A logo with trees and text

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Date: 6th June 2025 To: All Councillors From: Parish Clerk

Report to Council: **Resident Concerns Regarding Land to Rear of St JCC Allotments**

**1. Background**

A resident whose property backs onto the Parish Council owned allotment site off St John Cole Crescent has contacted the Clerk to raise an ongoing concern about a strip of land between their rear garden fence and the allotments. This strip, which is maintained by the Parish Council, is overgrown with brambles and other vegetation that are reportedly causing damage to the resident’s garden fence and encroaching into their property.

The resident was advised by the Clerk to submit a written report detailing the issue and outlining what they would like the Parish Council to consider. This report summarises the key points raised.

**2. Summary of Resident’s Concerns**

* The resident moved into the property nearly ten years ago, unaware of any boundary issues.
* It later came to their attention (through neighbours and a Parish Council meeting) that the boundary fence may have been incorrectly installed by the developer, and that a strip of land behind the fence belongs either to the developer or the Parish Council.
* The resident attended a Parish Council meeting some years ago where the issue was discussed. They report that they were met with a hostile response when they asked if the Council would clear the brambles growing behind their fence.
* The brambles were later sprayed with weedkiller by the Council, which allegedly caused damage to shrubs within the resident’s garden.
* Two years ago, the resident replaced the garden fence at personal cost of £1,500 after damage caused by overgrowth and bramble encroachment.
* Brambles have since regrown and are again reaching the top of the fence and growing through it, with runners spreading into the resident’s garden.
* The resident has attempted to manage the brambles on their side, but the issue persists and is becoming unmanageable.

**3. Resident's Request to the Parish Council**

* The resident is requesting that the Parish Council works with them to find a solution to the ongoing issue of overgrowth. They would welcome the opportunity to take ownership of the land (or reach an agreement for use), as they would like to incorporate it into their garden. However, they have stated that they are unable to afford legal or fencing costs at this time.
* They are willing to work cooperatively with the Council and even offered to cut the brambles back themselves, but noted that the extent of the overgrowth makes this difficult.

**4. Supporting Evidence**

* The resident has provided photographic evidence showing the current state of the brambles, which are level with or over the fence line and pushing through into the garden – see Appendix A.

**5. Considerations for the Council**

The Parish Council may wish to consider the following options:

* Asking the Contracted Handyman to assess and quote for clearance or maintenance of the brambles behind the affected properties, paying attention to weed control practises to avoid further incidents of herbicide damage.
* Clarifying the ownership and boundary status of the strip of land, then explore the feasibility of a formal transfer or licence to allow residents to assume responsibility for the land (with or without ownership)