

The most Frequently Asked Questions about the Bosden Farm Allotment Proposal for the old playing field of St Stephen's School....and the proposed solutions

Do the residents surrounding the land get consulted?

We whole-heartedly work with the residents because we are all residents as well. We have a meeting every month in the Harvester and everyone is welcome. We have encouraged everyone on the estate *to be involved since the start of October 2016. We have met with Residents of Kingfisher and Nightingale recently and we have collated their contact details so we can provide them and all other interested parties with new and updated information as when we have it.

We have set up a Facebook page, Twitter account and Web site. Also, we advertise on the Bosden Farm Facebook site, we advertise on the notice board at the Coop, and we have leafleted on the estate many times this year. We will be attending "Farm Fest". We have a waiting list of Bosden farm residents already. We have a committee of Bosden farm residents.

We have engaged with all the local and prospective councillors (i.e. Wendy Meikle, Laura Booth, Will Dawson and Dan Oliver) and the local MP (William Wragg).

*Please note that our waiting list is still open - please ask to join; we are open to anyone on the Bosden Farm Estate or indeed anyone from the surrounding area.

What about the noise?

Very few people make a noise when gardening. Having an allotment is a very quiet pursuit - for approximately 23 people.

Allotment smell?

Allotments do not usually smell; in this respect they are no different to gardens. There will be a need from time to time to use well-rotted manure to fertilise the land. This material is very low odour and is recommended in guidance by various local authorities to avoid nuisance smells, as it is so close to becoming soil. In any case manure will be covered up or dug in and we will also ask plot holders to keep compost bins away from neighbouring boundaries.

Vandalism on site? / increased crime and theft? /Magnet for Travellers?

The site will be more secure than at present. The planned access will only be through the locked and secured gates of Kingfisher Road, for which only the plot-holders will be issued with keys, and the plot-holders will not need to have access from Nightingale. Therefore, we are hoping to either fence off / gate off the small top access (in consultation with the residents of Nightingale and the local council).

The site already benefits from large 8 ft. climb-resistant security fencing (widely used for schools / car parking etc) which is continuous round most of its boundaries. The western perimeter has, in addition to the fence, a 9ft beech hedge that fronts Kingfisher, and which blocks the view of the site from street level. The East side of the plot is backed by the 8 ft. security fencing and, for the majority, 15 ft. hedges, well established trees and thick brambles. The east side perimeter is hence almost impenetrable and this is the same for the north side. The South side is backed by gardens of Nightingale and again is not accessible, and we would plan to reinforce the security of this boundary by security fencing and planting within the perimeter. Substantial thorny planting can be added in various places for further security, with an incidental benefit to wildlife and be visually attractive.

Deterring theft is something that also concerns the allotmenters and therefore there will not be individual tool sheds but shared, high security tool storage containers (with a minimum of tools inside), so that there

will be nothing of significant value on-site that will be accessible to thieves. Further, we have anecdotal evidence from local police on the estate that suggests that allotments themselves do not increase crime in the area and acts of vandalism on such sites are rare.

We do not believe this is an attractive site for travellers, as the site has never been targeted in the 14 years it has been left vacant, with the main gate locked and only a narrow access via a passage-way at the side of the end house on Nightingale.

Furthermore, as working on an allotment is confined to daylight hours, there will not be any artificial lighting on the site and hence nothing to encourage antisocial behaviour or facilitate intruders.

Attracting teenagers to the site ... antisocial behaviour?

There will not be any artificial light after dark, and there will be no attraction for teenagers to risk climbing a high fence, possibly backed up by thick/thorny planting. There has been no activity on this land to date, and there is no current evidence to suggest this site has been occupied by teenagers. Indeed, a recent extensive walk-round survey on the site has not shown physical evidence of any occupation: no broken glass, rubbish of any kind, cigarette butts, evidence of fires, etc. Further, one of our team whose house on Peregrine Road overlooks the site, has never witnessed (in the 14 years this site has been abandoned) any teenagers or anyone else accessing the site.

Increased Footfall on the Nightingale woodland path?

Concern has been expressed regarding the access through Nightingale Close through the woodland that is paid for by the residents on the close. It is felt that more residents will walk through the woodland (that has now been recently opened by the Council). As a direct result, the Nightingale residents are concerned that the increase footfall will increase their fees and their insurance costs will increase as they are potentially liable for anything that happens on that land or to walkers through that space.

