

Meeting notes 30.6.23

SRAA & APC working group

Present: Gerry Atkins, Elaine Hartford (EH), Chris House Mel Lawrence (ML), John Turley (JT)

Liz Holland APC clerk for notes, with contributions from JT

The main focus of the meeting was to understand Formula Land (FL)'s meeting with JT on 14th June and how the SRAA and APC can work with them to get a solution to the car park and track problems

- JT gave details of the meeting with Richard Brown (RB) from FL. APC had been unable to send a representative
- RB had a thorough review of the area and essentially did his own risk assessment of the land. That day was dryish but JT was able to describe the problems they have had with waterlogging and there was evidence of damage being caused by cars using the poor surface in the car park, and the uneven surface of the access and inner tracks resulting from inundation and frost since October
- The original grasscrete installation had been done poorly as no shingle was used to fill the holes in the matting; it has now sunk beneath the grass layers and is not fit for purpose
- The SRAA recommends a permanent surface covering which will be completely impervious, similar to the gate entrance (road planings). This to cover the whole car park and the access track down to the site's main gate
- Inside the allotments they require a 4ft wide impervious track laid
- The aim is to mitigate the risk of injury and to provide free, unfettered access all year round. This is essential for plot holders safety.
- JT pointed out that previous discussions at the APC meetings had intimated that the APC has no liability to fund safety measures, partly due to not funding other allotment sites in the village, but also because they are only the Licensee. Legal advice obtained by SRAA from NSALG stipulates that Licensor (FL(A)) and Licensee (APC) share the responsibility for ensuring safe access to the site and within it; APC has no Licence with other sites
- RB agreed to go away and talk again to the directors of FL (probably w/c 3/7) about the help they will give. They have previously offered £1,500 towards the cost. He now has details of the contractors and their estimates for most of the required work, provided by SRAA. He undertook to negotiate with the contractors to check the intended work, and to finalise cost estimates; these will be passed to APC and SRAA when ready
- ML conceded that the Council does have joint responsibility with FL for the safe use of the site
- ML & EH concurred that they would back a proposal to APC for financial help on that basis but ALL agreed to wait for FL to come back first. This may mean the finances cannot be discussed in detail until the August 7th meeting.
- ML will lay the case at the 6th July meeting & emphasise the need for contractors' tasks to be completed in the Summer, before the ground is bogged down again and becomes unworkable. It must be stressed that the allotments are used all year, not just in dry periods.
- JT will chase FL for an answer, if possible in time for the July PC meeting, but otherwise ASAP. He will also circulate a draft letter to be sent to FL(A) which requests changes to the Licence to reflect the reality of the site's current status, and commitments made about its future.

ACTIONS

JT to write to FL probably this weekend & copy APC

ML to represent the findings of this meeting at the APC meeting on 6th July

APC to be advised to have a risk assessment done of the area. JT offered to do this as he is qualified.