

Kendal Town Council

Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal LA9 4ED
www.kendaltowncouncil.gov.uk



Minutes of a meeting of the Allotments Committee held on Monday, 24 February 2025, in the Council Chamber at the Town Hall, Highgate, Kendal, at 7.00 p.m.

Kendal Town Council Members

Cllr G Archibald (Vice Chair)	Present	Cllr J Cornthwaite	Apologies
Cllr L Edwards	Present	Cllr A Finch (Chair)	Apologies
Cllr L Hendry	Present	One Vacancy	

Co-optees

Jon Cox (and Castle Hags Ext Representative)	Present
Chris Rowley (and Underley Road Representative)	Present
Ros Taylor (and Wattsfield Representative)	Present

Other Site Representative present

Town View	Helen Belton
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In attendance: Chris Bagshaw (Town Clerk), Inge Booth (Democratic Services Assistant), Janine Holt (Council Services Officer) and Pierre Labat (Townscape Officer).

Note – In the absence of Cllr Finch (Chair), Cllr Archibald (Vice-Chair) took the Chair for the meeting.

A21/2024 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received and accepted from Kendal Town Cllrs Cornthwaite and Finch (Chair) and from and from Site Representative Bryan Williams (Crow Tree).

A22/2024 Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were raised under this item.

A23/2024 Exclusion of Press and Public (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

There were no confidential items included in the agenda.

A24/2024 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Resolved: To receive and accept the minutes of the previous meeting of the Allotments Committee held on 30 September 2024 and to authorise the Chair to sign them as a true record.

A25/2024 Minute Action Sheet

The Committee considered a report on actions taken by officers on resolutions or recommendations made at previous meetings. In response to a query regarding progress on pathway improvements at Town View (Ref. No.42), the Council Services Officer advised that the contractor appointed in October 2024 would be commencing work in March. The Townscape Officer had cleared vacant Plot No.7 which would be split into three plots. The work would be completed by the end of this financial year.

Resolved: To note the report.

A26/2024 Review of Spend against 2024/25 Budget

The Committee considered a report reviewing spend against the budget as at 11 February 2025.

In response to a query, the Council Services Officer explained the reason for the apparent overspend on Allotments General Expenditure which was due to £3,813 having already been committed for the pathway improvements at Town View. These improvements, she pointed out however, might not go ahead in this financial year. The Council Services Officer further drew attention to the collapsing boundary at Crow Tree. The work required had been costed by the Townscape Officer and, whilst it was hoped that this work would also be carried out by a contractor before the end of the financial year, it was felt that this might not happen. It was raised that if this work did not go ahead then the £600 allocated for the work would not be used in this financial year.

Conversation took place on Pest Control and the potential for a review to be carried out regarding methods being used and efficiency. The Council Services Officer felt that a piece of work was required around public relations on the subject. She further suggested that she could bring up the matter at a forthcoming meeting for Site Representatives on 14 March.

The Town Clerk drew attention to the small water bill which was as a result of the water company's random billing and reported that there may not need to be as much money in that budget moving forward.

A question was raised as to whether the underspend on water could be used to carry out work on how to improve biodiversity on the Council's allotments and, in part, for a review of pest control, potentially by hiring someone in to carry out the work. The Town Clerk undertook to look into this suggestion, with the funding being vired from the Water budget. Ros Taylor, Co-optee and Wattsfield representative, volunteered to carry out some initial desk research on the matter prior to the next meeting of the Committee and to provide her findings to officers.

Resolved: The Town Clerk to look into the potential for work to be carried out around improving biodiversity on the Council's allotments and a review of pest control, with the funding to be vired from the Allotments Water Budget, and with Ros Taylor to carry out some initial desk research, providing her findings to officers prior to the next meeting of the Committee.

Resolved: To note the report.

A27/2024 Townscape Officer Update

The Townscape Officer provided a verbal update; a list of his current tasks was attached to the agenda. Members welcomed the information generated by the new allotments software and the Townscape Officer reported that this was working well.

Resolved: To note the verbal update.

