

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE
OF BARTON-LE-CLAY PARISH COUNCIL HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL
ON 4th SEPTEMBER 2023 COMMENCING AT 7.33 PM**

Present: Councillors B Thomas (Chair), J Mikkelson, N Day (ex-officio), J Paxton (ex-officio)
Attending: S Cowie (Assistant Clerk), 1 member of public
Minutes Taken by: S Cowie

23/131 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE - were received from Councillors A Vale, S Laycock and G Gardner.

23/132 SPECIFIC DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST – Members were reminded of the procedures, there were no declarations of interest made.

23/133 MATTERS ARISING

The following updates were provided.

The Assistant Clerk met with a family of an allotment tenant regarding clearance of personal items and their property boundary with the allotment site.

During the recent tree survey of Parish Council owned trees, it was noted that 3 trees within Arnold Recreation Ground need to be felled. Other work includes removing deadwood and lifting of the crown. The Highways and Environment Committee will discuss the findings at their next meeting and agree the best way forward for all tree work required.

Councillor Paxton joined the meeting at 7.37pm

The routine pest control check took place on 27th July. There were no signs of rodent activity and bait boxes were replenished as necessary.

23/134 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LEISURE COMMITTEE HELD ON 17th JULY 2023

A spelling error on minute point 23/115 was noted. There were no other queries on the minutes. Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the minutes of the Leisure Committee meeting held on 17th July 2023 **SECONDED** by Councillor Mikkelson and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**. The minutes were approved.

23/135 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE WEEKLY INSPECTIONS OF THE PLAYGROUND AND FITNESS EQUIPMENT

The inspections of the Norman Road and Arnold Recreation Ground Play Areas and Fitness Equipment undertaken by the Groundsman on 1st, 7th, 14th, 21st and 29th August were acknowledged.

In Arnold Recreation Ground on 14th August 2 rubber plugs on the swings were noted as missing and have been replaced. On 29th August it was noted that the zip wire seat height needed adjusting. During this inspection an issue with the foundation of the zip wire was noted, item to be discussed later in the meeting.

In the Norman Road Play Area, the damage to the rope ladder was noted.

With the fitness equipment, on 1st August the chip on the table tennis table was noted. On 29th August the soil to ground safety surface was noted as aware. The groundsman plan to raise the soil levels as necessary in the coming weeks.

23/136 TO CONSIDER REPORT OF ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR IN NORMAN ROAD PLAY AREA AFTER CLOSING AND AGREE THE WAY FORWARD

The Play Area key holder reported another incident of young persons in the Play Area after closing. Members reviewed the parks perimeter fencing and gate to consider whether more can be done to secure the area. After much discussion, it was agreed that we should look to plant up the area in front of the chain link fence, similar to the other boundaries, and remind the key holders that they must report all incidents of antisocial behaviour to the Police.

23/137 TO CONSIDER REPORT OF MOTORBIKES ACCESSING ARNOLD RECREATION GROUND AND AGREE THE WAY FORWARD

A report of nuisance motorbikes on the Recreation Ground had been received via social media, and Streetwatch had also reported an incident which has been referred to the Police for action.

The entrances into the Recreation Ground were reviewed it was thought that the most likely entrance point is the opening opposite Orchard Close. There are official entrances opposite Washbrook Close and by Hexton Road and the opening in the hedge opposite Orchard Close is not needed.

Councillor Day **PROPOSED** that the gap in the fence line opposite Orchard Close should be closed off. Councillor Paxton **SECONDED** the proposal and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

ACTION: Assistant Clerk to provide a quote to extend the chain link fence, for approval at the next meeting.

23/138 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE QUOTATIONS FOR PLAY EQUIPMENT REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

Members reviewed the quotations provided for replacement parts for the gyro-spiral, aeroskate and rotator and the annual check of the zip wire seat and trolley. As mentioned earlier in the meeting, an issue had occurred with the foundation of the zip wire resulting in the foundation lifting during use. For safety purposes the zip wire has been taken out of action pending repair.

Following discussion Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of costs as listed below, **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

- Quotation from Proludic to supply replacement parts for the Gyro Spiral and Aeroskate at a cost of £413.59 + VAT.
- Quotation from Wicksteed Leisure to supply replacement parts for the Rotator at a cost of £216.62 + VAT.
- Quotation from Kettering Playsafe to carry out repairs to the Gyro spiral, Aeroskate, Rotator, annual check of the Zip Wire seat and trolley and to break out and reset the Zip Wire leg at a cost of £1,721.85 + VAT.

