

Report to Leisure and Amenities Committee

Allotment Working Group -report of Chair

Annual meeting

The note below sets out some issues for consideration arising from the Annual meeting of plot holders on 26th September.

Attendance

Numbers were slightly down on previous years c45 indicating the contentious issue of fees between parish and non parish tenants has quietened combined with a general feeling that the Parish is managing the allotments more proactively than SBC . However some attendees did mention that communication about the event had been patchy.

We also dropped the tea and biscuits seen in previous years It would be nice to consider reintroducing this next year.

Timing

The meeting took place prior to the issue of the new set of guidance which occurred at the beginning of October with the issue of the invoices for 2020. In future years we need to ensure if we have issues of substance to relay to our tenants we do so prior to the annual meeting to ensure that they have an opportunity to raise concerns.

Use of Chemicals

There was some significant push back about our position to seek to end the use of chemicals on our plots. In particular we were asked about the use of slug pellets and controlling the more resistant invasive weeds. I pressed the case for an organic approach but as one plot holder pointed out some organic solutions eg use of seaweed can have very negative environmental impacts due to the collection process.

I feel that we may need to consider adopt a less blanket approach to the use of chemicals on plots and make clear that we are aiming our concern at this time on the Glycophosphate weedkillers.If we continue our current position the I fear we may find widespread breach of the guidelines with a consequent erosion in our ability to effectively enforce the key element in our guidelines.

Speaker

Mark Taylor one of our plotholders was our guest speaker and gave an excellent talk on UK species of bees and wasps .I now know that there are over 6000 species of wasps in the UK and that they are a positive contributor to pest control on our allotments. Given the topic above I wonder if next year we could give a slot to a speaker on hints and tips to cultivating organically.

Steve Allsopp

October 2019