

**ALLOTMENT HOLDERS MEETING  
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY FEBRUARY 18<sup>TH</sup> 2025 AT 7PM  
AT THE PAVILION, RECREATION GROUND, OLD CATTON**

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

**1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Mr. T. Cooke introduced himself and fellow Parish Councillors who form the Allotment Working Group and Mrs. V. Middleton, Old Catton Parish Council Administrator.

**2. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 14<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2024**

No matters arising from the Minutes. Mr. T. Cooke signed the Minutes. It was AGREED that the Minutes, which had been circulated with the Agenda, be confirmed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

**3. FINANCE**

Parish Charity funds 31/03/2024 were £1,319.87

Following deductions, including, but not limited to; skip hire, hedge & tree maintenance, water rates, insurance, costs linked to plot clearance, room hire, allotment association membership, vermin control a balance of £244.21 remains.

**4. TENANCY AGREEMENT, TERMS & CONDITIONS ALLOTMENT UPKEEP & DEPOSITS**

Mr. T. Cooke explained running of the allotments is governed by Law and there are requirements for the issuance of Tenancy Agreements.

To update, the majority of plot holders have signed their Tenancy Agreement, however by paying the fees and being in occupancy plot holders are bound by the Tenancy Agreement, even if unsigned.

Allotment year usually runs from 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> September.

Per plot holder's 2024 request the Old Catton Allotment year will continue to run from 1<sup>st</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December.

Fees are due by 31<sup>st</sup> December each year, reminders will be issued.

Plot holders are required to maintain their allotments to the standard as per the Tenancy Agreement, please refer specifically to section 9.

It is accepted there are different levels of gardener at the allotments, however, please endeavour to keep the plot weed free and ensure there is no encroachment on neighbouring plots/holders.

Failure to comply may result in 28 day notice to improve, which could result in termination of the tenancy, section 12.

A number of plots had been returned in very poor order and not per the Tenancy Agreement requirements, for which the cost of clearance pertaining to skip hire and manpower costs had to be absorbed.

To act as a deterrent and help offset clearance costs, in January 2025, a deposit scheme was introduced for new plot holders and any existing tenants who wish to take out another plot. This, £100 deposit, is refundable on relinquishing the tenancy provided the plot is returned in satisfactory condition.

## 5. SECURITY & HOUSEKEEPING

Plot holders are requested to be vigilant when on site. Upon entering the site, please ensure that gate is locked, this will stop any unwanted or unauthorised visitors. An instance of fly tipping while the gate was unlocked was encountered end 2024, this necessitated some clearance by Parish Council staff.

Please also remember to park considerately.

Any deliveries to the allotments should be shared with the Clerk's Office giving date, time and what is being delivered, phone 423880, email: [assistant@oldcattonparishcouncil.co.uk](mailto:assistant@oldcattonparishcouncil.co.uk)

Glass is not permitted on the site; refer to 9I, per email of 15/01/2025; please ensure any glass is removed.

Noticeboards will be repainted in the Spring, they are sound but need some attention.

## 6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- a. Hedge maintenance – plots that have boundary hedging as part of their plot are reminded that they are responsible for maintaining the inside. No maintenance is undertaken between March 31<sup>st</sup> and September 1<sup>st</sup>; refer to 9L.  
Parish Council is responsible for the top/outside where this is on the highway.
- b. Water on / off – together with frost damage, general damage to fittings / pipework was incurred due to an attempt to turn the water back on.  
Suggested water turn off is end September, dependant on weather, but 31<sup>st</sup> October latest. Suggested water turn on is 31<sup>st</sup> March.  
To eliminate damage, please do not attempt to control the water flow, the tool required to action this has been removed from the Allotments.
- c. Foodbank – gratitude was expressed for the quality and quantity of donations received.  
Please leave offerings in the blue box in the carpark.  
**ACTION:** Confirmation of collection days and dates and contact have been requested and will be shared soonest.
- d. Since the bees have left the site, there may be the opportunity to welcome 2 or 3 hives to be sited at the old burn area, query whether there an appetite for this, majority at the meeting would welcome bees.  
**ACTION:** voting email sent 19/02/25, please reply by CoB 05/03/25, decision will be made based on the consensus.  
**Info** – the mesh linked to the bees was in poor order, was gathered up and placed in a compost bin on plot 8/15, the posts were noticed close-by, they will be gathered up and placed in the Gazebo for collection. These items were paid for by the Parish Charity.
- e. Numbers have been ordered to affix to the posts including A and Bs.
- f. It was shared that there is an Old Catton Allotment Holders Facebook page and all were welcome to join.

