

Meeting started 3.00pm Meopham Village Hall 28/06/26

This Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM) was called at the suggestion of a Meopham Parish Council (MPC) Councillor, but despite being invited no MPC Councillors attended.

MDAA Chair

Thanked everyone for attending, stating the objective was to share with our membership our relationship with Meopham Parish Council, where we stand at present and steps to move forward

MDAA Committee Member Rodney

The meeting agenda was presented

- Chronology June 25 to now
- Details of main events
- Committee's analysis of current situation
- Q&A
- The way ahead
- Closing remarks

The presentation talked through the formation of the new committee, which included the vote of no confidence in the former chair, the SGM, election of the new committee and right the way through to MPC voting to take control on 03/03/26, and the formal notification they issued on 09/03/26, as well as subsequent events.

-On 07/04/26 a survey of MDAA Plot Holders was conducted, see results below

Survey Results

MPC justification for the takeover was stated for the following reasons;

- Many Plot Holders are not attending
- They are no longer getting enjoyment
- There is concern Plot Holders will leave
- There is no confidence in the working functions of the committee
- There is a complete breakdown between committee members
- There is a complete break down between the committee and the wider membership

A survey was later conducted asking Plot Holders to agree/disagree with these reasons. 84 Plot Holders completed the survey, the average score being 1.6, either 'Strongly Disagreeing', or 'Disagreeing' with the MPC assertions. The survey is the largest consultation of Plot Holders and clearly rejects MPC's justification for assuming the management of the allotments. MPC has conducted no consultation with Plot Holders itself, their comments on Plot Holder feelings are not backed up by any recorded analysis, but rather appear made up to match their ends.

-On 23/04/26 a Data Breach was uncovered where it was discovered that on 20/01/26 the personal information of MDAA Plot Holders was passed onto the Parish Clerk without the permission or knowledge of the MDAA Committee, that same evening MPC debated taking back control of the allotments, a formal complaint from MDAA was issued to MPC

-On 12/05/26 MPC Councillors voted 10 for, 1 abstention to not engage with MDAA

-The MDAA Privacy Policy was presented in brief, explaining how MDAA protects MDAA Plot Holders personal information. Like MPC, no individual within MDAA is the Data Controller, MDAA is the Data Controller

Current Plot assessment

There being 162 plots, of which 37 plots are classed as Wastelands, and 15 not fit for purpose. MPC has been running the site for the last three months. There is a legal term: Wilful Neglect, that may well apply here, is that what MPC are doing?

MDAA Secretary

When the new committee was formed every effort was made to build a good relationship with our Landlord MPC. The committee spent long hours writing and rewriting its Constitution and Plot Renewal Agreement so that they were in line with MPC standards. Given that we are unpaid volunteers it feels like we put an awful lot of effort in for very little return.

On the 03/03/26 the MDAA Secretary was invited to a meeting by the MPC Parish Clerk, the MDAA Lettings Manager being present. At that meeting it was provisionally

agreed that the MDAA Committee would cease communication with the Lettings Manager regarding the return of MDAA Plot Holders personal information provided the Lettings Manager agreed to return all Plot Holder information in the form of the PlotMaster system to MDAA at an AGM to be planned for a month and a half's time.

The Secretary informed the Parish Clerk that MDAA was producing a 'state of the art' online GDPR system which would alleviate the issues we were experiencing with Lettings having sole control of personal data. The Parish Clerk appeared interested in this, and practise sessions were sent to MPC Councillors to test its use. Later after the takeover the Parish Clerk wrote back stating this solution was not required, the current state of plot records is unknown at present, but given their request twice for Plot Holders to pass on their personal data, it may be that they do not have complete records for all. Not having access to the PlotMaster information has prevented MDAA running the allotments effectively, not fully knowing who had paid, not paid, who has left or joined.

On the surface the structure of the meeting on 03/03/26 was that the Parish Clerk was operating in a conciliatory way, agreeing a workable solution palatable to all. Yet given the transfer of MDAA members personal data to MPC beforehand, and the MDAA Secretary being the only person within the three who was not aware of this, would it not be unreasonable to question whether these were in fact fair negotiations? Was Parish Clerk operating in a neutral position? Why could not the Parish Clerk hand over the personal data then and there as part of the agreement?, they had it in their power to do so, and this would solve MDAA's most urgent problems. The Parish Clerk stated at

the MPC meeting at Harvel (07/04/26) that the MDAA Plot Holders personal information was 'on her desk, and hadn't been opened'. The Parish Clerk did not inform the three MDAA Officers of the removal of the personal data of all MDAA Plot Holders on 20/01/26, information they needed to run the allotments, which had effectively been denied them since the start of the new committee.

