

# TILEHURST PEOPLE'S LOCAL CHARITY

*serving people in need, hardship and distress*  
in West Reading, Southcote, Holybrook, Calcot, Theale and Tilehurst

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**Questions notified from the meeting held on 14th October 2022 – “a public meeting about the Kentwood Hill sites owned by Tilehurst Peoples’ Land Charity” (sic)**

Number	Question
1	<p><i>Why are TPLC not bringing back allotments on Chapel Hill?</i></p> <p>The subject of the meeting was “the Kentwood Hill sites” owned by the Charity. The Charity has made <u>no</u> pronouncements in respect of its other land-holdings.</p>
2	<p><i>Why are empty plots not being let?</i></p> <p>Development-related activities may cause temporary disruption. The Charity needs to have flexibility in order not to have to evict plot-holders as a result. Licences for cultivating the small number of vacant plots will be issued once the process has moved on. The Charity has <u>no</u> plans to sell or develop any land which is being cultivated (or has recently been cultivated) as licensed allotment plots.</p>
3	<p><i>What is going on with allotments now?</i></p> <p>This is <u>not</u> a specific question capable of being answered.</p>
4	<p><i>Why are TPLC scared of the people of Tilehurst?</i></p> <p>Please refer to the answer to question 20.</p>
5	<p><i>What consultation has there been with TAS?</i></p> <p>The Charity issues allotment licences direct to individual plot-holders. There is <u>no</u> formal relationship between the Charity and the Tilehurst Allotments Society and hence no formal consultation. Past informal discussions between the Charity and the Tilehurst Allotments Society Committee have rightly focussed on matters relating to the allotments area.</p>
6	<p><i>What is the value of the money lost by not taking allotment rentals?</i></p> <p>It is <u>not</u> accepted that money has been ‘lost’. There are relatively minor costs associated with bringing part of the Charity’s land to market, and the capital receipts will vastly outweigh such expenses.</p>
7	<p><i>What will TPLC do with the millions this sale and development will raise?</i></p> <p>The net proceeds of the sale of land will be invested, and the investment income will be used to fund the Charity’s grant-giving activities and other running costs.</p>
8	<p><i>If we were to put up alternative proposals, would TPLC accept alternatives?</i></p> <p>Having taken professional advice, the Charity has made the firm and final decision to sell part of its land as being in the best interests of the Charity and its beneficiaries.</p>

Number	Question
9	<p><i>How will TPLC invest the money raised?</i> The investment strategy will be decided in due course after taking specialist advice.</p>
10	<p><i>What is the investment strategy?</i> The investment strategy will be decided in due course after taking specialist advice.</p>
11	<p><i>What proportion of funds will be lost to administration?</i> It is <u>not</u> accepted that funds will be 'lost'. A small proportion of investment income will be spent on essential running costs, including administration.</p>
12	<p><i>Why are TPLC removing people's ability to grow food in a time of need?</i> The Charity does not prevent people from growing food. The Charity's actions help people whose financial hardship makes it difficult for them to afford a safe and healthy diet.</p>
13	<p><i>How is Chaney's conflict of interest being managed?</i> The Charity has no conflict of interests in its relationship with its professional advisers, including Qualified Surveyors, Solicitors, Bankers and Insurers.</p>
14	<p><i>After a sale of this land, how would you protect the capital from being devalued by things such as inflation?</i> The investment strategy will be decided in due course after taking specialist advice.</p>
15	<p><i>What other options for raising funds or managing the land has the charity considered?</i> Having taken professional advice, the Charity has made the firm and final decision to sell part of its land as being in the best interests of the Charity and its beneficiaries.</p>
16	<p><i>Please will the Charity arrange for all vacant plots to be let promptly using offers of help from Tilehurst Allotments Society if necessary?</i> The Charity will continue to manage and control the use of its own land, including decisions on how, when and to whom allotment licences are to be issued.</p>
17	<p><i>Please will the Charity ensure that no plots currently being cultivated are included in land to be sold?</i> The Charity has <u>no</u> plans to sell or develop any land which is being cultivated (or has recently been cultivated) as licensed allotment plots.</p>
18	<p><i>Regarding the sale of land including three allotment plots, an allotment access track and car park, please will the Charity explain how the proposed sale will meet the requirement of planning inspector Louise Gibbons regarding the second Local Plan in 2019 'to demonstrate how schemes fit within a comprehensive approach incorporating the allocated sites as well as the allotments and recreation ground'?</i> It is <u>not</u> accepted that the land for sale includes any land which is being cultivated (or has recently been cultivated) as licensed allotment plots. Planning matters will be addressed in due course as part of a planning application.</p>

