

Meeting	Parks & Open Spaces Committee
Date	3 September 2024
Report Title	Leisure Garden Report
Agenda Reference	10a
Author	Jackie Fawcett, Office Administrator

Officers Recommendations

1. To note the report.
2. To consider allowing placement of an advertisement poster for 'Budget Seeds' to allow a discounted rate for plot holders wishing to use their services.

Leisure Garden Inspections

The Head of Parks & Open Spaces and Administrator have completed three Leisure Garden inspections this year-to-date.

Following the inspections, polite reminders and non-cultivation letters were sent out to tenants (see below):

Current Stats

Site	Number of Plots	Waiting list
Rose Walk (RW)	79	7
Goodearl (GE)	46	3
RW or GE		6
Ventnor Close (VC)	51	2
Tadpole		30
Any Plot		11

Inspection Stats

Site	Number of Plots	Polite reminder letter	Non-cultivation letter	Vacant plots (through latest comms)
Rose Walk (RW)	79	3	1	0
Goodearl (GE)	46	4	2	0
Ventnor Close (VC)	51	1	2	0

We currently do not have any vacant plots, however this may change as we will follow up on the non-cultivated sites during our next inspection on the 3rd September.

We have taken back the ownership of Plot 35A at Ventnor Close as there is an established orchard with no cultivatable land, so will be using this as an allotment community orchard.

Leisure Garden Newsletter

A quarterly newsletter has been sent to all tenants and councillors. Issue dates will be as follows: Summer – July / Autumn – October / Winter – January / Spring – April.

The newsletter has led to the establishment of a representative for the Ventnor Close site and an introductory meeting has already taken place with them. This will allow us to improve our communication with tenants and to address both positive aspects and challenges at our sites.



Annual Leisure Garden Competition

We hosted the Annual Leisure Garden Competition on Tuesday 30th and Wednesday 31st July. Thank you to Councillor Leanne Stevenson who was part of the judging panel, alongside the Head of Parks and Open Spaces and the Administrator. The winners have been notified and they have been invited to the prize giving ceremony at the Annual Plot Holders Meeting.

WINNERS 2024		
Rose Walk	1st	Mr Titcombe
	2nd	Mr Scammell
	3rd	Mr Manbahadur Gurung
Goodearl	1st	Mr Sheppard
	2nd	Mr Lee
	3rd	Mr Akers
Ventnor	1st	Mrs Way
	2nd	Mr Hinton
	3rd	Mr White
	Newcomer	Mr Saunders

Annual Plot Holders Meeting

Save the date: Monday 7th October 2024

Communications to go out to plot holder's w/c 26th August. Thank you to the councillors who have accepted the invitation. The Administrator is hoping to source a guest speaker so any suggestions would be welcomed. Competition prizes will be awarded at the meeting.

Correspondence

To save costs, the Administrator continues to improve the paperless system by obtaining email contact information for more tenants. We have managed to obtain email addresses for a further 24 tenants who had previously not supplied these details. We still have 32 tenants who have only supplied a postal address.

FoodCycle

Unfortunately, the Swindon FoodCycle charity is currently unable to accept any surplus produce from our tenants as they currently do not have available volunteers. Tenants have suggested that surplus produce can be given to the public, however I am not sure how we can police this.

Car Park – Ventnor Close

Tenants have raised the unsuitability of the current car parking area. We are looking at remodelling this, in conjunction with the completion of the sheltered housing, as access is currently restricted. Works will include the excavation of the existing surface; new membrane; and compacted MOT type 1 hardcore.

Advertising

A plot holder has inquired about displaying a promotional poster for 'Budget Seeds'. The poster advertises discount codes exclusively for leisure gardeners to purchase seeds at reduced prices. This promotion is ongoing, and the plot holder has explicitly stated that they would not receive any financial compensation. Their intention is simply to share this opportunity as a goodwill gesture to fellow leisure gardeners.