The total cost for all work is £2,352.06 + VAT.

Members then reviewed the options and quotations to repair the multi-play rope ladder in the Norman Road Play Area. Following discussion Councillor Day **PROPOSED** approval of the quotation from Online Playgrounds to supply a new section of rope and clips at a cost of £100.10 + VAT. Councillor Paxton **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

Funds to be taken from the Maintenance Fund and Replacement Equipment. Any surplus committee funds left at the end of the year to be vired to the equipment replacement Ear Mark Reserve to replace the overspend.

23/139 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE QUOTATION TO REMOVE A TREE FROM AN ALLOTMENT PLOT

Councillor Thomas **PROPOSED** approval of the quotation from Jempson Tree Services to remove and grind the stump at a cost of £140.00 + VAT. Councillor Day **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

23/140 TO CONSIDER PERMITTING STORAGE STRUCTURES ON ALLOTMENT PLOTS AND AGREE THE POLICY

At the July committee meeting it was agreed that further research on structures within allotment plots should be undertaken before a decision is reached. Examples of other sites and their rules was provided prior to the meeting for information. Following consideration of the pros and cons it was unanimously agreed that structures should be permitted going forward.

Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** that standard 5 pole plots should be permitted to have a structure maximum size 6ft x 4ft, and for smaller plots, a structure no more than 25% of the overall plot size will be permitted. A deposit scheme similar to the scheme for new tenants will be introduced. It was acknowledged that there will additional administration work required for the structure application and installation process which will be discussed in the future.

The draft Structure Application Form and Terms and Conditions were reviewed, and minor amendments made. Councillor Thomas **SECONDED** the proposal, and it was **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

A copy of the Structure Application Form and Terms and Conditions is attached to these minutes for reference.

Councillor Day left the meeting at 8.46pm

23/141 TO CONSIDER/APPROVE THE ALLOTMENT TENANTS INFORMATION BOOKLET

The draft booklet was reviewed, and minor amendment made. Councillor Paxton **PROPOSED** approval of the Allotment Tenants Information Booklet, **SECONDED** by Councillor Thomas and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

23/142 TO REVIEW AND AGREE THE ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT

The amendments agreed at the July committee meeting were highlighted. A clause relating to structures on allotment plots was added, following the earlier decision that they should be permitted. Councillor Mikkelson **PROPOSED** approval of the Allotment Tenancy Agreement, with amendments as agreed, **SECONDED** by Councillor Paxton, and **UNANIMOUSLY CARRIED**.

The agreement will be adopted by the Full Council at their meeting on 11th September.

The member of public left at 9.00pm

23/143 ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF AN URGENT NATURE OR FOR INCLUSION ON THE NEXT AGENDA – for information only

Members were reminded that the walkabout meeting of the Norman Road Play Area to discuss grass cutting and hedge maintenance is yet to be organised. The Assistant Clerk will email councillors to establish their availability.

Following notice on social media the zip wire is out of action, a number of comments have been made by residents. The Assistant Clerk has responded to the resident, who has contacted the office to address their queries. It was agreed that an article should be included in the next Newsletter explaining to residents how the Parish Council is able to fund projects, and once details of the play equipment repairs are known, they should be shared on all media.

The meeting closed at 9.07pm



APPLICATION FORM TO ERECT A STRUCTURE ON AN ALLOTMENT PLOT

I hereby make application for permission to erect a shed/storage structure on my allotment plot and I agree to comply with the regulations of the Councils Allotment Structure Terms and Conditions – see overleaf

Plot Number	
Name	
Address	
Telephone number	
Email address	
Type of Structure Requested & any details e.g. tool store/shed	
Size	Length: Width : Height:
Material <i>Delete as necessary</i>	Wood / Plastic / Metal
Preferred Location within plot <i>Please provide a drawing of the proposed location, showing neighbouring plots and any shared pathways</i>	
Date of application	
I agree to the Terms and Conditions and this document forms part of the Tenancy Agreement	
Signed	

Terms and Conditions

The tenant shall not erect any structure including a shed, without the written consent of the Parish Council.

Applications must be made in writing, on the relevant form and submitted to the Parish Clerk for consideration. Any tenant who erects a structure without approval from the Parish Council will be asked to remove it at their own cost. Should the tenant fail to remove the structure, the Parish Council will act and will pass on the cost to the Tenant.

