

## **BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

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17 April 2015

There will be a meeting of the **Allotment Management Team** on **Thursday 23 April 2015** at **10.30am** in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted.

Councillors:                   A Armytage Chair  
                                      E Collins  
                                      J Laws

Allotment Reps:               John Eaton, Sunnyside  
                                      John Fisher, Butts Meadow  
                                      Diana Reay, Dellfield  
                                      Lin Philips, Sunnyside  
                                      Geoffrey Wallington, Butts Meadow  
                                      Keely Charlick, Sunnyside Rural Trust

Town Council:                 John Bushby, Town Warden

  
Gary Cox  
Town Clerk

**THE PUBLIC ARE INVITED TO ATTEND ALL MEETINGS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL**

## AGENDA

### OPENING MATTERS

**AMT 13/15 Apologies for Absence**

To receive any **apologies for absence**.

**AMT 14/15 Minutes of Last Meeting**

To approve the **minutes of the last meeting** held on 29 January 2015.  
(Minutes attached)

**AMT 15/15 Public Participation**

To invite any **public participation**.

### FINANCE MATTERS

**AMT 16/15 Income and Expenditure Report**

To consider the **allotment income and expenditure and reserves** for 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015. (Paper attached)

**AMT 17/15 Allotment Management System**

To consider the latest position on **payments for the Allotment Management System** and web access.

### ALLOTMENT MATTERS

**AMT 18/15 Tree Maintenance**

To note that outstanding **tree maintenance on the railway boundary** at Sunnyside has been completed.

**AMT 19/15 Storage Shed on Sunnyside**

To consider a proposal from Sunnyside Allotment Society to **install a storage shed on the site**.

**AMT 20/15 Public Rights of Way**

To note that the **annual allotment closure** under Section 31(6) will take place on Thursday 7 May 2015.

**AMT 21/15 Bee Keeping at Dellfield Allotment**

To consider concerns raised by allotment holders on **bee keeping at Dellfield**. (email attached)

**AMT 22/15 Allotment Reports**

To consider **allotment and plot inspection reports** on:

- (i) Dellfield
- (ii) Sunnyside Old
- (iii) Sunnyside New
- (iv) Butts Meadow
- (v) Sunnyside Rural Trust

**AMT 23/15 Allotment Risk Management**

To consider any **allotment risks** and agree required mitigating actions.

**AMT 24/15 Date of Meetings for 2015/16**

To consider the **date of the next and subsequent AMT meetings** for the 2015/16 Council Year. (Timetable attached)

**BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Meeting of the

**ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

held in the Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Berkhamsted on

**Thursday 29 January 2015 at 10.30 am**

**PRESENT:**

Councillors: A Armytage Chair  
E Collins

Allotment  
Representatives: John Eaton, Sunnyside  
Diana Reay, Dellfield  
Geoffrey Wallington, Butts Meadow  
Jenny Sippings, Sunnyside  
Gary Sinfield, Sunnyside Rural Trust

Town Council: John Bushby, Town Warden

**OFFICER:** Gary Cox - Town Clerk

**ALSO PRESENT:** 1 member of the public

**AMT 1/14 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillor Laws, John Fisher, Lin Philips and Keely Charlick. Gary Sinfield attended for Sunnyside Rural Trust.

**AMT 2/14 Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the last meeting held on 16 October 2014 were agreed.

Progress on actions from that meeting were as follows.

i ***Trees at SSO and SSN***

Network Rail had advised that trees close to the railway line at SSO and SSN should only be felled when power to the lines had been cut.

The Town Clerk was exploring with Network Rail if they might fell trees abutting the railway line during their next planned maintenance on the line.

ii ***Income and Expenditure Report***

The latest report included information on budget/expenditure variances.

iii ***Rabbit Fencing of Plots***

John Eaton advised that a proposal for rabbit fencing around some individual plots need not now be taken forward.

iv ***Allotment Management System***

The Town Clerk reported on invoicing issues with the supplier for work that had not been satisfactorily supplied on training and data transfer onto the new allotment management system.

The Committee noted that arrangements to provide secure web access to the system for Allotment Representatives was on hold until those invoicing issues had been resolved.

The Town Clerk undertook to confirm if the tenancy database could be transported to other application such as Excel, to help resolve problems with producing reports in the right format and content. **Action: Town Clerk**

v ***Allotment Termination Form On-Line***

The allotment termination form is now available on line.

