

Report from the meeting of Barrow Parish Council held on Tuesday 19th February 2019.

In the Spring of 2017 Barrow Parish Council received informal enquiries from several parishioners regarding the possibility of holding an allotment tenancy agreement within the Parish.

Barrow parish has for many years rented land owned by Shropshire Council and formally designated by them as use for Allotment Land.

The area of allotment land is in Floyer Lane and is situated in a field that surrounds a private dwelling known as Floyer Hall. The area of land has been divided into 9 roughly equal plots (Identified as Plots A,B,C,D,E,F,G,H and I), with identified common areas for car parking and access to each plot. At the time of the investigation only 2 active plot lease agreements were in operation with the Parish Council, one plot agreement was lapsed, with a further 2 parishioners utilising areas of the site but without formal lease agreements in their name. The minutes of Barrow Parish Council Meeting held on 13th July 2017 report the mention that Councillors Downes, Knott and Skinner met with 4 allotment holders to look at the state of said allotments - those tenants holding plots A, C and D in front of the Hall, and 2 gentlemen looking to take on a plot behind the Hall in the far left hand corner. Plot B was very overgrown and we had complaints that the plot hadn't been worked for years.

Investigations pertaining to the use and management of land designated as Allotment land (ref Allotment Law statutes 1908 to 1950) have revealed that:

- Such land must only be used for cultivation of food produce / decorative flowers;
- The land cannot be sold (part or in whole) by the land owner without the express authority of the Secretary of State (ref Section 8 Allotments Act 1925);
- Plots within the land cannot be used for business purposes or other financial reward;
- Plot management agreements can only be issued to individuals for their personal use;
- Individuals can only hold a single plot agreement*.

*Full conditions of use and management of a plot are fully detailed in a formal plot tenancy agreement when offered by the Parish Council.

An inspection of the allotment site by a delegation of councillors revealed that large parts of the land were in a severe state of neglect and that the boundaries to the land were not secure – in that there was no one single entrance /exit to the site.

The Parish Council acknowledge that proper management and control of the site has lapsed over a number of years. It is incumbent on the council to fulfil its legal requirements as set out in the various Allotment Acts passed into statute between 1908 and 1950. The Parish Council must as elected representatives of the parish, ensure that the allotment asset, albeit one rented from Shropshire council, is managed and maintained as a common facility for the benefit of the Parish.

Such that, any parishioner who should wish to apply for and be granted a tenancy agreement, will have use of an area of land to grow vegetable produce.