

NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE 2025 ANNUAL MEETING
OF NEW MILTON TOWN COUNCIL ALLOTMENT HOLDERS
HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, 2 ASHLEY ROAD, NEW MILTON
ON MONDAY 20 OCTOBER 2025

Chair: Cllr M Craze

Councillors: J Baker

In attendance: Mark Jeffries – Estates and Facilities Manager
Sam Welch – Administration Officer
28 Allotment Holders

The Chair welcomed everyone to the Annual Allotment Holders Meeting.

Apologies for absence were received from:

- Cllr G Blunden
- Cllr D Hawkins
- Cllr R Murrow
- Cllr D Rice-Mundy

Upper Ashley Site Representative 

12 Allotment Holders

The minutes of the meeting held on 21 October 2024 were agreed and signed by the Chair.

1. **SITE REPRESENTATIVES**

The Site Representatives for 2025/26 were agreed.

Becton Lane:
Middle Ashley:
Lower Ashley:
Lymington Road:
Upper Ashley:



The nominated councillors are:

Becton Lane:	Cllr Bob Murrow
Middle Ashley:	Cllr David Hawkins
Lower Ashley:	Cllr Bob Murrow
Lymington Road:	Cllr David Rice-Mundy
Upper Ashley:	Cllr David Hawkins

2. ALLOTMENT ADMINISTRATION

The Administration Officer gave the following updates:

- Site Locks:
All site lock codes will be changed shortly. Plot holders will be notified of the new codes prior to the change.
- Plot Markers:
Plot identifying markers are now ready. They have been installed at Becton Lane and will be placed at the remaining sites soon.
- Water Supply:
The water supply will be turned off shortly for the winter and restored in the spring.

3. CURRENT WAITING LIST

The Administration Officer reported that there are currently 22 people on the waiting list, with 8 vacant plots and 6 viewings scheduled.

4. DEMENTIA COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

The Chair referred to the Estates & Facilities Manager who provided an update on the Dementia Allotment on behalf of Cllr R Murrow:

“The Dementia Allotment has enjoyed a great summer this year welcoming visitors on Tuesday mornings to enjoy our lovely site.

We are now closed to visitors this year and look forward to reopening again next spring.

The team of regular volunteers have been great, and we’ve also been supported by corporate volunteers – from Innovus UK and GD Print. A big thank you to all the volunteers.

This year we received generous donations from Cllr Neil Tungate and New Milton Residents Association. A big thank you to our supporters.”

5. REPORTS FROM ALLOTMENT REPRESENTATIVES

The Chair then addressed each site representative in turn, inviting them to share any updates or concerns they wished to report.

Upper Ashley:

In his absence, [redacted] submitted a report via email, which the Chair read aloud:

“On the Upper Ashley Site, the deer are still getting in and eating produce. From the footprints left on some sites, they are now the large variety. Tenants are having to net or cover up just about everything to prevent it being eaten.

As a new season has started and we have new tenants and some who have given up, would it now be an opportune moment to change the padlock code for entry?

Also, the condition of the gate is such that the rusty broken ironwork could cause injury.”

The Estates & Facilities Manager noted the report and advised that funding has been allocated for gate works in next year's budget.

Middle Ashley:

[redacted] had no updates to report but expressed thanks to the Town Council for repairing a broken tap earlier in the year.

Lower Ashley:

[redacted] had numerous items to report:

- **Plot Markers**

Requested clarification on white posts recently put in at the site and asked whether the identifying plot markers would accurately correspond to the plots they are placed on.

The Administration Officer explained that the white posts referred to were outlining plots, and that identifying markers will accurately define each individual plot.

- **Taps**

Asked whether double headed taps could be installed at the site, explaining that there are currently only two taps at Lower Ashley, which makes it difficult when multiple plot holders need to water their plots. He also noted that during the summer, water butts were drying out.

The Estates & Facilities Manager confirmed he was happy to do so and added that improvements to taps are being considered across all allotment sites.

- **Site Inspections**

Suggested reinstating the practice of notifying Site Representatives and inviting them to attend inspections.

The Estates & Facilities Manager confirmed that this is something that will be explored.

- Cultivation Letters

Commented on lack of cultivation letters sent in March, noting that they were sent during a quieter period, suggesting that more leniency could be considered during such times.

The Estates & Facilities Manager acknowledged that inspections can be difficult to balance but explained that the aim is to assess whether work is actively being carried out on plots. He explained that letters are generally issued where it appears no or very little work is being done and encouraged plot holders to inform the Council if they are unable to maintain their plots for any reason.

- Other Updates

Commented on the success of dividing plots. He also noted that while deer had not been an issue this year, some plot holders reported their potatoes had been nibbled, possibly by rodents. Additionally, he raised concern about the poor condition of the gate.

The Estates & Facilities Manager confirmed that the gate will be looked at.

Lyminster Road:

redacted had no updates to report but echoed the points raised regarding inspections.

Becton Lane:

redacted bought up the following:

- Delivery of Materials

Enquired whether the Town Council could arrange for the delivery of items such as woodchip or manure.

The Estates & Facilities Manager explained that this is not something the Town Council would organise, but allotment holders are welcome to arrange deliveries themselves.

- Noticeboards/ Communication

Brought up the idea of installing noticeboards or exploring other ways of establishing a means of communication with others on site.

The Estates & Facilities Manager said this will be looked into.

Further discussion on noticeboards and means of communication took place under Item 6 - Any Other Business.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

The Chair invited all allotment tenants to provide any feedback they may have. The following issues were raised:

- Waste

An allotment holder asked whether it is the responsibility of a new tenant to remove rubbish when taking on a plot, and whether the Town Council clears plots prior to re-letting. Questions were also raised about the role of deposits and whether they are used to offset clearance costs. Another plot holder noted that waste from a neighbouring plot was encroaching onto theirs, and a comment was made regarding bonfires.

The Estates & Facilities Manager explained that while the Council does withhold deposits from plots not ready for immediate re-letting, the amount recovered only partially offsets the cost of clearance. He highlighted that the cost of clearing and disposing of waste, particularly tipping fees, is significant, and that the overall maintenance costs of allotment sites far exceed the income received from annual rental fees. He added that while the Council does what it can, it is not always feasible to clear every plot. He also reaffirmed the Council's position that bonfires are not permitted.

Regarding the specific waste issue raised, he confirmed that this will be looked into.

- Noticeboards/ Communication

Further discussion was then held regarding noticeboards, with holders asking whether there is a specific type the council would approve, or if there are any alternatives. Allotment holders commented that a method of communication between holders would be useful, particularly for things like seed swapping.

The Estates & Facilities Manager explained that noticeboards had been present in the past but saw little use and weren't used appropriately. However, it was acknowledged that this was in the past, and things may be different now.

It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged with the Site Representatives to discuss what is possible regarding communication and to further discuss the role.

7. NEXT ANNUAL MEETING

To be arranged.

8. GUEST SPEAKER

The Chair introduced Angela Jackson, who gave an informative talk on the New Milton Community Garden. She welcomed all to visit the garden and encouraged anyone interested to get involved and volunteer. She also highlighted two upcoming events at the garden:

- Pumpkin Carving & Decorating: Friday 31 October, 10:30am - 12 noon
- Carols in the Garden: Saturday 20 December, 1:30pm - 3:30pm

The Chair thanked Angela for her engaging talk and presentation.

There being no further business to discuss, The Chair thanked everyone for attending and closed the meeting at 7:27pm

CHAIRMAN..... DATE.....

Distribution

Allotment Holders
Allotment Site Representatives
Town Councillors – for information
Estates & Facilities Manager