We would encourage residents from all around the estate (especially the east side; Peregrine etc) to walk to the site avoiding Nightingale altogether (possible routes could be through the passageway on Linnet Close). The Association will tackle this issue directly when constructing the Rules to the site and their Constitution. As part of the allotments plot-holders' rules and constitution we would deter plot holders from using this access. We will put a rule in place to request that people do not travel that way on foot. We would openly work with Nightingale residents to encourage all allotmenters to avoid this route.

Privacy concerns for Nightingale Residents?

This is an issue we need to consider and we will take advice from The National Allotments Association regarding appropriate screening methods. Further consideration needs to be given as to the best methods to resolve issues such as resident privacy and screening from the allotment site. Privacy is a major concern for all residents and allotmenters. The association have suggested several solutions. For example, screening could be placed there in the form of trees and bushes; advice needs to be sought regarding the most appropriate method to address this, given the need to avoid any problems with roots, and the time required for anything to grow tall enough. It is also reiterated that sheds and glasshouses would not be allowed on the plots and that we would have the right and power to enforce this.

Tree Planting as Screening

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/plant-trees/free-trees/>

One option for screening is planting trees - The Woodland Trust offer free trees to associations like the BFA. We can apply for 420 trees per season for any use – hedging avenues etc. No limit to seasons apply They are supplied with bamboo canes and spiral protection ... 60cm sampling – full adult in eight years Hedging – Hazel, Hawthorn, Elder. We can plant them 40cms apart / 2 parallel rows 50cms apart

Other trees – Oak, Rowan, Beech – for wildlife
Dogwood, Hazel , Guelder Rose for Autumn color
Plant Autumn/ spring time

Trees roots damaging Nightingale gardens

We will seek advice on the best type of shrubs / trees /natural screening to use that won't cause root issues and be placed far enough from any physical boundary to avoid any current or future problems

Damage to fencing

Kingfisher residents have reported that the current unkempt nature of the proposed site is now having a detrimental effect to their garden fencing. The subsequent maintenance of the plot of land will improve matters considerably. We will also ensure the plots will not back on or against fences. Furthermore, as part of the plan, the site will have a large well-kept border between the plots and the boundaries. We intend to have a boundary fence which will be away from and protect the integrity of the Nightingale fencing and allow access.

Soil Pollution

Soil has never been touched for 14yrs and was never been turned over as it was a sports field (Grassed field) for the primary school. The grass is growing well, and there doesn't appear to be anything adverse in recent history to worry about chemicals.

What about the building work needed?

This is not a building site; we are not building houses - we are using the land as is to grow vegetables and flowers. Any landscaping would be minimal. Please go and see the work they have done on Dial Park or Torkington. The north of the site is where the plots will be, which should be free of any drainage issues, as originally that was the playing fields of the school.

Ground Preparation

Option 1 Ploughing and harrowing the whole site, then re-lay paths,
Option 2 Mark out plots and people to dig their own. The second way just requires the mow the paths and they're already there. The site measures at c.0.6Ha, which opens permitted development of Part 6 (B) of the GPDO 2015 (http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2015/596/pdfs/ukxi_20150596_en.pdf); this allows paths and a hard surface.

What about car parking?

In summary, our view is to openly encourage that all our members and allotmenters to walk to the site and respect our neighbours. If parking is needed they must park on the car park on site.

We all live locally and allotmenters will be encouraged to, and be likely, to walk given that the vast majority of the waiting list live on the estate, and indeed our constitution and rules will encourage people to walk. However, there will be times when people will need to use their cars (e.g. for carrying tools, supplies or produce) and some people who have to use their cars, so we want to have an adequate number of parking spaces on site. We will respect the car-parking needs of residents first over ours - and we are fully aware that parking on Nightingale is non-existent. Therefore, as part of rules and built into our constitution (that all members will be required to adhere to) that we will require everyone NOT to park on Nightingale AND the adjoining roundabout.

As to an increase in traffic on Kingfisher, we reiterate that there are only around 23 plots, and we know that

not all the plot holders would be there at the same time, or go there every day; different people have different routines and different commitments. Therefore, we can guarantee there will be unnoticeable amounts of traffic, especially as we have stressed we will encourage as many people as we can to walk.

What about unsightly sheds and glasshouses?