It was agreed to include an allotment application form on-line to sit alongside the waiting list form; and for there to be clear signposting on the website that applicants must have an agreed waiting list application and be assigned a plot before submitting the application form. **Action: Town Clerk**

vi ***Access to Butts Meadow Allotments***

Arrangements are in place for DBC to provide vehicle access into Butts Meadow and new access arrangements had been posted on the Butts Meadow Allotment Notice Board.

vii ***Sunnyside Rural Trust Lease***

Work was underway on a combined draft lease SSRT allotment plots.

viii ***Water Rates***

The Town Council was receiving the most competitive water rate charges, from Affinity Water.

ix ***Wood Chippings at Sunnyside***

A notice that anyone wishing to spread chippings on either Sunnyside site should contact the Town Council in the first instance had been placed on noticeboards.

Chippings had been over-piled onto the car park and needed to be moved to cover parking bays. It was agreed to contact DBC to see if it had a small digger that might be borrowed to move the wood chippings. Failing that, the Town Warden would obtain a quote for hire of a small digger. **Action: Town Warden**

- x ***Sunnyside Plots***  
John Eaton and Keely Charlick had discussed two potential plots on SSN that were difficult to let and might be suitable for Sunnyside Rural Trust. would consider options for those plots. **Action: John Eaton/ Keely Charlick**  
The confusion over ownership of one plot on Sunnyside New close to Sunnyside Rural Trust rented land had been resolved.
- xi ***Butts Meadow Noticeboard***  
John Fisher was considering options for a Centenary Noticeboard for Butts Meadow.

**AMT 3/15 Public Participation**

Mr Dyer, a local resident and allotment holder asked:

- When would the Allotment Officer become a Town Council employee?

The Town Clerk advised that following the Full Council decision, arrangements were in hand for the Finance and Allotment Officer to transfer to Town Council employment.

- Might a combination lock on the vehicle gate at Sunnyside New ensure those tipping wood chippings ask permission and deposit the chippings in required and appropriate places?

The Committee agreed to this suggestion. **Action: Town Warden**

**AMT 4/15 Correspondence from the Public**

The Committee noted emails from the public and responses regarding

- allotment measurements in imperial v metric system
- a concern over risks of water tanks at Dellfield

**FINANCE MATTERS**

**AMT 5/15 Income and Expenditure Report**

The Committee noted the allotment income and expenditure and reserves for 1 April 2014 to 31 December 2014 and the projected outcome at 31 March 2015.

**AMT 6/15 Allotment Budget 2015/16**

The Committee noted that Full Council has approved the budget for 2015/16, including the proposed allotment budget.

## **AMT 7/15 Allotment Rent Collection Report**

The Committee noted the outcome of the rent and water rate collection/renewal for 2014; and that the invoicing resulted in £8,389 allotment income being collected.

### **ALLOTMENT MATTERS**

## **AMT 8/15 Allotment Reports**

The following issues were raised in allotment reports.

### ***Dellfield***

The entrance gate damaged in the high winds had been replaced.

Diana Reay would investigate if the combination lock at the Billet Lane Gate could be repaired and re-used to lock the gate. **Action: Diana Reay**

The Town Warden would check on a possible leak on the Normandy Road ends water tank, before the water was turned back on after the winter months. **Action: Town Warden**

### ***Sunnyside Old and New***

Warning letters had not been sent out for three plots as they would have coincided with invoices being sent out. The next plot inspections would take place in the spring.

A waiting list application seems to have been received from a resident from Amersham. The Town Clerk would review this as allotments could only be let to residents who lived in, or no more than 1 mile outside, the Berkhamsted Parish boundary. **Action: Town Clerk**

### ***Butts Meadow***

It was agreed that any 'undercultivation' of plots should be dealt with informally by the Allotment Representative. If the cultivation does not improve, then the tenant should be reported to the Town Council under existing breach of tenancy warning letter and eviction arrangements.

### ***Sunnyside Rural Trust***

Plots were being worked, kept tidy and well managed by site co-ordinators. There were no issues to raise. It was agreed that Sunnyside Rural Trust would submit an allotment report for future meetings.

It was agreed that in future the information on allotment plots, vacancies and waiting list numbers in reports should be provided from the allotment management system. **Action: Town Clerk**

#### **AMT 9/15 Allotment Risk Management**

The Committee noted that no risks had been identified from the Ti9wn Warden's review of allotments.

#### **AMT 10/15 Allotment Rules**

The Committee consider a redraft of the allotment rules towards plainer English and greater clarity on tenant responsibilities, without losing any of the rules from the previous draft.

The re-draft was agreed subject to the following underlined amendments:

4. If you plant and cultivate fruit trees and bushes, they must not exceed 4 metres in height and must be kept in a manageable condition.
6. Only burn diseased plants and dry material that will burn easily. (It is not illegal to have a bonfire, but creating smoke that causes a nuisance is an offence).

