

Requests made by the Allotment tenants:

Allotment Committee / Allotment Working Group Requests for the Parish Council August 2018

Please find below the list of recommendations to the Parish Council, extracted from the minutes of the first meeting of the Wychbold Allotment Working Group.

I don't think that I need to send you the complete minutes, but if I do, then let me know and I can send as well.

The recommendations are probably no surprise:

- 1. Replace perimeter fence with taller fence and lockable gates around allotment perimeter for security purposes.**
- 2. Fix new, dedicated noticeboard to existing metal gate.**
- 3. Cut central area in the allotments along with path access by the conifer trees when the playing field is cut.**
- 4. Create parking / hard standing and improved access to allotments for vehicles.**
- 5. Improve entrance / exit on to Stoke Road – trim vegetation at the entrance.**
- 6. Reduce fee or no charge for the first year to attract new plot holders due to condition of the vacant plots.**
- 7. Promise new plot holders allotments will be handed over in state to work (PC to cover cost of strimming?)**
- 8. Advertise vacant allotments on Dodderhill Facebook page**

Wychbold Allotment Group Meeting of 17.09.2018

Recommendations for next Parish Council meeting In October 2018

We recommend that:

1. The allotments be numbered in such a way that the public (and allotment holders) can see which allotment is which and link this to those that are vacant on a published plan. A low, small painted post or stone with the number facing outwards is suggested.
2. Plots 1/2/7 are cleared by PCC so that there is more chance of attracting new people. Possibly get a quote from xxxx to do this.
3. The PCC consider one allotment to be in thirds. We feel that this might encourage more people to give it a try, as even half an allotment (especially in the state they are in), can be quite daunting.
4. Tree management needs consideration by the PCC. There are some quite large trees (not fruit trees) within the allotments that should not be there.
5. Who cuts the central grass path, and how often it is cut needs more clarity.
6. Who cuts the path between the pollarded trees and the allotments, and how often it is cut, needs more clarity.

7. The PCC continues to seriously consider improving the security of the allotments and develops a long-term plan to be in line with most other allotments in this respect.

8. The PCC **URGENTLY** considers winter access to the allotments from the Stoke Road entrance to avoid cars and tractors getting stuck in mud as last year. Some kind of webbing or road planings or chippings is suggested. Particular areas that are very muddy are the slope by the gate to Stoke Road and around the top and wood-side edges of the allotments.

9. Four notices are printed and laminated (or weatherproofed in some way) that give the name of the allotments, mention access only for allotment holders and give contact details for the Parish Clerk. Possible wording could be: *Wychbold Allotments. Please note that access to this area is for allotment holders only. Enquiries to the Parish Clerk: email address.* Black print on yellow perhaps. About A3 size. Sue has an example. The allotment group members have offered to fix these securely to the fences / gates so that there is one for each side of the allotments.

10. A full-sized noticeboard is provided for the allotment area, in addition to the half-sized one on the end of the village hall.

Note 1: the Allotment Group has organised a property marking event for gardening equipment to be held at the allotments (shed provided if it rains) on Sunday 14 October, 10.30 am for allotment holders and 11.00 am for anyone else.

Note 2: the Allotment Group has agreed to meet more frequently until the allotments are in a better state of use

Next Meeting of Wychbold Allotment Group: 29th October

Recommendations for Parish Council meeting, Nov 2018
From Wychbold Community Allotment Group meeting, 29 Oct 2018

Essential	Desirable
Safe winter access. Information sought about how winter access to the allotments will be made safer, particularly preventing vehicles getting stuck in mud.	Self-sufficiency / autonomy. The group is interested in taking on more financial responsibility for allotment affairs. There is a desire to be more autonomous and proactive.
	Grass cutting. Greater clarity requested about who cuts the central aisle and outside surrounds of the allotment and how often this will be cut. Also, information requested about the impact of the football team leaving on frequency of grass cutting.
	Removal of the section in the tenancy agreement about the need to ask permission to plant any crop that lasts pmore than

	one year (crops that last more than one year include: strawberries, currants, asparagus etc.)
	Alteration of tenancy dates. Current dates make it too late to make use of allotments if someone gives up and only lets the PC know at the latest date. We suggest having a tenancy agreement that runs from Jan to December. Reminders in Dec to pay. Bill in Jan. End of Feb is latest to pay. Non-responders by end of Feb lose their plot, so vacant from 1 st March. Include some flexibility for exceptional circumstances e.g. hospitalisation. Parish Clerk to work out pro-rata fees for the 1 st year of overlap.
	Security. Improved security (as recommended by police) to include effective fencing and gates

