**BRAA Quarterly Meeting – 15th May 2024**

1. **Letting of Plots**
	1. Please confirm that new tenants are being supplied with details of BRAA and supplied with application for member ship forms.

*Due to the ongoing office issues, we have not had in place our usual protocol as most paperwork has been issued to tenants via email, rather than in person. Currently, tenants are informed of BRAA’s existence when being shown a plot, then asked if they would like a joining form, so far this year, those that have taken a plot have chosen not to accept an application form.*

*1.2* Is it at all possible for let plots to be notified to BRAA so that new tenants can be invited to join in activities.

*We cannot give tenant information to BRAA as this breaches GDPR.*

1. **Neglect of plots**

The problem of neglect and the effect on neighbouring plots one that has been raised repeatedly.

The encroachment of pernicious weeds either directly or air borne is distressing for other plot holders.

May we please have a report on actions being taken (anonymised)

I am pleased to see that plot 6 is being tackled by the Community Payback people – they have already made a great improvement and I am sure that someone on the waiting list will be happy to take on.

*Inspections of plots is being undertaken, any we feel are not following the tenancy agreement will / or may have already received cultivation notices.*

*Please can BRAA provide us with more details of weeds on Broughton Road are pernicious? This is the first instance of such being reported to us. All tenants have a responsibility to upkeep up to 1m outside of their plot’s boundary (as outlined in the tenancy agreement) which should be enough to ensure all areas of the allotments are mowed/weeded.*

1. **Pond on plot 6**

The matter of the large pond on plot 6 has been raised (until the undergrowth around it was cleared it was not easy to see and people were not aware it was there)  – questions have been raised about safety and whether it should be filled in or fenced.

*Plot 6 has now been re-let. The pond on this plot is the new tenant’s responsibility. The safety issues outlined should only be of concern to that plots tenant as only individuals permitted by the tenant are allowed access to this plot. BRAA can erect a fence on their side of the plot if they wish. The pond is the individual tenant’s responsibility, and they are not obliged to fence this area if they do not wish to do so. We have unfenced ponds on plots at Middletown and these have never been an issue, only an advantage to wildlife. Point 7.m of the tenancy agreement covers tenants’ liability for visitors on their plot. Upon hearing the concern about the pond is due to tenant’s children playing on the allotments, we advise that parents should supervise their children on site at all times and not allow them to tresspass onto other allotment holders’ plots.*

1. **Water and water usage**

* 1. There is a water tap towards the rear of plot 6 – should it be there ?  (it is understood that there are ‘guerilla’ taps on other plots}

*Any taps on allotments are there from years before and are fine to be continued to use by the tenant of the plot where the tap is located. Should there be issue with the water taps directly on plots, tenants are welcome to repair themselves or ask STC to carry out the repair. No additional taps will be installed.*

* 1. Reports have bben made of water left running from main taps for hours/overnight.

*We have had no reports of water issues or taps left running since last summer or broken taps since January.*

 *Water issue need to be reported directly to STC.*

* 1. Is action being taken to encourage all tenants to install water butts to their buildings? Would the council consider giving a discount to those who install and use water butts as they will be reducing the overall water charge for the site.

*No discounts will be given for using a water butt as it is expected, and in the tenancy agreement, that any sloped roof structures should have a water butt.*

* 1. Will the council consider bulk purchase to obtain best prices and onward sale to tenants of water butts.

*No, as this is already expected of tenants with sloped roofed outbuildings. Dale will assess if any sheds do not currently have water butts that should.*

1. **Tree policy**

A number of the established non-fruit trees on the Broughton Road site are well over 3 meters tall.

I am not sure what will happen in regard to these trees – to get to the size they are they will have been in position for many years most probably pre-existing current tenants.

Are the council going to trim them or are they going to be left as is – surely tenants will not be expected to tackle them and reduce to 3 meters ?

*STC are currently looking at developing a plan maintain the trees moving forward and in line with the tree policy. Any tenants concerned by the trees on their plot should contact STC with any questions. It is likely the trees in Middletown will be the first starting point as there are 10 times more trees at Middletown. The few trees at Broughton Road that are with-in our perimeter are not currently a problem that we are aware of. An arborist will be able to tell us more information and conduct a maintenance plan with us in the coming months.*

1. **Car parks**

The state of the carparks has been raised again.

It has been extremely wet and the lower car parks (and the lowers paths) have become waterlogged and muddy making driving and even walking difficult and potentially dangerous especially for those with limited mobility. (a new tenant made the mistake of taking his camper van down and was forced to reverse all the way back to the road as he could not turn the vehicle round)

Putting down hardcore or quarry bottoms has been discussed in the past – is there any prospect of this happening ?

*This was discussed at our last meeting:* Taken from BRAA quarterly meeting November 2023:

‘2)car parks – as previously discussed the carparks are in a bad state and need clearing and scraping – reports regarding the bypass side lower car park being flooded and wet making it slippery and difficult for those less able – piles of poor-quality woodchip on carparks reducing parking spaces/smelling foul/attracting vermin/being fire hazard – when will the council use the new tractor and attachments to improve matters? In Autumn, Mark & Dale will be sorting the wood chip piles to create some additional space. Unfortunately, STC are currently unable to source hardcore for these areas. This will be re-visited in the future. BRAA have agreed with the U3A volunteer group that they will double park their cars when visiting to help with the issue. The main car park needing attention is the one located on the lower far side.’

1. **Fencing**

Who is responsible for maintaining fencing – by which I mean left or right hand side top or bottom ?

Will you please clarify.

*Although not a requirement, we have a fencing map of responsibility. We can issue individual requests for specifics plots of fencing, but the map we have will not be handed out to tenants to*

*ensure this is managed in house by STC.*

1. **Crime and Security**

It is understood that a number of sheds etc have been broken into and whilst little has been stolen the damage is distressing and incurs expensive for tenants.

I bumped into the local PSCOs at Morrisons recently and we discussed crime and security – they can see no reason why cameras cannot be installed so long as warning notices are put up - they are also willing to mark tools etc.

*We are looking at getting wildlife cameras for the allotments. Although the frequency of issues*

*At Middletown Allotments have been on a larger, more frequent scale. If people can report any*

*issue straight to the council, we will then be able to act. We have not had any crime reported from Broughton Road Allotments to us since the 15th of March.*

*Emma currently in touch with PC Akram regarding a dot marking event. Currently it is in arrangements for this to happen in the coming weeks at Middletown allotments. Emma has asked if this can also be conducted at BR allotments, but waiting to hear back from PC Akram to see if they have the resources available for this.*

1. **Skip for rubbish**

*As the new financial year has just commenced, we will look at funds potentially available for this with Finance. SMAA have offered to contribute towards the cost of any skip hired for spring, allotment clear outs at Middeltown. Will this be possible from BRAA also? The current price of a skip is £218 including VAT.*