

Parish Council allotment co-ordinator and enthusiastic allotmentee Nick Watson reports forlornly on growing progress down on the plot.

WET, WET, WET

The wretched weather continues to frustrate all attempts to get going with the Spring planting. Traditionalists always plant their potatoes on Good Friday as their growth is symbolic of rebirth and I suppose resurrection, but all we could do was to look forlornly at the completely sodden ground, so no progress has been made on the growing front.

NEW RULES

The last Parish Council meeting saw the adoption of a new set of rules for the allotments. This was a long overdue updating of a set of rules, some bits of which dated back to the founding of the allotments. The old set of rules was a wodge of about 20 pages of closely written instructions on what to do and what not to do, and unsurprisingly many people didn't bother to read them.

MAKING SENSE

The new rules have emerged from a lengthy consultative and redrafting process which took some months to complete. Thanks are due to the members of Allotmenters Consultative Group, and to Councillor Pam Furniss, who undertook the task of collecting the allotment regulations of many neighbouring parishes, taking all the best and sensible bits, and boiling down our own old rules into a much clearer 4-page document, which has now been signed off by the Parish Council, and circulated.

POLYTUNNEL POLICY

I think one of the best changes that has resulted in the new regulations is the newly agreed permission to erect a polytunnel on your plot. This has been a bone of contention for allotmenters for many years. It was an issue way back when I started allotmenting in the 1990s. It's only taken 25 years or more to get it agreed, but it's going to make a huge difference in extending the growing season. I pour scorn on the gods of rainfall and bite my thumb at the gods of floods!

IDEAL SET-UP

The regulations also allow allotmenters to place a lockable shedlet on their plot for tool storage so, taken together with the news that our co-tenants Branch Out MK are offering all allotmenters a cup of tea at their new facility on site if they drop in, and the use of their newly installed on-site composting toilet, there are no more excuses not to come down and join in the infinite pleasure of growing your own food. Give me a call or drop a line if you are thinking about a plot, or perhaps a half a plot for a try-out.

Nicholas.Watson10@outlook.com