



**Community Assets & Opens Spaces Committee
Wednesday 20 May 2026**

Agenda Item 7 – Updates from Allotment Working Party

Purpose of the Report

Members are required to:

- **NOTE** updates from the recent meeting of the Allotment Working Party
- **CONSIDER** the proposed spending recommendations

Notes from the Allotment Working Party meeting on 20 April 2026

Members Present:

- Katy Cena (Allotments Officer)
- Richard House (Grounds Manager GM)
- Bob Sanderson (Allotment Holder)
- Bill Jerman (Allotment Holder)
- Toby Kewen (Allotment Holder)

The parish council's Allotments Officer explained that there was one vacant plot which was going to be offered out in the near future. The skip day was planned for the next working day (21 April), which gave potholders the opportunity to clear their plots. Following skip day, the Allotments Officer explained that there will be another plot inspection and that it's likely that within the next few months there will be more people vacating their plots.

Working party members thought that the twice-yearly skip is very much welcomed and they have received a lot of positive feedback about it and, in addition, how helpful the grounds staff have been during skip days. There was feedback that it would be useful for skip day to be on a Saturday but they understood that it would be difficult due to it having to be manned. Friday was also suggested and Richard said this could be possible if his team were to swap hours.

Action: The Allotments Officer and Grounds Manager carried out an allotment inspection on 22 April 2026 and affected allotment holders have been written to.

Allotment Track

The Allotments Officer showed two quotes received from Contractor A, a higher quote (**Exempt Appendix B**) and a lower quote (**Exempt Appendix C**). The higher quote was

more extensive and included raising the road and cambered for water run off to prevent road deterioration. Members of the working party thought the higher quote was too high for an allotment track and would only benefit a very small proportion of the community. Bill said the lower quote would be more acceptable. Toby suggested communication to plot holders about being mindful about the frequency of using the track and to suggest only to drop off items that might be needed, though it was agreed that this would be difficult to enforce.

Due to recent complaints that the Allotments Officer was receiving about the track, the preferred option is for the potholes to be filled in by the Grounds Team within the next three months. The materials would be bought from Samsons at a cost of £110 which is 2x bulk bags at a cost of £55 each, outlined in **Appendix A**.

Recommendations

1. To **APPROVE** the spend of £110 to fill in the potholes as a temporary measure.
Budget: 4400/350 – Allotment Maintenance £1,500 available.
2. To **CONSIDER** putting the lesser quote from Contractor A into the parish council's budget for the 2027/28 financial year.

Allotment Posts/Markers

The Allotments Officer showed members of the working party a website print out of picket pales for allotment number marking and said that this would be something that would benefit members of staff and new potential plot holders.

At the moment, it's difficult during plot inspections to identify the plots. There have been attempts to encourage plot holders to mark their plots in creative ways, however only a small minority have done this, despite ongoing reminders. Bill works with some local schools who have done similar markers for marking gardening patches and will inform The Allotment Officer of how they do this. It was briefly discussed how the numbers could be marked, which included burning, stenciling and painting. Bob said that it would be best if the post could be as one entity rather than a separate plate for the number as it would involve more work in terms of screwing it on. The allotments officer said that there would be approx. 160 markers to be done. If the plots are clearly marked with posts then this would make it far easier for the Allotment Officer to navigate the plots without relying on the Grounds Manager, who has a better idea where individual plots are located. The Grounds Manager said that this could be a project for the grounds team in the winter months when they are less busy.

The Allotments Officer has looked into the most viable options and recommends the purchase of picket pales, wood engraving and stencil kits at a cost of £350. Each picket pale will have the individual number/letter engraved onto it to identify the plot. The engraved number would then be filled with a permanent black marker so that the number stands out. This would be considerably cheaper than outsourcing the work and this is one of the projects that the grounds team could undertake during bad weather days.

Recommendations

1. To **APPROVE** the spend of £350 for the creation of plot markings to ensure the plots are more easily identifiable. Budget: 4400/350 – Allotment Maintenance £1,500 available.

Wood chippings

Working party members mentioned that wood chippings could be placed in the top track to make it more accessible for plot holders who have their plots situated away from the bottom car park where the wood chippings are normally placed. The Allotments Officer stated that whilst it was a good idea it might increase the use of heavy vehicles on the track which could cause further deterioration. However, this should still be considered as an option.

Bonfires

Bill raised a query about bonfires and the Allotments Officer confirmed that every August, bonfires are prohibited on the allotment site. In addition the Allotments Officer said that when there are periods of dry weather throughout other times of the year, the council could implement further bans that plot holders would need to adhere to.

Rainwater Harvesting

Bill suggested that rainwater harvesting would benefit plot holders and the council. The parish council is on a water meter and by plot holders saving water it could save the council some money. In addition, if plot holders harvested water on their own plots they wouldn't need to go back and forth to the water troughs, which can be quite strenuous.

Action: The allotments officer shared a Facebook post and emailed all the plot holders a useful link.

Allotment Food Surplus

Bill mentioned that he often has a surplus of vegetables and donates them to local foodbanks, which are run by local primary schools. This is often later in the year from July onwards. Bill will inform the Allotments Officer of the details later this year.

Action: the Allotments Officer shared information on the allotment Facebook page later this year regarding donating surplus produce to local school foodbanks and coordinating a collection point for this.

Report Author: Katy Cena, Allotments and Administration Officer