

# **Iver Heath Allotments – Use of Plot 24a**

## **Presented to Facilities & Events Committee 28 February 2024**

### **1.0 Introduction**

Minute number 532/22 (Facilities and Events Committee of 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2023) resolved that Plot 24a be converted to an accessible allotment plot. However, the parish council does not have the budget available to match fund grant requests from the Community Board or other funding sources. The parish council did not conduct any feasibility studies or consultations into the need for an accessible allotment plot. The six month duration of the above resolution has now elapsed and the council has not received any enquires from residents regarding the availability of accessible allotment plots.



Site of Plot 24a – May 2023

### **2.0 Impact on Iver Heath Allotment Income Budget**

Plot 24a is size 1.5 and could be rented for £45 per year, plus a water contribution of £8.85 (in the current allotment year) if rented as an entire plot.

### **3.0 Recommendation**

To create a 'Community Allotment Plot' which incorporates a mixture of accessible raised beds, compost and communal seating area and small starter beds for those wishing try allotment gardening on a small scale.

Once the project is complete, the committee would need to agree a pricing structure for the new beds.

To agree the following:

- a) Delegated authority for officers to create a survey to gather residents' opinions on creating a 'Community Allotment plot'.
- b) Business Administrator to seek quotes for creating a 'Community Allotment plot'.

- c) Delegated authority for officers to apply for grant funding from appropriate sources.
- d) Delegated authority for officers to make a request to Full Council for budget for any match funding required for grant applications.

**For further information contact:**

Nicole McCaig  
Business Administrator  
office@iversparishcouncil.gov.uk  
01753 655331

**For further reading:**

Please see article at the bottom of this report, from the Allotment Gardener Magazine – Issue 1 2024, for information on a successful Community Allotment scheme.





## The Dartmoor area is working to improve the lives and wellbeing of its residents through 'Green Social Prescribing'.

Chagford Allotment Holders Association are in the process of creating a Community Allotment on their site. CAHA has leased land from the diocese of Exeter for over a hundred years in the small Dartmoor town of Chagford. It has over fifty plots, of various shapes and sizes and more than seventy members. It is situated above the town and has beautiful views of North Dartmoor.

In 2017, the Moretonhampstead Development Trust set up the 'Wellmoor Project' to use the skills of local communities in North East Dartmoor - supporting people of all ages to lead happy, healthy and fulfilling lives. One of the Wellmoor initiatives was a community garden on the Moretonhampstead allotment site; this was an idea of the local GPs, to provide outdoor activity for people with a range of health problems through 'Green Social Prescribing'. The garden was funded by North Dartmoor Primary Care Network and Devon County Council and has no-dig beds, a workshop/relaxing patio area and has had some generous donations of tools.

After the recent pandemic, a group of allotment holders in Chagford formed a steering group with the aim of starting a community allotment plot which would bring similar benefits to people in the Chagford community. They proposed that an unused plot on Chagford should have a dozen raised beds created on it. These would be used as a communal gardening area for Green Social Prescribing, 'sample gardening' for those on the

waiting list for an allotment, and for members of the Chagford community who are not able or do not want to manage a full-sized allotment. Existing plot holders could also benefit from the planned educational workshops on composting, horticulture and wildlife as well as seed swap days, produce-share days and groups of volunteers looking after site maintenance.

The community allotment plot offers members of the Chagford community the chance to learn about growing their own food through a shared experience, without feeling overwhelmed by a full-sized allotment plot. Equally, people who are on the waiting list for a plot can start by growing produce on one of the starter beds and meeting allotment holders.

It operates under the umbrella of The Wellmoor Project and recognises the benefits of being outside and working on a garden. The project receives referrals from the health service, offers a place for people on the waiting list for treatment and for anyone who just wants to come and help, or just share the company of others. The community allotment plot provides a safe welcoming space to help people socialise and connect with nature.

Setting up the community allotment has not been without issues. Sorting out the administrative and organisational structure of



the scheme, working out how it fits in with the existing allotment association's tenancy and leasehold agreements and getting the approval of the landowner have been crucial to the success of the project, although the 'fun' part has been seeing the transformation of an unused plot to a cultivated area and the shed going up!

The community allotment group is an individual member of the Chagford Allotment Holder Association, has its own Public Liability Insurance and completed a site Risk Assessment for users of the community allotment plot. The landowners have been supportive of the initiative and are working with CAHA and the Community Allotment Group to incorporate it into the leasehold agreement.

The Chagford Allotment Holders Association are planning an open day early this year. If anyone is interested in coming along to see how another association runs its site, meet your SW Representative to find out more about NAS or generally share experiences, please get in touch with me – Mark Joynes – by email at [mjoynes.nas@gmail.com](mailto:mjoynes.nas@gmail.com).

**"The Chagford Allotment Holders Association are planning an open day early this year."**