

HARWICH TOWN COUNCIL

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MINUTES of the Meeting of the ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

held on

Thursday 12th June 2025 at 7.00pm

at

The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich, Essex, CO12 3DS

Present:	Councillors Calver, Davidson, Fay, Morrison, Powell, Richardson Smith, and Wade
In the Chair:	Councillor Todd
Clerk:	Ms Maree Ratcliffe – Assistant Clerk to the Council
Also present:	Clerk to the Council – Lucy Ballard Site Representatives: Robert Bayford, Ben Chamberlain, Agnieszka Chudy, Joan Feaviour and Susan Meadows. No members of the public

PUBLIC QUESTION TIME:

None

A001/25	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> Site representatives - Robert Peacock (Boatswain's Call). Absent - Peter Day (Site Rep for The Redoubt).
A002/25	<u>DECLARATIONS OF MEMBERS' INTEREST</u> None
A003/25	<u>ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIR</u> Members RESOLVED to elect Cllr Smith as Vice Chair for the 2025-26 Municipal Year.
A004/25	<u>MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING</u> RESOLVED: The Minutes of the Allotments meeting held on 5 th March 2025 (previously circulated) were APPROVED by the committee and signed by the Chairman as a true record.
A005/25	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES</u> None
A006/25	<u>MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES</u> None
A007/25	<u>VACANT PLOTS/WAITING LIST/NOTICES TO QUIT</u> The Clerk advised members of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 36 people on the waiting list (most are waiting for specific sites or plots)• 2 plots will be vacant soon – BC30 and BC40A• 1 NTQ issued since the last meeting (TH47) Tenancy will finish on 13th June.
A008/25	<u>SITE REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS</u> Abdy Avenue – Site Rep requested permission to add netting to the existing chain link boundary fence to further protect against the winds. The clerk confirmed this

would be ok on condition that it wasn't encroaching on or affecting anyone else's plot. The Site Rep will be resigning from post at the end of the allotment year and suggested a suitable replacement. The prospective new rep will be required to send in a letter of application, which will be considered at the next meeting. The current Site Rep will attend the Allotments Committee Meeting in July and then the new Site Rep will take over.

Dunns Meadow – Going well so far this year, although on one plot in particular, there have been complaints about it not being tendered and weeds are spreading. The Assistant Clerk is aware of this and is managing.

King Georges Avenue – Everything looks fine, people are working hard, and the tap has been repaired. One plot not progressing as well, KG03A, which is being managed by the Asst. Clerk.

Long Meadows – Nothing to report, all good, everyone working hard.

The Redoubt – Site rep reported that a muntjak had to be rescued that was trapped in picket fencing on a plot. Most fencing is panelled, however the area where the muntjac was found was picket fencing. Assistant Clerk to investigate allotment fencing requirements and to ensure the picket fence conforms to any safety guidelines for wildlife on site.

Concerns with plots TH46 and TH47, the Assistant Clerk confirmed that these plots are being dealt with.

Inept watering, plot holders using hosepipes for more than four hours at a time. Members were informed that the policy was changed 20 years ago to allow hosepipe usage, however the policy may need reviewing to ensure reasonable usage is permitted.

The Assistant Clerk agreed to check current policy regarding hosepipe usage and submit to next the Allotments Committee Meeting. A piece to be added in the next newsletter to remind plot holders that hosepipes should be used within reason and a notice to be placed on all sites stating same.

A009/25

BUDGET UPDATE

The Assistant Clerk briefed members on the current financial position of the allotments budget:

Allotments Maintenance Budget	£6,000
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Expenditure to Date

Grounds Maintenance Outgoings	£0.00
Water Rates	£966.00
Management of vacant plots (if applicable) to be recovered from vacating tenant)	£.0.00

Total income to date	£0.00
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Tenant rate and Water rates	£0.00
Black plastic ground cover	£0.00

Budget Remaining	£5,034.00
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A010/25	<p><u>ALLOTMENT RENTS</u> The meeting was briefed on the current allotment fees and those which had been agreed to be implemented in September 2025. RESOLVED: A further increase of 50p per rod (to £6.50 per rod) from September 2026 and to keep the discount for those in receipt of state pension at 25%.</p>
A011/25	<p><u>MATTERS RECEIVED IN THE POST, TO BE REPORTED OR RAISED BY MEMBERS</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Noted - pond on BC29a – 4 x 2 pond installed in February 2025. Advised the PH to cover it with mesh to keep it safe. • Noted- expenditure of £58.37 authorised under delegated authority for a repair to the tap at The Redoubt, expended from the Grounds Maintenance budget. • Noted - expenditure of £26.35 authorised under delegated authority for lawnmower repairs, expended from the Grounds Maintenance budget. • Clarification on payment methods for rental renewals. It was confirmed that payments are made via online banking or if plot holders cannot access this method, payment can be made via the Post Office. • A previous plot holder on Boatswains Call has complained that they were forced to give up the plot and since it has been taken over the condition has worsened. The Clerk is aware of this and is managing.
A012/25	<p><u>TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING</u> The next meeting of the Allotments Committee is Tuesday 22nd July 2025 at The Guildhall, Church Street, Harwich.</p>
A013/25	<p><u>Exclusion of Public and Press</u> Pursuant to Sub-Section 2 of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 it was RESOLVED: to close the meeting to the press and public for the transaction of the under-mentioned business and for the Site Representatives to remain:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cost recovery of plots

The Chairman closed the public part of the meeting at 7.28 pm.

CHAIRMAN:

DATE: