

→ Cllr. Goodman
→ Mandy Bishop

Council Statement (third presentation)

Lower Common East Allotment Association

My name is Mr Dickens, I am a tenant on Lower Common East Allotment and a member of the Lower Common East Allotment Association, which was established in September 2017.

In April 2018 the Council was introduced to the Association and asked to make a routine confirmation that the Association would be treated no less favourably than the other two Allotment Associations already in existence.

In particular, confirmation was sought that the Lower Common East Allotment Association could make use of the Lower Common East allotment site gates and notice board to advertise and promote itself, and could attend the Council's quarterly allotment sub-forum meetings with the other two Allotment Associations where decisions are made that affect Lower Common East Allotment Association members.

The Council has accepted the establishment of the Lower Common East Allotment Association, but has refused to allow it to use the gates and notice board, or attend the sub-forum meetings.

Under current UK and European Law prior approval from a local authority to form an Allotment Association is not required, nor is a local authority able to interfere with the lawful functions and activities of an Allotment Association, nor treat one Allotment Association less favourably than another.

Whilst the Council's 2015 Allotment Management Plan recognises the possible existence of Allotment Associations it does not take proper account of their rights, and this is reflected in the Council's decision.

A reply from the Secretary of State, when taken into consideration with the Council's decision and the rights of the Lower Common East Allotment Association itself, suggests that this matter needs to be brought to the attention of a full Council meeting and this has now been done, for a third time.

The Lower Common East Allotment Association is seeking confirmation from the Council, for a third time, that it recognises and accepts the Association's right to be treated no less favourably than any other Allotment Association, for a third time that it recognises and accepts the Association's right to place notices on the site gates and notice board on Lower Common East Allotment which relate to and promote its activities, and for a third time that it recognises and accepts the Association's right to engage with the Council to represent the Association's members where appropriate.

Thank you very much.