

ICKLESHAM PARISH COUNCIL

A local council for the peoples of Icklesham, Winchelsea, Winchelsea Beach and Rye Harbour

Minutes of the Allotment Committee Meeting Held at Winchelsea Court Hall on Monday 12th August 7.15 pm

Present: Cllrs: C Chappell, I Mann and A Rixon

In Attendance: Jenner Sands (Clerk and RFO), Rob Brown (Cricket Field Site Rep), members of the public were also present.

1. **The Chairman Opened the Meeting at 6.15 pm**

2. **Questions or comments from members of the public relating to matters on the agenda.**

Two residents from Icklesham complained about the fact that a padlock had been installed on the allotment side of the resident's gate into the allotments.

One of the residents explained that he used to have a very good relationship with the tenant of the bottom plot until he sadly died in 2019. He said that he used to cut the back hedge of the allotments and leave the cuttings in a pile in the allotments that would then be dealt with by the tenant. He said he did this as normal when the new tenant took over the plot and he came home to find that all of the cuttings had been thrown over the fence into his garden. He has not cut the hedge since.

He said that he originally complained to the Clerk as he and his neighbour had been experiencing issues with rats in their gardens that he reported to be coming through from the allotments. He said that the Clerk had told him that a pest controller had been to the allotments and said that there was not a rat infestation at the allotments. He said that this is ludicrous and that he has now put lots of rat poison in his garden that has sorted the issue but his neighbour is still experiencing problems. He said that following his meeting with the Clerk, he had agreed to a padlock on the inside of his gate so he could go in and out of the allotments as and when he needed to in order to repair his fence. He said that the Clerk has offered to go and let him in when he needs to do this but this is ridiculous as he would need to do this when the weather is right.

He said that the padlock has been fitted illegally and he wants it to be removed immediately. He said that the previous tenant had given him permission to install the gate into the allotments and he would often pop in to go and see him.

He complained that since the previous tenant had died, the bottom end of the allotments has become a real mess and has been left overgrown which has caused the rats.

Another resident from Icklesham explained that when he moved into his property he was told by the previous tenant that he could have his allotment plot however he was then told by the Council that he couldn't as he would have to join the waiting list and the plot would be offered to the first person on the list. He said that he needs access to the allotments to repair his fence as his neighbour does. He said that his access to the allotments has been blocked by vegetation and a rusty old swing set.

The Clerk explained that it is the Council's policy that only allotment tenants and officers are allowed free access into the allotments and that this is not personal, it is the same on all of the allotment sites that the Council run. It was agreed that the Clerk and Councillors Chappell and Rixon would go and inspect the allotments.

A tenant from Rye Harbour spoke in relation to item 9 of the agenda. He asked whether the Council had considered building a raised bund for people to walk over – he had drawn a diagram which he gave to the committee.

3. **Apologies for absence.** *Apologies received from Cllrs Ms. Eldridge and Mrs. Stanford.*
4. **Disclosure of interests.** Cllr Chappell and Mann declared a personal interest as allotment tenants.
5. **To approve the Minutes of the meeting held on 24th June 2024. RESOLVED:** the Minutes were approved and signed.
6. **Feedback from Allotment Sites.** Rob Brown, the Cricket Field Site Representative explained that there are quite a few plots that he knows will be becoming available. He said that he knows there is

no one on the waiting list. **RESOLVED:** the Clerk will put a post on the Council's Facebook page and also include a paragraph about this in the next Winchelsea Magazine.

Rob Brown also confirmed that there has been an increase in rabbits and they have recently discovered another warren which they are currently dealing with which will hopefully improve the situation.

The Clerk explained that there are a few plots in Rye Harbour that were flagged in the inspections that still haven't been worked on. The Clerk confirmed that she would write to the tenants again.

7. **Update to waiting list and to approve plot allocation.**

The Clerk confirmed the waiting list as follows:-

High Fords – 1

Pear Tree Marsh – 0

Cricket Field – 0

Rye Harbour – 0

11B and 12A have been allocated since the last meeting.

8. **Update regarding Compost Heap in Rye Harbour and to consider quotes received for moving it.** The Clerk explained that the compost heap was removed and had left a large mound which is quickly growing more vegetation. The Clerk explained that this could be moved down to the main pathway to build it up to try and help the flooding. The Clerk has received an estimate for this in the sum of £600. This is on the basis that it could be done in 1 day with two men. The Clerk also explained that since the last meeting, she has met with the High Weald Trust regarding the potential pond project and they confirmed that this would not meet the criteria for the funding as it would involve removing some shrubbery which the trust are keen to protect. The Clerk also explained that the representative didn't seem to think the pond would work in relieving the flooding problems however the advice she has received previously from the Drainage Board contradicts this. **RESOLVED:** it was agreed to try moving the mud from the composting area in the first instance and then if necessary we can look into the pond idea if further intervention is needed. The Clerk will also pass the bund diagram on to the contractor to see if he thinks he could do this.

9. **Update regarding Rye Harbour Allotment Pond/ Walkway and to discuss way forward.**
See item 8 above.

10. **Pear Tree Marsh Water Supply** The Clerk had circulated a report she had drafted on the different options she had looked into so far and the various reasons why they aren't feasible. The Clerk suggested looking into IBC containers that could be used to collect and store water throughout the winter. However, upon discussion with other tenants present at the meeting this is unlikely to store enough water to keep the tenants in supply for any length of time. **RESOLVED:** the Clerk is to look into a pump with a water filter that could be used to pump water from the River Brede.

11. **Allotment Tenant Meetings**

To note that Allotment Tenant Meetings have been organised for:

Wednesday 4th September – 7.00 pm at Rye Harbour Village Hall

Wednesday 18th September – 7.00 pm at Winchelsea New Hall

RESOLVED: noted.

12. **Suggested items for future agendas.**

There were no suggested items.

13. **The date of the next meeting: Monday 14th October 7.15 pm at Winchelsea Court Hall.**

Agreed as a true record of the meeting.

Signed:

Cllr I Mann
(Chair)

Dated: 14th October 2024