As a plot holder, you must not:

22. Bring any rubbish onto the site. (specified rubbish items removed)

The new rules were agreed and would be placed on the website, on all new allotment application forms and posted on allotment noticeboards, to come into force with immediate effect.

#### **AMT 11/15 Date of Next Meeting**

The Committee noted the date of the next AMT meeting at 10.30am on Thursday 23 April 2015.

#### **AMT 12/15 Close of Meeting**

The meeting closed at 11.48am.



AMT 16/15

BTC Income Expenditure Current Financial Year

	2013-14	2014-15		Estimated Outturn	% Forecast Variance	Notes	Proposed Budget	Notes
	Actual Outturn	Budget	As at 14-Apr-15					
TOTAL INCOME	£8,589	£8,200	£9,006	£9,007	109.84%		£8,400	
TOTAL EXPENDITURE	£6,895	£8,155	£6,057	£7,498	91.94%		£6,405	
Surplus/Deficit	£1,694	£45	£2,949	£1,509	3353.33%		£1,995	
<b>RESERVES</b>								
1380 Allotment Reserve Fund	8,060			9,569			11,564	

BTC Income Expenditure Current Financial Year

	2013-14	2014-15		Notes	Proposed Budget
	Actual Outturn	Budget	As at 14-Apr-15		
INCOME				% Forecast Variance	
0600/05 Allotment Land Rent	6,779	6,600	7,111	7,111	6,800
0610 Allotment Water Rates Income	1,634	1,600	1,716	1,716	1,600
0612-18 Water & Gate Key Deposit & Sales	176	-	180	180	-
<b>Total Allotment Income</b>	<b>8,589</b>	<b>8,200</b>	<b>9,006</b>	<b>9,007</b>	<b>8,400</b>
				<b>109.84%</b>	

BTC Income Expenditure Current Financial Year

	2013-14	2014-15		Notes	Proposed Budget	Notes
		As at				
EXPENDITURE	Actual Outturn	Budget	14-Apr-15	Estimated Outturn	% Forecast Variance	Proposed Budget
7300 Improvements	1,858	2,500	1,661	1,665		2,000
7303 Water Supply Charges	1,322	1,400	1,082	1,400		1,400
7304 General Expenses	706	1,200	521	520		300
7306 Annual Maintenance Costs	2,148	2,255	1,935	2,255		2,255
7308 Legal Fees	718	800	-	800		-
7309 Allotment Software Support	143	-	858	858		450
<b>Allotments</b>	<b>6,895</b>	<b>8,155</b>	<b>6,057</b>	<b>7,498</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>6,405</b>

Townclerk

AMT 21/15

**From:** Townclerk  
**Sent:** 15 April 2015 10:51  
**To:** 'Diana Reay'  
**Subject:** RE: Bees

Diana

Thanks.

I'll put this on the agenda for the next AMT meeting on 23 April where I can advise that:

Bee keeping is permissible use of allotment land. Therefore, a request for bee keeping at Dellfield was noted at AMT on 24 April 2014

The approach to keeping bees on the site is consistent with bee keeping good practice.

The voluntary extension to the netting is a welcome addition (but in practice will have little impact).

The bee keeping tenant should ensure a contact telephone number is on the allotment noticeboard in the unlikely event of any swarming or other problems

Gary

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**From:** Diana Reay <[REDACTED]>  
**Sent:** 14 April 2015 09:55  
**To:** Gary Cox  
**Subject:** Fwd: Bees

Gary I have received this reply from Charlie. I think one of the problems is that it was thought that a solid fence would be put up round the hive. I don't have any problems with the present situation at all apart from the height of the fencing, but I have spoken to a bee-keeping friend who has many years experience, who says that there shouldn't be any problems. He has kept bees in the family back garden for decades. Don't bees usually fly round obstacles anyway? I'm not sure that this situation will be resolved so quickly though. An official verdict may be helpful.

Diana

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Diana Reay <[REDACTED]>  
**Date:** 14 April 2015 at 09:46  
**Subject:** Re: Bees  
**To:** Charlie <[REDACTED]>

Thanks for replying so quickly. One of the points that has been raised is that the netting round the bees has too wide a mesh and that they are flying through it.

I haven't been to look myself but could you make sure that any other netting that you put round doesn't allow this to happen and also that it goes all the way round the hive? I will pass your assurances on to the other tenants and will let the town clerk know what has been discussed.

