

BLYTH TOWN COUNCIL
Special Environment Committee
Tuesday 26 March 2024
Decision Report

Bolam Allotment Lanes - Meeting with Officials of Blyth Small Holdings Allotment Association

Recommendations

The Committee RESOLVE to agree to the revised proposals for the repair of the Bolam Allotment Site lanes and access to them.

Ward

Cowpen

Risk Management

There is budget provision, in the Allotments Planned Maintenance Programme, for this work, in 2024/25.

Objective

To promote the environmental, social, and economic wellbeing of the town and its community. One way this can be done is by the provision of allotments and access to them.

Report

Members agreed in May 2023 to redo all the lanes at the Bolam site and make a provision of £76k in the 2024/25 budget. This followed a number of complaints about the state of the lanes. Members also agreed that the lanes be closed to vehicular access which had caused this deterioration. The Secretary of the Allotment Association did allow limited access at various times for vehicles that needed to be on site.

At the last Environment Committee, 22 February 2024, members heard the views from some plot holders, as to the difficulties restricted access was causing. It was agreed that the Chair of the Committee, Council Officers and 3 representatives from the Bolam site meet to discuss these issues and to agree on some proposals.

At the beginning of February, the site suffered from a water burst in one of the lanes and upon this being resolved, it was immediately apparent that the water pipes underground are in a very poor state and in need of replacement. A replacement water system was also agreed at the

Environment Committee on the 22 February, and to be financed from Balances.

This meeting to discuss the lanes and access to them, took place on the 28 February and was chaired by the Deputy Chair of the Environment Committee.

The favoured outcome was that:

- The locks be changed immediately to allow vehicular access to the site without time restriction, apart from vans because of the height restriction barriers.
- New signs be installed advising that the lanes are not suitable for vehicular access and any entry will be at the car owners own risk.
- All repairs to address potholes/uneven surfaces be addressed after the installation of a new water system for which the Council have gone out to tender.
- Council Officers will appoint a contractor to repair the lanes where required, after the installation of a new water system.
- Further repairs will be required depending upon vehicular use of the lanes and will be monitored/reported accordingly.
- Officers report the outcome from this meeting to the next Environment Committee for consideration and approval.

These proposals if agreed, should mean that there will be savings from the initial budget for lane repairs from which the costs of the new water system can be met, thereby negating the need to use balances.

M Wilkinson
Deputy Town Clerk
18 March 2024