A28/2024 Allotment Statistics Report

The Council Services Officer presented a report which showed that the waiting list currently stood at 74 individuals. The list had increased by nine individuals since the last meeting. 47 plots were vacant, details of which were provided within the report. 19 plots had been let since the last meeting. There were 54 tenants with outstanding rent, with the total amount outstanding being £4,143.76. Payment reminder letters had been sent out on 13 February 2025. Performance indicators on allotments occupancy at 14 February were also attached to the agenda for information. The Council Services Officer pointed out at the meeting that the date of September 2024 shown on the report was incorrect and that it was, in fact, up to date.

In response to a query, the Council Services Officer explained that empty plots would be advertised through the Newsletter and on social media, although pointing out that this had not helped in previous years. She felt that different ways needed to be found through which to reach out to people. It was suggested that empty plots should also be advertised on the Council's Website.

In response to a further query, the Council Services Officer explained that those tenants with outstanding rent would shortly be provided with notices to quit. With regard to empty plots, the Townscape Officer was in the process of getting these cleared and ready to let and would ensure that they did not get out of hand. The Council Services Officer agreed with a further suggestion that empty plots which could not be let might be offered to existing tenants.

The need for an up-to-date detailed list of all plots and tenants was stressed, with the last one having been supplied in 2015.

Resolved: The Council Services Officer be authorised to let multiple plots where all other possible methods of advertisement have been exhausted.

Resolved: An up-to-date detailed list of all plots and tenants to be produced and circulated as necessary.

Resolved: To note the report.

A29/2024 Site Representatives

Chris Rowley, Underley Road representative, welcomed the work which had been carried out by the Townscape Officer on the community plot. In response to a query, the Council Services Officers advised that Carer Support South Lakes had recently taken on this plot. Mr Rowley drew attention to the fact that a number of plots were still not being worked and requested a full list of details in relation to plots.

Ros Taylor, Wattsfield representative, informed the Committee that all was going well on that site.

John Cox, Castle Haggs Ext representative, raised concerns in relation to the access road from Sunnyside alongside Fletcher Park which was often submerged in water, making it impossible for cars to access the site. The Town Clerk raised the question of ownership of the road and undertook to look into the matter.

Helen Belton, Town View representative, welcomed the work in relation to the improvements to the pathway through the middle of the site and the clearing and splitting of Plot 7. She asked, however, whether there was any possibility of allotment holders accessing the compost area via Maude Street and through Maudes Meadow. The Town Clerk, whilst pessimistic, undertook to raise the question.

Resolved: The Council Services Officer to provide an up-to-date list of allotments and allotment holders, also as outlined at Minute No. A28/2024 above.

Resolved: The Town Clerk to look into the matter of the access road to Castle Haggs Ext.

Resolved: The Town Clerk to raise the question of access by vehicle to the Town View compost area via Maude Street and Maudes Meadow.

Resolved: To note the verbal reports from Site Representatives.

A30/2024 Waste into Wellbeing Event

It was reported that the Town Council was supporting Waste into Wellbeing, which was holding an event on 17 May 2025. Allotments would be represented by Officers and allotment holders who would promote Kendal's allotment community.

It was pointed out that the event would be held between 10.00 a.m. and 2.00 p.m. A range of plants would be available for sale on the Allotments stall which would be situated in a gazebo outside the United Reform Church, with sales being in aid of Waste into Wellbeing. The finer details would be discussed at the forthcoming meeting of the Site Representatives on 14 March. The Council Services Officer, in response to a query, undertook to circulate copies of a poster advertising the event.

Resolved: To note the joint event with Waste into Wellbeing.

A31/2024 Bird Boxes on Allotments

Note – At this stage in the meeting, Cllr Archibald (Vice-Chair in the Chair) pointed out that he was a Town Council representative on Natural Kendal. He informed the Committee, however, that there was no conflict, bias or predetermination.

It was reported that Natural Kendal was working to improve the biodiversity and natural landscape in Kendal. One of the organisation's aims was to support bird habitats. The Committee was asked to consider a request from Natural Kendal for the Town Council to work in partnership to site bird boxes in trees on the allotment estate. Appropriate locations on allotment sites would be identified, with boxes being supplied and installed by Natural Kendal. Natural Kendal would work with officers to identify suitable trees and seek relevant permissions. If approved, the scheme would commence in late summer.

Members welcomed the proposal.

Resolved: To support the work of Natural Kendal and work in partnership with the organisation to provide bird boxes on allotment sites.

The meeting closed at 7.33 p.m.