

REPORT TO ASSETS AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

WARREN AVENUE ALLOTMENT FLOODING



Report Reference A-24-02
Meeting Date 10th June 2024
Agenda Item 8
Prepared by Town Clerk

1.0 BACKGROUND

There has long been an issue of flooding to properties on Warren Avenue and the field which is now being developed by Redrow. The Warren Avenue allotment site borders the *Tabley Park* development of 190 homes and since 2020/21 it has experienced flooding during the winter, this has coincided with the commencement of the development on site and regular flooding on the site was not previously reported.

This issue was raised at the community update meeting with Redrow in April 2022, when it was stated that further work was to be undertaken which they expected would address the issue.

The flooding experienced over winter 2023/24 was particularly pronounced and did not ease until after the spring sowing season had commenced. Some plot holders have vacated plots at this site due to the issues, whilst others that remain have been extremely inconvenienced and upset by the impact it has had on their ability to use their allotments.



Photograph showing the depth of flood water

The Planning and Facilities Officer did explore commissioning a topographical survey and provisions to tackle the flooding on the allotment site but was advised by a consultant that the issue should be pursued with Redrow in the first instance; in discussions in 2023, the Redrow Development Engineer confirmed to the council that contractors had failed to install land drainage. In the months following, repeated assurances had been given that this would be rectified, however until April/May 2024 nothing had been undertaken.

2.0 MEETING WITH REDROW

In late May, a meeting was held with the regional Managing Director of Redrow and the Technical Director for the development. The meeting was attended by the Town Clerk, two representatives of the Knutsford Allotment Society and Borough Councillor Dean. Cllrs Gray and Banks were due to attend (as committee Deputy Chair and Town Mayor, respectively) but were unable to last minute.

During the meeting it was confirmed that works had now commenced on installing land drains. The drains are being installed along the public open space and rear of the new Devis Way allotment site and will channel water into a pond to the north of the site. The Technical Director was certain that this would resolve the issue moving forward and that the works would be completed within the next two weeks. The works involved digging a drainage trench, laying perforated pipe and backfilling with gravel and then soil.

A request for compensation/reinstatement was also put forward, this would be discussed by Redrow at a forthcoming meeting. This was based on claims submitted by six plot holders at Warren Avenue for actual losses, some reinstatement of lost soil nutrients (compost) and a sum equal to three years of allotment rents. The total claim was in the region of £15k-£20k and at the time of writing, a response is awaited.

The issue of the creation of a path from the site through to Warren Avenue was also discussed. It was noted that Redrow was not obligated to provide the path from its site to Warren Avenue under the s106 agreement¹ and that the council was happy to support the path as it would deliver a beneficial connection. Redrow undertook to consider the council's request to undertake the works when installing its own paths.

3.0 DECISIONS REQUIRED

The report is principally for information and discussion, no formal decision is required.

The Town Clerk will report to members on the response from Redrow to the council's requests, once received.

¹ In retrospect it should have been secured by the s106 agreement. It was not an issue identified by the Town Council at the time and only came to light during the reserved matters application.