

difficulties). A grant was received from the Devon Community Fund which funded the purchase of two pop up gazebos and an LPG hot water boiler. In addition NATC funded three foldable tables for the Association.

Portaloo on Coach Road

In 2022 a Portaloo was trialled on the Coach Road site for 16 weeks during the peak growing season. The trial was successful and will be implemented on Coach Road and Bradley allotment sites in 2023.

Facebook

The allotment Facebook page and private members group page continues to be well supported with members sharing their achievements and ideas.

Pollinators and People in the Bradley Valley

The association was pleased to work with Green Futures in connection with the Bradley Bug Recovery Network and Bradley field was one of the chosen sites for investigation. This initiative compliments the goals of NADCAA to promote biodiversity on their allotment fields and they look forward to supporting the expansion of the Bradley project to other parts of Newton Abbot.

Removal of age-related rent concession

At last year's NADCAA AGM, a motion put forward by a member to remove the 20% rent reduction for members of state pension age was agreed by the membership. Rents were also increased slightly and this year's annual rent for a half plot is £33.

Applications and Plot Churn 2022

There are typically two applications for new allotments each week and 80 tenancies were terminated in 2022. The majority of terminations were voluntary.

During 2022 there were 4 evictions due to lack of cultivation. The number of evictions over the past 6 years is set out in the following table:

Year	Evictions
2017	4
2018	8
2019	2
2020	Nil - Covid
2021	2
2022	4

The current waiting list is 92 (as at 14.04.23)

Injunction Hearing

At the beginning of the year the Association had to defend an application for an interim injunction made by a member in connection with a Notice to Quit that had been served on the member. The application was dismissed by the County

Court but these proceedings have caused considerable worry and stress to the volunteer senior officers of the Association who had to deal with this matter. The Association is working with the Council to find a way of providing greater protection to the Association and its officers.

The Kings Coronation

The Association is arranging a Coronation Picnic on Decoy Field on the 8th May. The equipment purchased for the Jubilee picnic will be used. Members of the Allotment Sub Committee were invited to attend the event.

b) Upgrading of sites tracks

The meeting considered a briefing note produced by representatives of NADCAA, previously circulated. Members were reminded that at the previous sub-committee meeting it was stated that subject to available CIL monies, the Council might be in a position to support long term improvements and upgrading of the allotment tracks.

Decoy Field Top Track

At the request of the Town Clerk a quotation for extending the parallel 600mm tarmac tracks by 64m on the top track on Decoy Field was obtained along with a full width track section at the entrance to a car parking area off the track.

The quote was in the region of £8000. The Associations management committee has approved a contribution of £1000 from its maintenance budget towards the improvement. It was reported that the track needs attention as the potholes are causing cars to ground and members to complain.

Bradley Field (track alongside the leat leading to Bradley Field)

The track is in poor condition although it was noted that the track may be affected by the proposed new housing development on part of the industrial estate. The representatives asked whether the Council is able to undertake temporary repairs to this track? It was noted that at the previous meeting, minute A9(B), it was agreed that NATC would fund 50% of the cost of the gravel required for short term track repairs and that NADCAA were going to ask the developers if they could provide any hardcore.

Cooke's Field (track at the end of Courtenay Road), it was noted that this track is not owned by NATC. The NADCAA field manager has reported that it is in very poor condition and has asked if improvements can be arranged to ensure that it is safe to use.

The RFO advised that the Council recognised the repair of the track at Decoy Field as a priority and that the Council will require three quotes, in accordance with its Financial Regulations, to consider the expenditure. It was suggested that any permanent repairs to the tracks will need to consider a permeable option.

Following discussion, it was **agreed** that:

- The Town Clerk contacts the landowner of the track at Cooke's Field to ask for the top end of the track to be repaired.
- NADCAA obtains three quotes in relation to the long-term improvement of tracks across all sites, including a permeable option and submits a report to the Council for consideration.

c) Hele Park New Allotment Site

The meeting considered a report produced by representatives of NADCAA, previously circulated and heard an update on the proposed new allotments at Hele Park. Taylor Wimpey and Persimmon are required to provide two allotment fields in the Hele Park area. It was reported that some progress is being made, albeit incredibly slow.

Taylor Wimpey (TW) Field

Legal discussions are ongoing between the Council and lawyers representing Taylor Wimpey and a site meeting has taken place. Currently the only access to this field is up 30 steps in the bottom corner of the field and there has been discussion regarding the creation of a link between this field and the adjacent allotment field that is being provided by Persimmon, unfortunately Persimmon has not engaged constructively with these ideas.

TW have offered an ex-gratia payment of £3000 to NADCAA to help fund the creation of a link between the Persimmon and TW fields and for the import of compost / topsoil once this ramp has been created. For a vehicle to be able to gain access to the Persimmon field the current entrance would need to be enlarged. A hardened track would also be required along the top of the Persimmon field.

Cllr Bullivant advised that it is unlikely that the entrance to the field can be enlarged due to the stone wall being designated as a public work of art.

