

**Community Services Committee Meeting - 20 October****Park Road Allotments**

The Council have administered allotment plots off Park Road in Stratford-upon-Avon since 2012/13, although a licence agreement between Orbit and the Town Council was agreed back in 2011. Initially there were 4 plots, although the layout was later increased to 5 following consultation with the tenants. Each plot is currently rented at an annual cost of £33.00.

The area, located at the end of Park Road, had formally been used as hard standing for porta-cabins, and although the concrete surface had been broken up to expose the soil beneath, no work at the time was instigated to completely clear the proposed allotment site of rubble. This has made cultivation for tenants very difficult and has directly led to at least two of the original tenants giving up their plots due to ongoing frustration!

The initial expenditure to set up the allotment garden was considerable and a detailed breakdown is listed below.

• Security fencing	£7,000
• Storage units x 4	£8,200
• Tree and bush removal	£2,500
• Cement base for units and skip hire	£1,200
• Additional roofs/guttering for units	£ 700
• Pathway/slabs	£2,000
• Water tank	£ 199
• Additional wooden shed/installation	£ 580
• Miscellaneous expenditure	£ 100
	<u>£22,479</u>

- *The above expenditure also includes additional levelling work and scraping of the soil to try and remove compacted rubble. This has not been completely successful.*

The soil itself is of poor quality, which makes growing crops difficult. Although each plot has a dedicated water butt, the site has no established water supply. At times of drought the Open Spaces Team are called upon to fill the individual water butts and the much larger

communal water tank, until such time as any natural water supply returns. In 2013, discussions took place with Severn Trent to determine how much it would cost to install a proper water supply, but the Committee at the time determined that the estimated cost of £1,000 was too expensive.

Something clearly needs to be done to rectify many of the issues which exist, and as Allotment Officer I RECOMMEND that the following should be actioned as soon as possible:

- Set up a meeting with the tenants to discuss the issues they face and ways that they can be resolved;
- Consider installing raised beds, made of railway sleepers;
- Installation of a proper water supply;
- That the existing rent of £33.00 per annum is not increased, until such time as the current issues have been satisfactorily resolved.

Charles Wilson  
**Allotment Officer**  
October, 2020