

Leek Town Council
Green Spaces and Allotments Committee Minutes

MINUTES of the meeting held Tuesday 24th February 2026 at 10.30am in the Town Council Office

Present: Cllr Dee Young (Chair), Cllr Derek Hilyer (Vice Chair), Cllr. Sue Webster, Ben Benefer, Mavis Weaver, Gaynor Tatton, Denise Wheat (Clerk)

Minutes: Victoria Johnson (Admin Assistant)

ALLOTMENTS

1. **Welcome:** Cllr. Dee Young welcomed everyone to the meeting.
(At the Town Council meeting on 17th February Cllr Dee Young was nominated and appointed as Chair and Cllr Derek Hilyer was nominated and appointed as Vice Chair of the Green Spaces and Allotments Committee)
2. **Apologies:** Cllr Keith Hoptroff, Suzanne Sheldon
3. **The Minutes** of the meeting held on 27th January 2026 were received as a correct record with the exception of the following:
 - The Chair of the Leek Allotment Holders and Gardeners Association asked for the word ‘mandatory’ to be amended to the word ‘optional’ where it is used twice in section 4 of the Minutes.
It was agreed that the Minutes are amended to read ‘optional’ rather than ‘mandatory’ in section 4.
4. **Matters Arising:**
 - As the new Chair of the Green Spaces and Allotments Committee was only appointed one week prior to this meeting there has not been sufficient time for a full report to be produced on the facts relating to the recent rent increase and non-inclusion of Allotment Association membership.
It was agreed that the Clerk investigates whether all tenants have to be members of the Leek Allotment Holders and Gardeners Association before the Association can enrol as a member of the National Allotment Society.
5. **Tenancy Matters and Waiting List:**
 - There are 79 people on the Waiting List.
 - 15 plots have been allocated to new tenants and 15 plots currently vacant are in the process of being allocated.
 - *It was agreed that the Secretary of Leek Allotment Holders and Gardeners Association will be informed when allotments are relinquished so that their member records can be updated.*
6. **Finance Report:**
 - The budget previously allocated assumed collection of Allotment Association and National Allotment Society fees, so income does not appear as high as anticipated.
 - There has been a large tree surgery spend of £1200.
 - The water bill appears to be high due to a significant leak on Badnall Street and a tenant leaving a water spray on permanently on their allotment.
 - It was noted that the Financial Report provided did not include all the Lengthsman costs.
7. **Allotment Reports:**

Cheadle Road

- There are increasing incidents of new tenants being left with waste and debris from previous tenants. It was noted that clause 2d) in the Tenancy Agreement specifies that *'At the end of the tenancy all personal belongings to be removed and the Council reserves the right to charge for the cost of removing rubbish and tidying the plot.'* but it was agreed that the Council face difficulties in enforcing this. It was further agreed that consideration be given to implementing deposits being taken from new tenants and reflecting this with a new clause in the Tenancy Agreement.
- A complaint has been received about the conditions of a communal path. The Chair and Clerk will assess when they next carry out a site visit.
- There are significant rat infestations on both Cheadle Road and Peggs Field allotment sites. The Clerk will ask the National Allotment Society if fees can be charged to those tenants keeping chickens to cover the cost of pest control measures.
- Banning chickens will be discussed at the next Leek Allotment Holders and Gardeners Association meeting and a proposal can then be made to the Committee.
- The Clerk will provide the Vice Chair with the law/statute regarding chickens being kept on allotments.

Beggars Lane

- An asbestos inspection will be carried out and asbestos will be removed in the correct manner by professionals.

Peggs Field

- The fly tipping reported at the last meeting has been removed and thanks were given to those involved in making this happen.

Crescent 1 & 2

- An abandoned car has been reported and ownership is being pursued.

Badnall Street and Parrs Field

- Part of a dry-stone wall has collapsed and quotes for repair are being sought.

8. **Leek Allotment Holders and Gardeners Association Report:**

- Potato Day which took place on 1st February was a great success and made a profit of £558.60. The Mayor was thanked for attending and Suzanne Sheldon was thanked for the advertising and promotion for the event.
- A Coffee Morning will be taking place on Saturday 7th March at Trinity Church.
- The next meeting will be held at The Fountain Inn on Tuesday 17th March at 7pm.

9. **Cheadle Road Community Plot Report:**

- A member of Outside Arts may be going to view the Community Plot and a member of staff at St Edward's Academy has expressed interest in the Academy using the plot.

GREEN SPACES

10. **Green Space Reports:**

Ball Haye Green

- The quote for the new Zip Wire is over £800. Whether to go ahead with this repair given the cost was debated. The Chair and the Clerk will do a site visit and provide a full report.

Prince Street

- A £500 grant has been awarded from the Green Space Development Fund which the Clerk will use to order and fund a bench and planter.

Sparrow Park

- Discussions with Leek Town Lands Trust are continuing regarding the land surrounding the Nicholson War Memorial, including the Sensory Garden.

St Stephen's Square

- Ownership and responsibility for maintenance is an ongoing issue.

Russell Street

- Nothing to report.

Best Kept Village Community Competition

- As this needs to be community led the Council will communicate information about the competition to the community groups.

Green Space Assets

- The Clerk is to compile a list of the Green Spaces which the Town Council is responsible for.
- The Council needs to maintain awareness of Green Space assets with Local Government Reorganisation in mind.

11. Items for the next Agenda

- Allotment Holders rights on the keeping of poultry on allotments and reflecting this in the Tenancy Agreement.
- Q&A Evening including venue.

12. Confidential

- Future agendas should specify 'Reserved Areas of Business' for confidential discussion after all non-councillor members have left the meeting.

Date of next meeting: Tuesday 24th March 2026 at 10.30am in the Town Council office

Meeting ended 11.50am.