



**SHIPSTON ON STOUR TOWN COUNCIL  
NOTES OF ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ANNUAL MEETING  
Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026 at 1830hrs  
At  
The Townsend Hall, Shipston on Stour**

**Present:**

**Shipston Town Council:** Councillor Tony Booth,  
Emily Booth and Debbie Hardiman (Town Clerks)  
Kim Watson (Admin Officer)

**Allotment Reps:** Anne Wagenhauser & Phil Cowley (New Street)  
Stephen Lockwood (Shoulderway)

**Allotment Holders:** Approx 19

**Welcome and Introduction:**

Cllr T Booth opened the meeting, welcomed all Allotment Holders and introduced the office team

**Minutes of Previous Meeting:**

No matters arising from the minutes and were confirmed a true record.

Cllr T Booth explained that these draft minutes are already on the Shipston Town Council website and the minutes from this meeting will be uploaded as a draft once completed.

**Discussion of Reps Meeting:**

Brief update from Emily regarding discussions held within the Reps meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2026:

- Suggestion boxes needed replacing – this has now been done
- No cash payments this year – a card machine has been purchased and is set up ready to take card payments – allotment holders can now pay by either card, cheque or bank transfer online.
- Asking everyone to pay for their plots after the 1<sup>st</sup> April to fit in with the new financial year– deadline is the 30<sup>th</sup> April
- Water bill was exceptionally high this year due to the drought. Landed with a very large bill near the end of last year, due to meter readings being massively underestimated. We were made aware that actual readings were only taken twice a year by waterplus. We are now aiming to take meter readings ourselves during inspections to avoid this happening again
- Cemetery extension is still being investigated, as explained last year, the Shoulderway allotments were initially purchased as a cemetery extension, but would be used as

allotments until that point. This is something we are trying to avoid so are looking into the possibility of buying more land for the Cemetery

- Plot clearances after a tenant has vacated the plot have been very low this year. We have involved the small claims courts this year to get previous holders to pay for this, this was a simple process that will be used again if needed.
- Fees have increased by 10% as discussed last year. Fees haven't increased for 3 years and would like to fix the new prices for the next 3 years
- Plots markers are still yet to be placed – it is on our to-do list

### **Presentation:**

Emily talked through the presentation:

- 93 plots overall: New Street – 4 Full and 60 Half, Shoulderway – 1 Full and 28 Half
- 13 people currently on the waiting list
- No current vacancies across the sites, but have heard of at least 3 holders in New Street that are looking to give up
- As discussed earlier, fees have increased by 10% this year. New Street – Full Plot - £55, Half Plot - £27.50, Shoulderway – Full Plot - £45.10, Half Plot - £22.50
- This year's income and expenditure was explained:
  - o £2,315 income from rent, £135 income from Small Claims Court after plot clearance
  - o £2460 spent on general maintenance of both sites, £1,372.62 on water, £160 on plot clearances, £20 Moreton show entry, £127.99 on a card machine for New Clark House to enable holders to pay by card instead of cash.
  - o Total expenditure of £4,140.61 – leaving a deficit of -£1,690.61
- Allotment Holder questioned plot clearance charges – Emily explained that there have been incidents where holders are vacating their plots and leaving them in a very poor condition and with items that need to be removed, we have to arrange for the rubbish to be collected, which is charged to us – we have started issuing invoices now if this happens and have taken one case to Small Claims Court and have successfully reclaimed that money back from the previous holder.
- Monthly inspections paused over the winter months and have now resumed. The dates are posted in the notice boards at both sites. Explained that we are keeping track of plots and issuing warning letters as and when needed – holders are given two weeks to rectify and if we deem this not to have happened by the time we carry out the next inspection we will issue another letter or an eviction notice, whichever is deemed necessary. Reminded holders that we are approachable and will take personal circumstances into account – please just contact us.

### **Open Forum:**

- Allotment Holder asked the question regarding Fires – why are they not allowed, what were the reasonings? Cllr T Booth explained that this issue comes up every year and the Council made a decision regarding this some years ago. Council deemed this a fire safety risk, it is bad for the environment and also effects the neighbouring residential

area. Emily added that new agreements were sent out with the updated rules 2 years ago and there have been no complaints.

- Allotment Holder asked if charges will be applied on top of Allotment Fees if they pay by card – Emily replied No, the Council will be paying the charges
- Allotment Holder asked about the card machine – why are holders being charged for this? Emily responded that they are not being charged extra for this, but it is included in our finance details, because it was bought specifically for the Allotment Holders - we wouldn't have use for one otherwise. It was thought that it would be helpful considering we can't accept cash this year due to the closure of the bank
- Allotment Holder queried the Moreton Show Entry – Emily explained that this is something both sites are entered into every year – judges come along and look around, judging for “Best Allotment Site”, which is then awarded at Moreton Show. Last year New Street won 3<sup>rd</sup> prize and won 2<sup>nd</sup> prize the year before.
- Cllr T Booth asked if the Allotment Holders would be interested in Shipston Town Council Awards for the Allotments – for example, best plot etc – there was some interest. An allotment Holder informed Cllr Booth that there used to be an annual produce show held in the Townsend Hall by either the Rotary Club or the Stour Valley Lions – would be interested in getting this back up and running again. Cllr T Booth said he would speak to both organisations to see if this would be possible
- Anne – New Street Rep – informed all that there is a Facebook page for all Allotment Holders and invited all to join
- Allotment Holder queried the Tool Shed at New Street and how it worked – Anne informed that the Tool Library is there for holders to borrow any tools and then put them back. Also asked that if anyone has any spare tools that they don't need, could they be donated to the Tool Library
- Allotment Holder who does not have access to Facebook asked if a WhatsApp group could be set up – this is something the Reps will investigate
- Allotment Holder asked what the Council are doing with regards to welfare of some of the chickens at the New Street site – Emily mentioned that the office hasn't been made aware of any issues and requested that if there is cause for concern, could an email be sent or a phone call be made to New Clark House and we will look into this. Reiterated that, whilst we inspect the sites once a month, we are office based – we don't know of issues unless we are informed. Discussions then went on to rats. Again, Emily reiterated that the office has not been made aware of any issues with rats. At the last annual meeting this was discussed but no further correspondence has been sent, so we assumed this was no longer an issue. Asked all Allotment Holders to report any issues to either the Allotment Reps or the office, via email or telephone
- Allotment Rep for New Street, Anne, reported that she will be helping out with Shipston Home Nursing's Plant Sale on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> May, which is being held on Gibbons Field next to the New Street Site – requested that if anyone has any spare plants, seeds or cuttings would they be willing to donate or even spare some time to help out.
- Cllr T Booth thanked all Allotment Holders for attending and thanked Emily and Debbie for their management of the Allotments over the past 3 years

**Meeting Closed at 1900hrs**