Structures must be either timber, metal or plastic construction. Only one structure will be permitted inside the boundary of an allotment plot and its location must not interfere with the enjoyment of neighbouring tenants.

If purchasing a second-hand structure, please note that it must be of good quality and sound. The final decision on the quality of the building resides with the Parish Council.

All structures must be kept in good condition, to the satisfaction of the Parish Council and shall be regularly treated by the tenant with wood preservative in a natural or green colour to blend with the surroundings.

Loose paving slabs can be used as a base for structures. Permanent bases such as concrete are not permitted. All structures should be adequately secured to prevent uplifting.

Glass is not permitted anywhere on site.

Storage of flammable materials, petrol or spirits is NOT permitted (even in fuel tanks).

Naked flames are not permitted anywhere on the allotment site.

A Deposit Scheme will operate for all structures and will be retained by the Parish Council if the conditions are not met. The tenant is responsible for removal of the structure and base at the end of the tenancy, should the structure not be removed the Parish Council reserve the right to pass the structure onto the next tenant or if found to be unstable, remove it and pass back the costs of the removal to the Tenant.

Tenants are asked to ensure that their structure is securely locked. The Parish Council will not be held responsible for the loss by accident, fire, theft or damage of the shed or its contents and strongly suggest that Tenants look to take out the relevant insurance.

Wherever possible the Parish Council encourages Tenants to install water butts or a suitable container to collect rainwater to ease pressure on the mains water supply.



INFORMATION FOR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

The Allotment Tenancy Agreement outlines the site rules, and it is a legal agreement so please familiarise yourself with the document. Please be aware that any tenant found to be in breach of the Allotment Rules could be asked to vacate their plot.

CAR PARKING

There is a small car park at the entrance to the site. Please do not park in front of the gates as access must be maintained at all times.

We are aware that some tenants choose to park their vehicles on the grass areas at the top of the site. Please use caution when driving up the central or side tracks as they are narrow. The Parish Council takes no responsibility for vehicles or possessions on site and tenants are reminded to be vigilant and keep vehicles locked at all times.

ENTRANCE GATES

The gates were installed in December 2022 following ongoing incidents of theft and unauthorised access. Two gates are provided, a pedestrian gate to plots at the front of the site, and main double vehicle gates into the site.

If you do drive into the site, you will need to open up both gates. Remember to secure the drop bolts into the ground anchors provided.

When you close the double gates, you should close the one closest to the noticeboard first and then lower the drop bolt. Once it has been secured, close the gate with the slide over bar and padlock. Please do not lower the drop bolt on this gate as this will cause access issues. The gates are secured by the slide bar and padlock.

Combination padlocks have been fixed to both gates to keep the site secure and the combination number is issued to tenants at the start of the tenancy. In order to keep the site secure, please do not share the code. Tenants are asked to lock on entry and exit. Don't forget to jumble the code to a random number. If you have a delivery to site, you must be present and not pass the code to anyone.

The combination number will be changed from time to time and tenants will be advised of the new number by email/letter in advance.

WATERING OF ALLOTMENTS

There is water available via several taps. The use of a hosepipe is currently permitted but must only be used when the allotment holder is on the premises and hoses must not be left on taps or be unattended at any time. Sprinklers are strictly forbidden. Tenants are requested to show respect for other tenants when using standpipes. Tenants are encouraged to have water storage on their plots to minimise the reliance on the standpipes.

During periods when there is a hose pipe ban, tenants must follow the rules in place at that time.

WEED CONTROL

In order to control weeds, new tenants may initially request assistance from the Parish Council in the form of a weed killing spray, completed by our trained handymen. We do not own a rotavator, but you can personally hire one from a local hire shop should you wish to do so. Please note that the ground is not suitable for planting until at least 6 weeks after it is sprayed. After initial help has

been given, it is then up to the tenant to control pernicious weeds to prevent them spreading to other allotment holders.

Please note that carpet or underlay etc. should not be used to suppress weeds, for pathways, or anywhere on the site.

MANURE

A system is in operation whereby a flag is displayed on your allotment to indicate your need for manure. The Council does not have any involvement with this system. For further details please ask one of your allotment neighbours. The removal of manure from other allotment holder's piles on their plots is not allowed.

TIDYNESS

Allotments should be kept tidy and clear of rubbish as much as possible.

