

Blandford Allotment Society

Minutes of meeting held at the Lamperd's Field Store Room On Sunday 14th February 2016 at 2 p.m.

Chaired by Amanda Bibby

Present: Amanda Bibby - Chairman, Andy Dickinson – Treasurer, Ann Edwards – Social Secretary/Minute Taker, Pat Richardson - Webmaster, Norman Moors – Estate Manager, Diane Mawer – Community Action Days, David McGaw – Plot Allocator, Ian Ricketts – Seed Secretary, Dave Buchan – Upkeep of allotments, Maureen Cawley – Committee Member.

1. The meeting was opened at 2 pm by Amanda. She said that there was no agenda, as the main item to be discussed were the emails received from Dorset County Council and the Town Council. These itemized the redevelopment of land, and in particular the relocation of the allotments. See attached copies of emails and map for more information.

Consultation Period is 12th February to 31st March 2016. There will meetings at the Corn Exchange on Saturday 27th February, 10 to 2 pm, and at the Bryanston Estate Club on Sunday 13th March, 12 to 2 pm. Allotment holders are strongly encouraged to attend these.

The Committee agreed that copies of correspondence and the map would be prominently displayed on the Notice Board in the Barn.

There was a lively discussion on the subject, and it was agreed that the following recommendations should be forwarded to the Town Council, on behalf of the Committee:

- a. Most importantly, we should be given an indication of timescale.
- b. That we would not want free access to No. 6 on the map.
- c. That we would not want free access through our allotments whilst the work is going on.
- d. Regarding the communal shed/barn, during the transition, we would need to have access to toilets, kitchen, lockers etc.
- e. The soil on the new allotments would need to be replenished as a priority, preferably at the beginning of any development, and after removal of stones.
- f. We would recommend at the beginning that the road and paths are laid and water pipes are relaid.
- g. The Committee is concerned about the stoney ground of the new allotments and would recommend that a mechanical stone picker is used before any other work takes place.
- h. It was suggested that the finished new allotments are allocated, whilst at the same time holders keep on their old allotment. This would allow a transition time for them and would mean holders would be responsible for 2 allotments at the same time, for a while.
- i. Compensation – Plot holders have spent many hours and a lot of money on their allotments. For example, new greenhouses, new sheds, nourishing the land, planting trees etc. Plus, it has taken some 3 to 5 years of work to get to the stage they are at, establishing their plot. The expense runs into hundreds and in some cases £1,000s. What compensation will they be offered, and will there be a team to provide the labour needed to help them to uplift from the old allotment to the new?

- j. The Committee recommends that they are involved in the planning process for the allotments, at every stage of the development, including the final marking out of quarter, half and full plots.
- k. The Committee is grateful to the Town Council for listing in their email their concerns for allotment holders as follows:
 - For the allotments to be located on one side and not to be split.*
 - Clarification of the usage of the waste transfer site (due to concerns over the proximity of the school and the site).*
 - Confirmation that the standard of soil will be appropriate for allotment plots (Councillors recalling that it was not suitable when Lamperd's Field was introduced).*
 - That facilities are either like for like or improved and the number of locker units is increased in line with the number of plots that are currently on site (we now half and quarter plots due to demand so more lockers are required).*
 - Ample parking is provided*
 - That the land where the allotments is relocated is on a freehold basis instead of leasehold (this is because some Councillors were surprised to learn that there was a lease in place).*
 - A slightly larger compound area for storage.*
 - Consideration of timing is key for crop removal.*
 - Councillors would like further details of the buffer zone between the allotments and school.*
 - Fencing to separate the allotments from the road passing through to the school.*

2. Any Other Business

- a. The Committee expressed their gratitude to Pat Richardson for all her hard work in getting the website up and running. It is a very easy, pleasant and informative website, and hopefully plot holders will log on to it for all the latest information, both on planting tips, links to other gardening sites, and information on social events, etc. The website is www.blandfordallotments.com
- b. The water leaks will be attended to on Tuesday next in the morning, by Norman, Dave and Ian.
- c. Sunflower Competition Ian has the sunflower seeds, and will have them at the Coffee Morning on 5th March for anyone wanting to take part in the competition for the tallest sunflower. He produced a poster which will be scanned into the web site, and put on the notice board.
- d. Amanda asked the Committee if they were happy to have their email addresses put under their photos on the website. All agreed.
- e. All the Committee did a short walk around of the allotments to get a better idea of what the map means, in terms of transfer of allotments. As there was a time constraint at this point, it was agreed that Amanda and Dave would carry out an extra walk around to locate problems as itemized in the previous minutes.
- f. Ann had received the list from Dave McGaw, of people's addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses. She was asked to email all those allotment plot holders who have submitted their email addresses, attaching letters and map, and asking them also to see the Notice Board in the Barn. Also to inform them of the new website address – www.blandfordallotments.com. At the same time, encouraging them to contact the Chairman, Amanda by email (abibby@bluebottle.com) if they have any concerns.

The meeting closed at 3.30 pm.

Date of next meeting is Monday 14th March at 7 pm.

(Ann Edwards)