We will have a constitution and rules which will ban plots from having sheds, glasshouses etc. Please consider the plots at Torkington / Dial Park and others; modern small allotments are neat, compact and well-ordered. There will be strict rules on how the plots are kept and organised. We can assure you that the plot holders also live locally (some on Peregrine) and will be mindful of the appearance of the site.

At a certain stage, in the future, there will be a need to place a toilet on site and a larger tool shed as the site becomes more popular, however this would be under review and subject to further consultation.

What about chickens and other animals on the site etc?

We will ban ALL livestock of any kind. We have had some interest raised in one day keeping bees on the site and this is obviously a matter where we would seek proper advice and which would be subject to further consultation.

Where will you store your tools?

We would have one or two discreetly-kept sturdy "all weather" chest type boxes (commonly used in gardens and allotments) secured, possibly anchored into the ground and located at the edge of the site - tucked away out of view - for storing the spades, forks, rakes etc. In the future, we will also need a larger secure storage container for large equipment.

What about the numbers on the site?

The plots will be about 23 of various sizes and shapes matching the needs of the allotmenters. From experience, we would expect that there would be a maximum of 5-10 people gardening at the same time on the same day for the same amount of time. Everyone has a different schedule and a hobby like this is fitted around work and family, so it is almost guaranteed that the site would generally only ever be quietly populated during daylight hours.

Housing on the site?

It had been expressed that the proposal for Allotments may have highlighted the land to the Council for other uses. However, the site is now approved for use as allotments.

We know through Allotments Stockport that other allotment sites have been given statutory rights and if it's possible to have this for this allotment site, it would give it protection that could only be removed by the Secretary of State.

Why have a large waiting list?

Why do we need to have so many on the waiting list if we only have so many plots?

It is important to have the numbers on the waiting list. It shows that there is an interest in this site and ensures that there are people ready to take on plots after others leave, ensuring that all plots remain in use.

Why don't we grow fruit and vegetables in our own garden instead of an allotment?

Whilst we have gardens, these are often not large enough in size to grow what we want to grow. We have

children, dogs etc that also require space and keeping and going to an allotment is a hobby.

Why in this area? There aren't many allotments in residential areas.

The Chairman of Allotments Stockport has told us that that most allotments in the Stockport are based in residential areas and many (like this site) have houses backing onto them.

Budget/Funding

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/7594/2203634.pdf

<https://www.nsalg.org.uk/allotment-info/funding-advice/>

There are a huge number of potential funding sources for community Allotment projects, like ours so we believe once we have the final approval / permission we will be able to have the budget we need. Here is a short list of grant providers ...

Big Lottery Fund

Awards for All

Parks for People

Reaching Communities: England

Reaching Communities buildings – funding of between £100,000 and

The Fair Share programme h

Heritage Lottery Fund

Parks for People – grants from £100,000 to £5 million

Your Heritage – grants from £10,000 to £100,000

Heritage Grants – grants from £100,000 and over

Young Roots – grants from £3,000 to £50,000

Community First

Big Local

Capital Growth

Green Places Fund

Sport England

The Landfill Tax Credit Scheme

Esmee Fairbairn Foundation

Federation of City Farms and Community

Age UK

Lloyds TSB Foundation

The Co-operative Group

The Country Land and Business Association Charitable Trust

Community Foundations

Grants from companies and local businesses

Numerous companies and local businesses are now giving various grants to community and voluntary groups in their areas to promote the benefits of green spaces and community engagement. This is often as part of their policy on corporate aid responsibility.

Big Tree Plant

Forestry Commission

The English Woodland Grant Scheme

- Woodland Planning Grant (to produce a woodland management plan);

- Woodland Assessment Grant (to collect information that assists management decision);

- Woodland Improvement Grant (to carry out capital projects in woodlands such as access tracks, uneconomic thinning, coppicing, rhododendron clearance and public access facilities);

- Woodland Regeneration Grant (to re-establish trees after felling);
- Woodland Management Grant (to carry out regular work such as ride management and pest control).
- Woodland Creation Grant (to create new woodland).

Biffa Awards:-

- Community (for projects that provide and improve community facilities);
- Biodiversity (for projects that conserve wildlife species and habitats); and
- Small Grants (for projects that enable communities to improve local amenities and to conserve wildlife)

We can also use:-

Grantfinder which is the UK's leading grants and funding information provider. Their database includes details more than 6,000 funding opportunities. <http://www.grantfinder.co.uk>

National Allotment Association Grant database