of winning. Competition winners will then automatically be entered back into the competition having missed one year. A response of 50% of the tenants was required in order for the "Tenants Special Prize" to be awarded

Competition Winners;

- **Competition Winner judged by Independent Judge**

Certificate and £30 garden voucher to Plot 1 – Ann Hooper

Highly Commended Certificates to Plot 18, Jenny Devine
Plot 21, Mr and Mrs Edwards

- **We only just achieved the 50% response rate and we had several nominations but overall the Special Prize Winner as judged by their fellow tenants was**

Certificate and £ 30 garden voucher to Plot 1 – Ann Hooper

Reasons given for nominating Ann were '*Beautifully Kept Plot*', '*Friendly and Helpful*' '*Knowledgeable and Welcoming*', '*Worked hard to reach the present high standard*', '*Well maintained and productive plot*', '*Embodiment of the allotment spirit*'

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PARISH COUNCIL REPORT

Alderholt Allotment Association

The Parish Council would like to thank tenants for all their hard work over the last year and also special thanks go to the Alderholt Allotment Association who are the main liaison point between the Parish Council and tenants and aide the council in trying to achieve the best for all tenants at the allotments.

Responses to AAA AGM on 9th September 2017

Items raised for questioning to APC;

1. It was noted that the front hedge needs pruning again and it was agreed that the Parish Council would be approached on this matter. **Cllr Hibberd has now pruned the hedge.**
2. A discussion was then held as to whether we would require insurance from the Parish Council and the general agreement was that this would be a good idea. A risk assessment would be needed and Paul Adams offered to do this. **Please ensure this reaches the parish council in good time (ideally at the beginning of November so that it can be minuted at the PC meeting as agreement for the works to go ahead)**
3. Concern was raised about what happens to empty plots and whether it is the responsibility of the Parish Council to maintain them until a tenant is found. Clarification on this issue will be needed from the Parish Council. **APC will be considering this over the next few months, particularly after officers attending an allotment seminar in October**

Council actions:

1. Following the horsetail problems and complaints from some tenants about unkempt plots, at the Council meeting on 11th September, Cllrs agreed the following additional clause to be added to the allotment tenancy;
The Tenant shall be responsible for keeping their plot maintained so that invasive plants cannot take control and spread to other plots. This has now been added to the tenancy agreement for this year.
2. Plot 23 which had the major horsetail problem has been vacated by tenant with no work carried out. APC agreed to carry out strimming by a local contractor (John Powell) which was completed on 5th September and the plot has now been re let.
3. Tenants are reminded that play equipment is not suitable on the allotments and although it is appreciated that this may keep children occupied, it uses up land which should be cultivated and allows weeds to spread as the land is not being worked.

Other issues the Council will be looking into;

4. Removing the problem of inherited tyres on plots
5. Formalise an inspection system by the allotment representatives
6. Dealing with vacant plots before they become too unruly
7. Refurbishment of the allotment noticeboard

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Waiting List

31 plots are currently rented and there is currently nobody on the waiting list. At least 1 plot is expected to be given up by the end of September. Allotments have been re-advertised in this month's Parish News.

Plot costs

Following rent increases over the last 3 years, there are no plans to increase the rents for the next few years. However, this could change if there are any costly works that are required to be carried out by APC in the future.

Allotment Year 17/18

Full plot; £25.00

Half plots £20.00 (there are currently no half plots)

Water

The water supply will be turned off from 1st December until 1st March to protect the taps and pipes from freezing.

Dogs

Tenants are reminded that as per the tenancy agreement, it is not permitted to have dogs on the allotment gardens.

Chickens

Tenants are reminded that if they wish to have chickens, written permission is required from the Parish Council. Currently 2 plot holders have chickens on their plot.

Tenants Open Forum

The following questions were asked by tenants;

- Is black plastic allowed?
- What is the Parish Council position on lids on composters?

The Parish Clerk explained that there is currently no formal policy on either of the above and unless a problem is reported by other tenants or we learn differently at the allotment seminar, there are no plans to change this.

- Could bark be laid on central pathway outside plot as the tenant does not have a lawnmower to mow the grass?

The Parish Clerk advised that as per Clause 7 of the tenancy agreement, each tenant is responsible for keeping their section of the central pathway cut. However, this has historically been undertaken by volunteers with the appropriate equipment and whilst this was still happening, there is no reason to change the clause. It was agreed at the AAA AGM that this would be reviewed next year.

Meeting Closed at 7.28pm.

Tenants were given the opportunity to pay their allotment rent at the meeting with a reminder that rent is due by 30th September for 2017/2018 allotment year.