## 7. PLOT HOLDERS QUESTIONS

- a. **Plot 32&33:**
- Requested water off to be end October – please refer to 6A.
  - Ref. balance of £244.21, observed that with adequate monitoring, excessive clearance activities / costs should not be an issue going forward.
- b. **Plot 4A:**
- Reminder issued that here are 2 large water barrels behind the Gazebo.
  - Queried refundable deposit and who would determine if it were to be returned – confirmed this would be actioned by the Allotment Working Group.
  - Queried could chippings be organised via Catton Park as previously actioned for the Gazebo communal space, agreed this can be arranged.  
**ACTION:** please put forward some dates to the office to be agreed with the Team at Catton Park.
- c. **Plot 66:** Highlighted tenancy was in husband's name and assumed it would automatically transfer if unable / unwilling to work the allotment, this is not the case, the tenancy is in the name of the plot holder.  
Please consider this when renewing and be assured consideration of continuance of tenancy in a partner's name would be reviewed in extenuating circumstances.
- d. **Plot 29:**
- Requested an update on transfer of ownership.  
**ACTION:** this remains ongoing, dissolution of the charity to be investigated. Land Registry guidance needed. Please remain assured that historically the land was used for Allotments and will continue to be the case under the Parish Council.
  - Requested an update re. liability and accountability of persons on site, signage was suggested to include a sign in for plot holders and one for visitors and a no dogs sign.  
**RESPONSE:** Gate is to be locked on entry to prevent unauthorised access, 9V. Dogs are not permitted as per 9E (except for disability assistance dogs).
  - Who is responsible for which boundary  
**RESPONSE:** This would need to be confirmed with the title deeds and is linked to the transfer of ownership via the Land Registry.
- e. **Plot 31:** Queried the process to monitor / review plots, suggesting it was in everyone's interest to maintain plots in good order. Suggest diarised reviews / monitoring visits. Also suggested a collaborative approach to monitoring and a willingness to be involved.  
**ACTION** – volunteer(s) to be sought to join Allotment Working Group representative(s) and plot holder 31 to undertake a quarterly walk around to encourage good practice and foster good relationships.  
**RESPONSE** – re. inspections, these by nature, should remain ad hoc, point 4 and 9R
- f. **Plot 85:** new plot holder has inherited some scrap metal, mindful of the budget but please could removal be considered  
**ACTION:** Council staff will assess ASAP.
- g. **Plot 17:**
- ref damage to water connectors and staffing / contractor costs to rectify, could these be claimed under the insurance and why are there 2 forms of insurance. Allotment Society offer insurance, and a yearly insurance is also paid.  
**RESPONSE** – The allotment Society quote their "insurance does NOT cover you for loss or damage to sheds or their contents and IS NOT personal injury cover. It is a liability policy - not a material damage policy. This insurance does not replace the requirement for associations, councils, or landowners to obtain Property Owners or Public Liability Insurance to cover self-management responsibilities, communal areas, site shops, or events and site tours etc."

The Allotment Society insurance is linked to the Parish Council and not individuals, a separate yearly insurance is needed which covers the entire site, including the gazebo, personal accident and public liability.

Multiple small claims will increase the yearly dividend and also increase the excess.

- Observation – suggest all refrain from feeding the wildlife by hanging fat-balls this encourages vermin, refer to 9U.

- h. **Plot 66:** Who has responsibility for hedging and why was the hedge removed near the bungalow.

**RESPONSE:** Confirmation that the hedge by the road is maintained by the Parish Council. The hedge removed by the bungalow will be replaced with whips in the Springtime, which are FoC via the Woodland Trust. Once established, the top will be maintained by the Parish Council while the sides will be tended to by adjoining Allotment Holder

**Please also refer to 6A.**

**Info** The reason the hedge was removed was due to it being overgrown with ivy.

With no further business to discuss Mr. T. Cooke thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 20:00pm.

Mr T Cooke  
February 2025

DRAFT