

North Staffs Allotments Network Meeting  
Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2024

Attendance: John Birch, Uddersfield; Sarah Hill, Gresty Street; Bruce Jarvis, Thistlehough; Kate Mannion; Jayne Stokes, Fenpark/Colville Street; Victoria Shepherd, Newford Cresc.

Introduction: Bruce welcomed everyone and then asked if everyone had seen the previous meetings minutes which were then passed.

Minutes from this meeting: Kate was asked if there was any progress obtaining a plot at Dimsdale, Newcastle. Kate said there had been no progress. Jayne said she would try to contact Newcastle Borough Council to see what could be done. Kate will forward the contact details.

Sarah Hill then gave an update on the waiting council list for plots. This has been reduced to 350, but the process of reducing the list has highlighted a shortage of plots in the north of the city. Some of the sites do have larger than average plots, so the allotments department are in the process of measuring them to see if plots can be reduced in size. It is hoped that would then create additional plots for those on the waiting list. Sarah asked if people had received the information for the allotments competition, which everyone present said they had. Update on Withies Road, there is still one person on the site to be moved.

Bruce gave an update on the response to the survey on the website, which still ongoing.

The question of rats came up again and everyone present felt that as long as sites have good housekeeping procedures in place it can be kept to a minimum.

HMRC changes. Jayne explained that a email had been received by all members of the National Allotments and Gardners Ass., that sites must register under the Trustees Registration. This is to make sure that people do not money launder or may be liable for income tax./capital gains tax. For the majority of self-managed site's you will never have to pay anything, but do have to do a tax return each year. The setting up process is done online, but the yearly returns can be done either on a paper format or electronically. To do it electronically will require software that has to be purchased from the HMRC. Sarah had not heard of this so Jayne will forward the email to her.

Campbell Road pavilion update. Sarah said that the principal of creating the pavilion into a community hub is feasible. However, there will be quite a few different process to go through to get to that stage. So is a work in progress for now.

Jayne mentioned that there are community fund grants available for Bentilee.

Bruce asked John about the land that had been cleared by the council on the south side of the site. John said that for quite some time they did keep on top of the growth, but the person who was doing it was unable to continue so had become overgrown. However, they have reinstated the monthly meetings so they might

manage to get a working party together. Was asked about the bees and they are fine, but they did have one complaint.

A.O.B

John asked if the council have a bee policy. Sarah said they do and it has just been completed. So, a copy could be sent to him.

Victoria said not been able to do much on the website due to starting a new job. There is an open day at Scot Lidget site on 18<sup>th</sup> May, 2024.

Date of next meeting is Wednesday June 5<sup>th</sup> at 07.30 hrs.

Venue to be confirmed.