Hope to see you soon, we have noticed the difference in bee numbers already, I'm hoping for a better crop of plums this year,

Diana

On 14 April 2015 at 08:15, Charlie <[REDACTED]> wrote:  
Diana,

No problem, please advise that I will raise the height of the netting on Saturday to ensure that their flight path is directed upwards.

The bees don't just forage on the allotment but in a 3 mile radius. Having said that said they may be interested in particular crops on a hot day when they come into flower but they are passive bees and do not sting people unless they run into somebody and get confused.

Hope this will reassure any concerns but please do let me know if there are any further questions.

Charlie  
07905835401  
From phone

> On 13 Apr 2015, at 19:54, Diana Reay [REDACTED] > wrote:

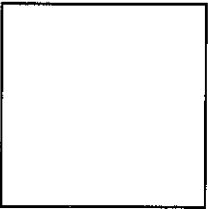
>

> Hi Charlie,

> just checking, are you going to put a more substantial fence round the bees? One of your neighbours is a little nervous, so could you assure her, via me, that there is no risk. I don't see that there is but I have been contacted and she and her husband are concerned about flight paths of bees across their allotment, fencing and the proximity of the hive to their plot,

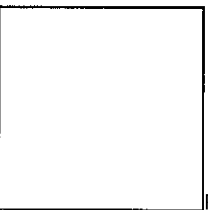
> Thanks Diana

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AMT 22/15

**SUMMARY ALLOTMENT REPORT 2014/2015 from Allotment Management System**

	<b>Terminations</b>	<b>New Lets</b>	<b>On Waiting List</b>	<b>Vacant Plots</b>
BM	2	5	13	1
DF	4	10	1	2
SSN	11	20	5	6
SSO	10	17	5	1

AMT 22/15

**ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT TO AMT April 2015**

Name of Site Representative	<i>John Eaton</i>
Site(s) covered by this report	<i>SSO SSN</i>
Date of AMT meeting	<i>23/04/2015</i>

**ALLOTMENT VACANCIES & WAITING LIST APPLICATIONS**

NB: entries are for changes since date of last meeting	Total Nr allotment plots	Vacant Plots	Nr of waiting list applicants
B/F total from last meeting date	226	10	9
Add plots created by subdivision	0		
Add Nr plots vacated/evicted		x	
Add Nr new waiting list applicants			x
Deduct plots 'lost' by amalgamation			
Deduct Nr plots let to new tenants		x	x
Deduct Nr of withdrawn applications			
Total C/F to next meeting	226	5.5	8

**SITE INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN (PLEASE STATE PLOT REFERENCES)**

None yet
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**LETTERS TO BE WRITTEN TO TENANTS**

	Plot reference(s)
Overgrown warning letters	
Letters of eviction due to non-cultivation (based upon the spread sheet showing list of tenants sent allotment warning letters)	

**OTHER ISSUES:**

<i>SRT Lease, Trees, Remote reading of reports, SAS shed and wood pile</i>
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## ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES REPORT TO AMT April 2015

Name of Site Representative	<i>John Fisher</i>
Site(s) covered by this report	<i>Butts Meadow</i>
Date of AMT meeting	<i>23/04/2015</i>

### ALLOTMENT VACANCIES & WAITING LIST APPLICATIONS

NB: entries are for changes since date of last meeting	Total Nr allotment plots	Vacant Plots	Nr of waiting list applicants
B/F total from last meeting date	66	3	18
Add plots created by subdivision	0		
Add Nr plots vacated/evicted		0	
Add Nr new waiting list applicants			3
Deduct plots 'lost' by amalgamation	0		
Deduct Nr plots let to new tenants		2	0
Deduct Nr of withdrawn applications			7
Total C/F to next meeting	66	1	12

### SITE INSPECTIONS UNDERTAKEN (PLEASE STATE PLOT REFERENCES)

Plot 9B has now been rehabilitated and let. No other issues.
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### LETTERS TO BE WRITTEN TO TENANTS

	Plot reference(s)
Overgrown warning letters	<i>None</i>
Letters of eviction due to non-cultivation (based upon the spread sheet showing list of tenants sent allotment warning letters)	<i>None</i>

### OTHER ISSUES:

1. <i>None</i>
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<b>BERKHAMSTED TOWN COUNCIL - MEETING DATES 2015/16</b>	
<b>2015</b>	
July 16 (Thursday 10.30am)	Allotment Management Team
October 15 (Thursday 10.30am)	Allotment Management Team
<b>2016</b>	
February 11(Thursday 10.30am)	Allotment Management Team
April 21 (Thursday 10.30am)	Allotment Management Team