It was noted that an allotment field accessible via 30 steps is not suitable as a permanent arrangement and could breach the Equality Act. The creation of a ramped link between the TW field and the adjacent Persimmon field would improve access but would require significant improvements to the Persimmon field and could only proceed if the Persimmon field was also taken over by the Council and if sufficient funding for these improvements was available. In addition to the cash grant being offered by Taylor Wimpey, the Association has obtained grants totalling £3000 to go towards improving the access to the TW field and for commissioning the Persimmon Field. The approved layout for this field will provide 16 plots with each plot being 100m².

It was noted that as the field is visible to the residential properties the Allotment Association has agreed that:

1. Sheds will only be permitted in one location on the site.
2. Chickens/geese will not be permitted on the site.

Persimmon Field

A rectangular field located between the rear gardens of houses in Larkspur Drive and Howton Rd and access to this field is through a one metre wide pedestrian gate from Larkspur Drive. There are five car parking spaces just outside of the entrance to the field and the Association have been advised that these will be transferred along with the field for allotment users. A water supply is provided at the entrance but under the S106 planning agreement no water troughs were stipulated and so these will need to be provided.

Persimmon have advised that they are in discussions with TDC regarding the transfer of the field, but these discussions have stalled. Persimmon have advised that they are not willing to go beyond the requirements of their initial S106 agreement which would mean the field is set out as six very large plots. These need to be re-sized to enable them to be let as half/quarter plots. A revised layout could provide 18 x 90m² half plots.

To be suitable for use this field would require at least three water troughs along the top of the plots and as noted under the previous comments for the Taylor Wimpey field the entrance gate would need to be enlarged and a hardened track provided along the top of the Persimmon field to link with the proposed hardened/tarmacked ramp down to the Taylor Wimpey field.

Both of these two fields present problems and require investment to ensure that they are suitable for use as allotments. As noted above providing TW uphold their donation, NADCAA would have access to £6000 that can contribute to the initial commissioning of these new allotments.

The Deputy Town Clerk advised that the Town Clerk is in communication with the developers and TDC regarding the issues.

Water harvesting

The Association is making plans to install a water harvesting system on the TW field that could provide approximately 50% of the annual water demand on the field. These plans will be finalised when the field has been transferred and the Association is intending to apply for grants from South West Water and others to help fund this project.

It was **agreed** to recommend to the Community & Heritage Committee that the money allocated to water harvesting at Decoy Field is transferred to the new site at Hele Park.

d) Local Plan Comments

The meeting noted a report produced by representatives of the NADCAA, previously circulated. In summary, the report outlined the demand for allotments in Newton Abbot and the comments submitted by NADCAA on the Local Plan. The representatives were frustrated and felt that the comments submitted by the Allotment's Association had been ignored by TDC.

Members recognised that the Neighbourhood Plan is due to be revised and suggested the Allotments are given a much stronger representation.

A5. ITEMS RAISED BY NEWTON ABBOT TOWN COUNCIL

a) Membership Agreement

Members discussed the proposed amendments/additions to the Membership Agreement, as circulated prior to the meeting. The NADCAA representatives advised members that due to the recent injunction the Allotment Association may struggle to renew or secure appropriate insurance cover which could leave NADCAA unable to function.

It was **agreed** that the Allotment Sub-Committee recommends to the Community and Heritage Committee that it proceeds with the proposed amendments/additions to the Membership Agreement.

b) Tenancy Agreement

Members discussed the proposed addition to the Tenancy Agreement, as circulated prior to the meeting.

It was **agreed** that the Allotment Sub-Committee recommends to the Community and Heritage Committee that it proceeds with the proposed addition to the Tenancy Agreement.

A6. OTHER MATTERS FROM OTHER ALLOTMENT SITES

Representatives of NADCAA provided the following updates:

(a) Blake's Field

- No issues.

(b) Coach Road

- Some tenants have expressed concern about the possible development of the Idverde/TDC greenhouse site.

Members agreed that NATC should give consideration to this area when refreshing the Neighbourhood Plan.

(c) Cooke's Field

- Issue with a tree, has now been felled and replaced.
- Condition of access tracks.

(d) Bradley

- No issues
- New Field Manager
- Investigating improved water harvesting

(e) Decoy

- Biodiversity survey carried out, which has confirmed wildlife is thriving and includes:
 - All three types of newts
 - Pipistrelle bats
 - Tawny Owls – installing owl boxes.
 - Dragonflies.
 - Hedgehogs

It was noted that Biodiversity is improving across all sites and agreed that an article on biodiversity will feature in the next edition of the Cryer newsletter.

(f) Hele park – as previously discussed.

The committee expressed their thanks to the representatives of NADCAA for their incredible work managing the allotments and NADCAA representatives expressed their thanks to the sub-committee, in particular to those Councillors who are not standing for re election in May.

A7. Date of next meeting

To be agreed as necessary.

Meeting closed at 20:00

Chairman.....Date.....