

# **Proposal to Install Muntjac Fencing at the Gedding Road and Rattlesden Road Allotment Sites**

## **Background**

There have been allotments in Drinkstone since the establishment of Parish Councils in 1898. The allotment lands were held in trust for the community, with two Trustees one of whom was the Chair of the Council. In the 1980s the Trust was registered as a charity, principally to protect the allotments and prevent the sale of sections of the Gedding Road site to neighbouring home owners.

In about 2004 the Parish Council took more direct control over the running of the allotments as the waiting list exceeded the level at which councils are obliged to act to increase the supply of plots. The Gedding Road site was cleared and part of the parish land on Rattlesden Road was also converted to allotments. All this work was paid for by grants from MSDC.

There are currently 21 allotment plots, of which 19 are currently rented by 17 tenants - some renting 2 plots.

The allotments are now one of the few community amenities remaining in the village. They are available to benefit anyone in the community who wishes to rent a plot. The allotments provide an opportunity for people to get together, to share knowledge and help with both the physical and mental health of the tenants and their families. They are open to parishioners of all ages at a modest annual rent. Until it ceased operating, the Youth Club had rented a plot for more than 10 years.

## **The Problem**

Over the last two years or so the allotment tenants have been suffering escalating damage to crops grown on both allotment sites as the muntjac population in the Parish increases year on year. Netting individual crops is ineffective against a determined muntjac.

The tenants pay rent for their plots. Rents are set at a level to cover outgoings and essential maintenance, while not being so high as to exclude people whose means may be limited. It has been the custom for the Trust to use rental income to provide materials with any work being carried out by tenant volunteers.

The trust does not have sufficient funds to pay for proper fencing, nor do most of the tenants possess the requisite skills to carry out the work and ensure good build quality.

## **The Proposal**

The Parish Council is in possession of CIL funds which are required to be spent on infrastructure which benefits the community. It was suggested at the PC meeting in October that the Council could consider using some of the CIL money to provide the much needed muntjac fencing.

Since then a working party has been preparing detailed specifications for potential contractors and engaging in extensive consultation with neighbouring residents.

Detailed specifications for contractors can be found in Appendix 1. All clearance of vegetation, cutting back of hedges and removal of obstacles will be carried out by tenant volunteers before the work begins. This will further reduce costs.

## **Gedding Road**

There have been concerns about the section of boundary on Gedding Road which abuts the Old Chapel. Agreement has been reached with the neighbours to erect a picket fence along the

stretch immediately adjacent behind the immature hedge. This will not incur any additional cost to the project. It is proposed that the Trust will supply the materials and this fence will be erected using volunteer labour.

## Rattlesden Road

There are fewer aesthetic concerns here, as the site is well screened from neighbouring properties. Here it is proposed to erect a 1.2m stock fence, with additional straining wires along the top to give an overall height of 1.5m, replacing the existing fence. The extra height is needed as the site backs onto open country on two sides, without the benefit of mature hedges. This is the accepted height for muntjac fencing.

The existing pedestrian gates at the rear of the site will be replaced by removable iron mesh in order to save costs. All work to clear vegetation and obstacles and secure the existing gates on the site against deer will be carried out by the Trust with volunteer labour.

## Progress

- The Allotment Trustees have decided to withdraw the Gedding Road proposal as it requires further examination of the problems with how to fence along the ditch which runs alongside Chapel Lane and what height fencing would be effective
- Revised specifications focussed on cost saving have been sent out to 4 interested contractors, and should be received back by 7 February.
- The PC has received one letter from a resident supporting the proposed fencing and one objecting.
- The PC has concluded a pre planning enquiry and MSDC confirms that planning permission is required even in cases where the fence is behind an existing hedge and where the adjacent highway is a private road, such as Chapel Lane. The cost of this per site would be £293 less the 50% discount for Parish Councils
- Some photo illustrations have been prepared ready for consultation with nearby residents. These are of GR but are meant to be representative of how the fence will look when next to the hedges
- Contact has been made with a volunteer CAD designer for production of full plans
- Consultation letters have been sent to nearby residents on Rattlesden Road

Two quotes were obtained before Christmas which have given us an idea of the costs of the work. The specifications have been revised to squeeze costs out of the project without compromising the overall build quality, so new quotes should come in slightly lower.

