

## **Allotments & Land Report 21<sup>st</sup> October 2024**

### **Norman Road and Nash Gardens Allotments**

We currently have 2 vacant plots at Norman Road which are in the process of being offered out.

The waiting lists have increased with 45 people on each waiting list.

- **Does the Committee want to close the waiting list and reviewed in October 2025?**

A non-recyclable waste collection will be arranged in January.

A very large laurel bush/tree will be reduced at Nash Gardens as it has now taken up considerable room and impacting the allotments either side. Once reduced, the allotment holders will be able to keep on top of the maintenance.

### **Mockett's Wood**

The Management Plan has been produced and sent out to the Committee. There are a few amendments/additions that the Volunteers have asked for. These have been sent to David Archer Associates to place into the plan as follows:

- Include the management of ivy and alexander – this is a big issue at the woods and there is currently no mention of how this should be managed and during which months.
- Include – how to manage the glade and meadow areas. Previously this was cleared in preparation for replanting. The volunteers would like to have details on preferred management and planting – again during which months.
- Management of paths – as an alternative to woodchip, which needs replacing on a regular basis, can bring pathogens into the woods and is also not readily available, the volunteers have asked about self-binding gravel (subbase) to use for the pathways, which has been used in other woodlands.
- There is a small barrier at this point (couple of posts and a board). This welcomes people to climb over. Barrier to be increased and made more substantial as a better deterrent.
- This is the area the volunteers will commence planting of butcher's broom etc to start to discourage visitors/access. In time, the installation of a fenced area (gated access) would allow this area to grow wild, but still allow access for necessary inspection.
- Volunteers would like to plant 3 hazel trees here, with hurdling built around the trees. Volunteers can access a hurdling course to enable them to undertake this correctly. Additional materials will need to be purchased as there would not be enough material from the site for all requirements of dead hedging.

On discussion with the Town Clerk and also the lead volunteer, if the Management Plan is approved, due to the increased work required initially at Mockett's, and to help organise the plan of works, a suggestion of employing a fixed term Woodland Officer has been discussed to help with the implementation of the Management Plan. Decision to be taken to Full Council.

- **The Management Plan/Woodland Officer is to be discussed, and a decision is required from the Committee if they wish for the Plan, with the amendments, to be approved and put in place and agree with the proposal of employing a Woodlands Officer for a 1 year fixed term contract.**

There has been some vandalism to one of the bins that we installed last year – it has been pulled out of the ground. This has been remedied by the Operations Officer.

### **Culmer's Amenity Land**

CT10 Charities have purchased a new bench to replace the one that had been vandalised. Our Operations Officer will be installing this in its new location at Culmers.

The Town Clerk is in discussions with CT10 Charities regarding the increase in rent for the lease which is reviewed every 5 years and is in line with the RPI/base rate calculated at December of each year.

### **Pierremont Park Grounds**

In July the Committee agreed to the fixing of the wooden fence at the rear of the Music Room, which was scheduled in for October. The Facilities Team have now re-looked at the fence and a lot of the wood has begun to rot, so a quote is being sought for the replacement of the whole of the fence.

### **Victoria Gardens**

The Gardeners are still making a huge impact within this area, and we do receive a lot of positive comments both on social media and day to day. We are waiting for the licence for this area to be renewed but have received verbal confirmation that this will be happening.

### **Additions to Cultivation Licence**

TDC are in the process of adding on Balmoral Gardens, the two circular beds within Pierremont Park (memorial rose bed and bed close to Pierremont Hall), and we have also added on the flower bed around the war memorial to our cultivation licence. We have also included the Fosters Avenue environmental committee project within this licence application so all land is under one license rather than individual.

As you may have noticed, to ensure that the War Memorial looks presentable for this year's Remembrance Service, during a meeting with Dan Gooch at TDC, our gardeners have removed all the plants in the flower beds, which were unkempt and not suitable for this area – they have been kept and will be used elsewhere by our gardeners. Dan arranged for the paving to be repaired, and the memorial and surrounding areas cleaned. We will replant the memorial beds with mature plants for instant impact prior to the Remembrance Service.

### **Tree Surveys**

You will have received the tree surveys which are undertaken each year and are a requirement of our insurance. Several actions are required. Once the committee have approved actions required, we will arrange for the work to take place.

- **A decision is required for the authorisation of works stated within the tree surveys to be undertaken.**

### **Grounds Maintenance Contract**

You will have received a copy of the tender with the areas highlighted in yellow as additions for this year, or to be discussed. Approval is required. Once approved, this contract will be put out to tender for a period of three years.

- **Approval of the Grounds Maintenance tender document required.**

Receipt of the tenders will be required during the second week of January 2025. Approval for an extraordinary meeting to be held after 13<sup>th</sup> January to discuss the tenders and approve the contractor, who will commence on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2025.

- **Date required for an extraordinary meeting in January 2025.**

### **Allotment & Land Budget 2025-26**

The budget for this year has been sent to the Committee.

- **Taking into account recommendations from this meeting and changes coming in the new financial year, a review of the budget is required and initial recommendations for the year 2025-6 are required.**