

Amenities Committee 23 September 26

Request for Mains Water Supply Connection at Chinnocks Allotment Site

(Report adapted from an email received by the Town Clerk from the Chair of the Sturminster Newton Allotment Association (SNAA))

Purpose of Report

This report seeks formal approval for the SNAA to progress an application to Wessex Water for the installation of a mains water supply connection and standpipe at the Chinnocks Allotment Site.

Background

During the summer, the water tanks at Chinnocks Allotment Site ran dry. Although the site makes use of rainwater storage wherever possible, the site is small and there is limited space available for additional tanks. This means that, during prolonged dry periods, the existing arrangements are not sufficient to provide a reliable water supply for plot holders.

The SNAA therefore would like to request permission to pursue a mains water connection for the site. The matter has been discussed by the SNAA committee and initial tentative enquiries have been made with Wessex Water.

Proposal

The proposal is for the SNAA to submit an application to Wessex Water for a water supply only connection at Chinnocks Allotment Site, with a standpipe to be installed in an agreed location on the site. No sewerage connection is required.

Wessex Water requires a one-off, non-refundable administration fee of £172 to begin the process. This fee covers the formal site survey and preparation of an exact cost quotation. Wessex Water has advised that simple water connections typically start from approximately £1,000, although the final cost will only be confirmed once the survey has been completed.

To support the application, the SNAA would need to provide the completed connection form together with a Google Maps satellite image showing the allotment location and the proposed position of the standpipe.

Financial Implications

The SNAA is willing to find funding for the project itself if required, including the initial administration fee and any subsequent installation costs, subject to the final quotation received from Wessex Water.

As the Council owns the land, the water supply would be the responsibility of the Town Council and the SNAA would be recharged for its water usage, as is currently the case for the standpipe at Filbridge Rise.

Water Management and Sustainability

The intention is not to replace rainwater harvesting, but to provide a reliable back-up supply when stored water is insufficient. The SNAA will continue to store and use as much rainwater as

possible. However, due to the limited size of the Chinnocks site, there is little scope to install significant additional water storage without affecting the available allotment space.

Management of the Application

If approved, the SNAA will complete the application forms, provide the required plan and location information, and liaise with Wessex Water regarding the survey and quotation process. The SNAA Chair will act as the point of contact for Wessex Water engineers in arranging any required site visits.

Recommendation

Members are asked to consider and approve the SNAA's request to progress an application to Wessex Water for a mains water supply connection at Chinnocks Allotment Site, on the basis that:

- the existing rainwater storage arrangements proved insufficient during the summer;
- there is limited space on site for further water tanks;
- the SNAA will continue to maximise the use of stored rainwater where possible;
- the SNAA has indicated that it is willing to fund the project itself if required;
- water usage would continue to be recharged to the SNAA by the Council, in line with the existing arrangement for Filbridge Rise; and
- the connection would provide a more reliable water supply for plot holders during dry periods.