Like the play equipment, this is a once in a generation project, with a life span of around 20 years.

Since the GR project has been shelved for the time being, the Trustees would ask the PC to consider allocating funding for the Rattlesden Road site. If this is approved plans can be drawn up for the necessary planning application.

Daphne Youngs  
On behalf of the Allotment Trustees

## **Specification for Muntjac Fencing at Gedding Road & Rattlesden Road**

### **Allotments, Drinkstone Green**

(24<sup>th</sup> January 2025)

Quotations are sought by Drinkstone Parish Council for the supply and erection of 145 metres of muntjac proof fencing on Rattlesden road allotments and 115 metres of muntjac proof fencing on Gedding road allotments. Please see attached plans. The works are to be priced as a single contract although contractors are asked to provide a breakdown of costs by each site and item as is shown on the next page. Please return your quote to Paul Selvey, (Chairman of Drinkstone Parish Council) [drinkstoneselveyp@gmail.com](mailto:drinkstoneselveyp@gmail.com) by Fri 7<sup>th</sup> February.

Note: All vegetation clearance works, removal of old fencing (excluding rabbit netting on Rattlesden Road) and obstacle removal will be undertaken by allotment volunteers before any fencing work starts.

### **Materials specification**

#### **Gedding Road**

High tensile steel fencing HT13/120/7.5 stock fencing. (Hamptons or Tornado) Overall height 1.2m, 2.5mm heavy galvanised high tensile wire.

Rabbit netting 1.05m high, 19g galvanised 30mm diameter hexagonal mesh.

Galvanised rabbit netting pegs 300mm x 6mm.

Field gate posts 2.4m x 175mm x 175mm 4 way weathered top, treated softwood.

Strainer posts 2.4m x 150 – 175mm, peeled cundy posts, creosote treated. Strainers will be used at start, gates, any turns and finish. Box assembly struts to be used on the straining posts to help take the tension of the wire on posts.

Intermediate posts 2.1m x 75-100mm cundy peeled posts creosote treated at approx 4m spacing. Topped finish angled away from the wire.

#### **Rattlesden Road**

High tensile steel fencing HT 13/120/7.5 stock fencing (Hamptons or Tornado), 2.5mm heavy galvanised high tensile wire. To be topped by 2 high tensile steel line wires 2.5mm diameter 150mm apart to give an overall height 1.5m.

Strainer posts 2.4m x 150 – 175mm, peeled cundy posts, creosote treated. Strainers will be used at start, gates, any turns and finish. Box assembly struts to be used on the straining posts to help take the tension of the wire on posts.

Intermediate posts 2.1m x 75-100mm cundy peeled posts creosote treated at approx 4m spacing.  
Topped finish angled away from the wire.

## **Quantities, installation methods and costs**

### **Please price items listed below individually by each section as indicated**

#### **Gedding Road**

Supply and erect 115 metres of 1.2m of high tensile steel stock fencing with intermediate posts at 4 metre spacing and driven in at least 55cm. Provide and install 2.1x 175mm straining posts with struts at the end of runs, gates and changes of direction. Box assembly struts to be used on straining posts to help take the tension of the wire on the posts.

New fencing to be set outside and hard up against the hedge on Chapel Lane, and inside the hedge on Gedding Road.

**COST .....**

Supply and fit rabbit netting to the base of the new stock fencing to be turned outwards at the base for 300mm and pegged down at 50cm intervals. **nb this item may be omitted by the Parish Council**

**COST.....**

Supply and install 2 field gate posts on Gedding road frontage and rehang the existing field gate, reusing existing metal fixings

**COST.....**

#### **Rattlesden Road**

Supply and install 145 metres of 1.2m high tensile stock fencing topped by 2 line wires 2.5mm diameter to give an overall height of 1.5metres, with intermediate posts at 4metre spacing driven in at least 55cm. Provide and install 2.1x 175mm straining posts with struts at the end of runs, gates and changes of direction. Box assembly struts to be used on straining posts to help take the tension of the wire on the posts. Fence to be installed on the inside of existing hedges along the line of the old fence. Leave 2 gaps x 1.2 m wide gaps where the existing pedestrian gates are to the rear of the allotments as indicated on the attached plan.

Re tension and attach the existing rabbit netting to the new fence.

**COST.....**

**TOTAL COST**

**Excl VAT.....**

**Inc VAT.....**