

Proposal to build a deer proof fence on the parish allotments.

There has been discussion on whether to install deer proof fencing on the allotments. There is a considerable problem with muntjac on the Rattlesden Road site.

There are a number of key issues:

1. Allotment holders cannot afford to pay for the fencing however both sites are an asset of the Parish Council
2. If agreed the Parish Council could determine to only fence the Rattlesden Road site where the problem is more pronounced.
3. The project could be funded through CIL monies.
4. Two quotes would be required for the project to be agreed.

Numerous views have been offered – I offer a precis of comments.

Michael Lambert – allotment trustee:

“As an allotments charity trustee it is not my job to look at how CIL money is spent. If it affects the charities finances that is a different matter, I am told it does not. In simple terms the allotments are council assets which are managed by the charity. The proposal put forward for Gedding Road site is for fencing to be erected on the inside of the existing hedge to include new hedging on the area adjoining Chapel House. We are advised that at no point will it exceed the height of the current mature hedging. This being the case it should not adversely affect hedge maintenance. I do not see that this will 100% keep out invading muntjac although it should certainly reduce the problem. I have no idea of the costs involved (quotes not in yet) although as I have said if it does not affect the charity and therefore the tenants it does not concern trustees. Same applies to the Rattlesden Road site I expect. In my opinion the tenants should have the final decision and would request that a vote is taken before a final decision is made. I am sure either myself or Michael Walton can arrange this.”

Peter Holborn – allotment holder, Rattlesden Road

“I would be grateful if you could bring the following comments to the attention of the Parish Council meeting on Monday.

I would like to clarify a few points regarding the problems the Rattlesden Road allotment holders are facing with the quite severe and unsustainable damage caused by muntjac to vegetable crops and also the tree saplings I grow to plant out around the village.

To be clear we are only dealing with muntjac not roe, fallow, red or any other larger species of deer. The existing netting has proved to be effective in excluding rabbits. In my view a simple wooden post and wire netting fence would be more than adequate to keep muntjac out. Forestry Commission advice states 1.5m high is quite sufficient with the bottom of the netting buried or turned out to stop them pushing the way under. I think we should keep the existing rabbit netting in place and either add the required extra height or erect full 1.5m muntjac netting depending on what contractors recommend. Either way new posts are required.

I do not consider individual protection for each plot is practical, aesthetically acceptable or cost effective.”

Alice Robinson – Cllr responsible for allotments and allotment holder on Gedding Road

“Dear all,

Just catching up on emails. If the deer fencing is to be this tall then I would oppose it on Gedding Road. We live next to the allotments (the old chapel) and having a 1.8 - 2.5 metre fence around it would significantly impact the light/ view from our windows.

Happy to discuss other solutions but I would not be in favour of this one.

Kind regards”