On 03/03/26 at a closed session of the MPC meeting the MPC Councillors voted to assume the management of the allotments. MDAA have opened an investigation with the ICO concerning the data loss which is ongoing at present.

On 09/03/26 Parish Clerk issued a letter to the MDAA Committee confirming the transition of the Southdown Shaw site from MDAA to MPC. The origin date of that letter was 13/11/25, suggesting it was written at the forming of the MDAA Committee? Was there a plan to take over Southdown Shaw after the removal of the previous chair? Was there never an intention to grant our seven year lease?

These are all questions that need to be asked of MPC, who are not talking to us, as we are under the threat of legal action.

During this presentation there were a lot of questions, which included discussion with the previous chair who had had email exchanges during his time as chair concerning PlotMaster and GDPR. Questions included;

- Why was the data sent? Boundary changes which have not yet happened and were MDAA's responsibility to manage
- Why did the Parish Clerk not contact the MDAA Officers?

- Why did MPC post the minutes for 20/01/26 meeting late?
- Why is MDAA personal data 'Sitting on a desk'?
- Why are MPC asking for Plot Holders personal data? (does this suggest their records are not complete?)
- People questioned why the promises made of cooperation from MPC not made good?
- Why plots that have been let are not being made good, are people disillusioned in the three months since the MPC takeover?
- People questioned whether there were plans to build houses on the allotments.
- That the allotments previously had never favoured Meopham residents
- Why no full notice period was given?
- There was discussion concerning Snodland allotments going into council control, lowering standards and causing resentment.

It was asked if anyone was recording the meeting? No one declared they were.

MDAA Chair

The MDAA Chair conducted a Chairs Report and Question and Answer session giving members a current update on what we know so far. The Chair stated that we have reported our concerns for the protection of MDAA members personal details to the Monitoring Officer at Gravesham Borough Council, and notified our local Member of Parliament. Questions included;

- Why are MPC choosing to get involved in the running of allotments?

- What do they hope to gain in terms of rents/money?
 - What happens to our saved fund? The current Constitution states we would refund current Plot Holders and the remainder will be given to MPC
 - If we hand over our funds are there any guarantees they would be spent on the allotments?
 - Can people complain individually regarding the transfer of personal data outside of our organisation? Yes you would have to complain to MPC via the Parish Clerk, but request she copy in the MPC Councillors. You can also contact the ICO as an individual and report the transfer of your data to them. You can also email the Parish Clerk and request MPC delete your personal information.
 - Persons who have had character assessments sent to MPC will be notified so that they can complain to MPC via the Parish Clerk, again please request MPC Councillors are copied in.
 - Should we be contacting the local press?
 - Are MPC currently letting out plots? We have no evidence that they are, but they have turned away someone we know
 - If MPC plan to close us, are they legally obliged to give us a comparable site?
- The site is now classed as Greybelt (near a railway station), a new term designed to make it easier to build on
- Are Plot Holders currently insured? We do not know, we had to cancel our MDAA insurance, and have not been informed by MPC that they have taken out insurance since their takeover
- Meopham residents can go direct to their Councillor and complain via them too regarding the transfer of personal details.
- There was a suggestion that if contacted by MPC, Plot Holders request that MPC go through MDAA

-To post a copy of the the Tenancy Agreement and Constitution on the front page of the website/Facebook

Motions

According to our constitution we require 15 members to form a quorum, as there were 27 present, we meet that standard

Motion 1- Do you want MDAA to continue to fight MPC's takeover including funding legal costs? 26 Yes 1 Abstention

Motion 2- Do you want to sign up for the National Allotment Society (NAS), to be paid for out of MDAA funds (£3.50 per person) 27 Yes

Meeting ended 5.30pm

There was an MPC open meeting on Tuesday 30/06/26 at the Cricket Pavillion, the MDAA Committee attended but were not permitted to speak, and so could not share the EGM content or the views of our members. It was stated that this was due to legal procedures being implemented. MDAA will be contesting this as the public have a right to be heard at MPC meetings. MPC can of choose not to reply, but we have a right to be heard.

There are none so blind as those that won't see

The MDAA Committee