Wychbold Community Allotment Working Group
Feedback for the Parish Council April 2019 meeting from the WCAWG meeting on 25.03.19

1. Recommendations

- DESIRABLE. Provide information about frequency of grass-cutting for the central aisle of the allotments and by lower trees between allotments and field. It would be useful to get reassurance that the grass will be kept short enough to allow access at all times for allotment tenants and their tools.
- DESIRABLE. Provide an update on any progress towards improving safer vehicle access from the top gate to the allotments, particularly to help avoid vehicles getting stuck in mud.
- DESIRABLE. Provide an update on any progress towards improving the security of the allotments. We understand that this is a big financial commitment, which previously the Parish Council have not been able to undertake. However, thefts continue and the allotment area continues to be used by many who are not allotment holders. Could the Parish Council confirm that a) they understand the need for improved security of the allotments and b) that they intend to budget, or seek grants, for this in the future.
- ESSENTIAL. Send out reminders to allotment tenants who have not yet paid rent for the coming year (to December 2019). Provide an update of current tenants after the 1st April (last day to pay rent for the coming year) to WCAWG, so that it is known which plots are vacant.

2. Thank you.

Wychbold Community Allotment Group



Please note that the WCAWG wish to thank the Parish Council for the provision of the three notices that give the name of the allotment, a polite reminder that the allotment area is for allotment tenants only and contact details (the Parish Clerk) for further information. These have now been firmly fixed in position for several months and so far appear to be weather resistant.

The WCAWG also wish to thank the Parish Council for the provision of numbered labels, to identify the separate plots. These also have been firmly fixed in place and have already been useful in helping identify vacant plots to some interested people.

3. Vacant plots

Until rent for the coming year is paid, we cannot know which plots are being rented for the rest of 2019. At the end of March 2019, the only vacant plots are 1a (possibly taken, to be confirmed); 1b, 2 and 6.

4. State of vacant plots

Interested people have been put off by the state of the vacant allotments. As a gesture of good will, some of the allotment tenants have offered to help clear plot 1b in the hope that it might interest someone in renting it.

Wychbold Community Allotment Working Group

Feedback for the Parish Council June 2019 meeting from the WCAWG meeting on 13.05.19
Headings used are Essential/Desirable/Wished for, to indicate urgency

1. Recommendations

- DESIRABLE. Provide information about frequency of grass-cutting for the central aisle of the allotments and by lower trees between allotments and field. We understand that a grass-cutting contract has now been agreed but note that at time of writing – 20th May 2019 – the grass has still not been cut, is getting very long and is beginning to present difficulty for some allotment holders to gain access to their plots.
- DESIRABLE. Consider advertising the vacant allotments at the community/church fete on Sat 13th July. Ideally, we envisage a stall/table (or part of one) with some produce available to buy (proceeds to charity or towards an allotment association), some plants and/or seeds, some leaflets about the allotments and some tenancy agreements ready for anyone keen on the day. Is it possible to share a PC stall or do we need – if still time – to negotiate a table via the church/organising committee? If so, who would pay for this?
- DESIRABLE. Reduce fees for overgrown allotments as agreed with the PC last year. This should be continued for this coming year, with badly overgrown allotments offered rent-free for the first year. It may be that someone might take a year free and then walk away, but at least the allotment may then be in better condition for the next tenant.

- **WISHED FOR.** Provide toilet facilities. These would allow a wider range of gardeners/would-be gardeners in our community to make use of the allotments. This might be combined with a need for such facilities for the recreation ground when the village hall is not open. Some allotments have 'composting toilets' and have obtained grants for these (one allotment in Bromsgrove/Redditch obtained a grant of £5k for two such toilets – but these are key coded and only allotment holders have the code). Perhaps something to explore.
- **DESIRABLE.** Provide information about the barrier to the Village Hall parking area and its times of opening/closing. It continues to be a big unknown whether to park by the VH and risk being locked in. With the longer hours of daylight extending the evenings for working at the allotments, this may begin to be a bigger issue.

2. Status of allotment plots.

Current vacant plots are: 1b, 2 and 6. Plot 3b was vacated last month and then taken up by a new tenant.



Wychbold Community Allotment Group