**ALLOTMENT MANAGER’S REPORT FOR**

**ANNUAL PARISH MEETING April 2020**

The 26 plots are all let. Nearly all of them have been divided in half, apart from two of 8 rods each. The rest vary between 3.5 and 5.5 rods, the majority being 4 rods. Of the 22 plot holders, five live in Linton.

The last year was dominated by concerns about water: the cost of supply and consumption, and then surface water drain pipes being laid across the Allotments to service the new housing development in Vicarage Field.

The water supply company had changed twice since Southern Water’s tenure. The 2019 summer was hot and dry and with all the plots let, the consumption had increased but not to the extent shown on the invoices. The accounting was mainly based on inaccurate estimates, not taking into account that the water is turned off in the winter months to avoid frozen pipes. Eventually the current water company reimbursed the Parish Council for overpayment.

The drainpipe was laid underneath the central path to disperse the surface water from the Vicarage Field development in accordance with the Easement granted by the Parish Council to the developers. The works were protracted, delays caused by weather, Christmas/New Year break and the contractors’ JCB being vandalised. The path was reinstated, replacing slabs missing or damaged by the works, the grass border re-turfed in places. The North boundary hedging and trees have been largely destroyed by the works. Erecting a panel wooden fence has been suggested, to match the existing fence on the East boundary to give privacy and security for plot holders and their sheds whilst waiting for new hedging to grow.

The path by the gate is now regularly flooded from water welling up underneath, covering the steps and pavement.

The Tenancy Agreement has been updated to prevent the erection of polytunnels. In future, small polythene covered greenhouses will be allowed with permission (maximum size 7’ x 8’ x 6’ high), only one per tenant. Fruit/vegetable cages covered in netting will continue to be permitted.

The rent review in July resulted in an increase of £1.50 per rod, the total rental being £5 per rod. There is still no separate charge made for water supply.

The Seed Swap in May was well attended. For the first time in two decades the Autumn Tidy-up was rained off but took place on 16 November instead of the customary Guy Fawkes Saturday.

Covid 19 Government Guidelines were sent out to all plot holders in March. Many plot holders have taken advantage of more free time to work their plots, ticking the boxes of exercise and producing food whilst keeping 2m social distance. Many thanks go to them all for their support, hard work and forbearance particularly over the last few months of disruption.

Jane Sawyer

24 April 2020