The majority of waste from your allotment should be compostable. It is the tenant's responsibility to remove any waste which cannot be composted from the site to the relevant tidy tip.

Plots that persistently have rubbish left on them such as pallets, wood etc will be asked to remove them. Should a tenant fail to remove the items, they will be cleared by the Groundsman and the cost for clearance will be passed to the tenant.

It is the responsibility of each tenant to keep the shared pathways surrounding plots in a good clear condition.

PEST CONTROL

The Parish Council use a company for pest control and checks are undertaken every 2 months and bait boxes replenished with the appropriate bait at that time. Unfortunately, allotments are a great habitat for rodents, offering shelter, food and water. Keeping your allotment tidy and limiting potential habitats such as compost heaps will help. If you do have a compost heap, make it rat proof by placing wire underneath and extending the wire around the sides of the bin. We recommend that you check compost bins weekly in the winter for signs of rat activity. If you do see rats on the allotment, please let the Parish Office know so action can be taken.

DOGS

Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times and should remain within the boundary of the owner's allotment. Dog owners/carers must show consideration for other allotment users, particularly with regard to their personal safety and well-being. Neighbouring plot holders are responsible for the appropriate separation of dogs. No more than two dogs are permitted on any one allotment plot at any one time. All dog mess must be disposed of off-site. Plot holders will be held responsible for any dog mess which is not removed. See clause 2.13.

CHILDREN ON AN ALLOTMENT

Children are permitted on site but must be supervised at all times. Please do not allow children to walk onto neighbouring plots. It is advisable to encourage hand washing or have wipes/sanitising gel with you at all times.

SHARING OR SUB-LETTING

Tenants may have help working their allotment, but sub-letting is strictly forbidden. Please be aware that where the tenancy ends, any persons helping the tenant are not automatically entitled to take on the plot and that the plot will be relet at the Council's discretion.

KEEPING YOUR DETAILS UP-TO-DATE

It is the tenant's responsibility to keep their details up to date, if you move home or change your email or telephone number, please let the Parish Office know. All personal details are stored confidentially and not shared. Please refer to the Parish Council's Privacy Policy.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I CAN'T MANAGE MY PLOT OR WANT TO GIVE UP

We understand that tenants will occasionally have difficulties maintaining their plots to an acceptable level from time to time. If you experience difficulties, please speak to the Parish Office straight away. Often tenants put off speaking to the office and their plot then becomes unmanageable. It may be possible for a plot to be split, or help offered to get things back on track. If you are experiencing difficulties, please speak to us, we will always work with tenants to find a solution.

Should a Tenant wish to give notice it must be made in writing at which point the tenancy end date will be agreed in line with the Tenancy Agreement.

BONFIRES

Bonfires, BBQ's or naked flames are not permitted anywhere on the allotment site. Any tenant found to have a fire will be in breach of the Tenancy Agreement and could be asked to vacate their plot. Please refer to point 2.17 of the Tenancy Agreement.

GENERAL ADVICE FOR SAFETY WHEN ON THE ALLOTMENT SITE

Tenants are responsible for their own safety and possessions as well as that of any child or visitor to the allotment garden.

Tenants often spend long periods of time on their own, working their plots. When working alone, it is advisable that you let someone know where you are and when you will be back. If you have a mobile phone, take it with you.

To ensure the site remains secure please lock the gate behind you upon entering and leaving the site. Remember to leave the lock on a random number and do not share the code.

You should be aware of risks to yourself and others, from sharp objects, timber and objects left lying around i.e. tools. Glass is not permitted on site.

Always wear sturdy footwear and wearing gloves is advisable but particularly if you are handling manure.

Ensure that your tetanus vaccinations are up to date. If you do cut yourself, cover with a waterproof dressing.

Don't forget to wash your hands before eating. Having hand sterilising gel or wipes available is a good idea.

Be aware of weather conditions that can affect walking surfaces such as hardcore and grass. Don't forget to protect yourself from sun damage.

Allotment sites are a community, get to know your neighbours, they can offer advice, help and you could even make a new friend!

ANNUAL COMPETITION FOR 'BEST KEPT ALLOTMENT' TO INCLUDE 'BEST NEWCOMER'

The competition runs annually and all plots are included. A prize is awarded to the best kept allotment, and runner up and there is a prize of the best newcomer. Details of the judging criteria are included in your welcome pack.

Barton-le-Clay Parish Council

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