Number	Question
19	<p><i>Is TPLC aware of the charity governance code (endorsed by the charity commission) which highlights the key themes of organisational purpose, leadership, integrity, decision making risk and control, board effectiveness, equality, diversity and inclusion and openness and effectiveness? If so, why is TPLC ignoring it?</i></p> <p>The Charity is fully aware of the Charity Governance Code – including the section on the <u>Principle of Integrity</u> which states that:</p> <p>Trustees should behave “with integrity, even where difficult or unpopular decisions are required”.</p> <p>“The board [of Trustees] acts in the best interests of the charity and its beneficiaries. The board is not unduly influenced by those who may have special interests and places the interests of the charity before any personal interest. This applies whether trustees are elected, nominated, or appointed. Collectively, the board is independent in its decision making.”</p>
20	<p><i>Why did you not attend the public meeting organised by the local Kentwood Councillors?</i></p> <p>The Charity told the two Kentwood Councillors that, prior to a planning application being submitted, a public meeting would serve no useful purpose. The Charity asked for a private meeting instead – to ensure that Councillors were properly informed, and to dispel the incorrect and misleading statements being disseminated by those objecting to any development.</p> <p>This set of questions does not ask why the meeting was organised when it was already known to the organisers that the Charity would not be attending.</p>
21	<p><i>Over the last 3 reported years 2018 – 2020, TPLC have an average income of £19,367 pa and an average expenditure of £15,210 pa. This suggests that on a regular basis, demand for support in accordance with the aims of the charity's objectives does not meet current income levels. Other than the anecdotal examples on the website please confirm for the above 3 year period:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>The number of qualifying requests for support received each year?</i></li> <li>• <i>The value of the qualifying requests?</i></li> <li>• <i>Whether all of the qualifying requests were considered and support given?</i></li> </ul> <p>This question is unrelated to “the Kentwood Hill sites” owned by the Charity. Data on grant applications and awards are published in the Charity’s annual reports which are available on the Charity’s website and in the local library.</p>
22	<p><i>TPLC are a small locally run charity comprising 5 trustees with low turnovers of income and outgoings. What business governance measures are being put in place to scale up the Charity from an average income of circa £19k pa to a potential land receipt of several million pounds from any Kentwood Hill/Armour Hill sale?</i></p> <p>The Charity has a Business Plan for the review of its operations and the expansion of its charitable activities.</p>
23	<p><i>How has TPLC assessed that this quantum of additional support is required for the charity’s objectives?</i></p> <p>An analysis of the quantum of need is not relevant to understanding that the land sale is in the best interests of the Charity’s beneficiaries.</p>

Number	Question
24	<p><i>What evidence has TPLC based a decision on to sell the land for development now rather than at some stage in the future. Equally what has led to the decision to sell all the land in question rather than for example excluding the greenfield element?</i></p> <p>Having taken professional advice, the Charity has made the firm and final decision to sell part of its land as being in the best interests of the Charity and its beneficiaries. The Governing Document states that the Charity “<i>may sell the whole or any part of the said land</i>”.</p>
25	<p><i>What criteria does TPLC apply to assess qualifying needs for poor's support?</i></p> <p>When assessing the level of need, hardship and distress of grant applicants, the Charity uses the experience and judgement of its Trustees, the application details, the supporting information supplied by referring agencies, and the guidance in the Charity's Governing Document.</p>
26	<p><i>In ensuring value for money what process did TPLC undertake to ensure competitive market value in appointing selling agents?</i></p> <p>The Charity complies with relevant guidance and good practice when selecting professional organisations and issuing instructions for the provision of services.</p>
27	<p><i>With the current welfare state support for those in need, does TPLC consider whether the original purpose of the charity set up 200 years ago is still relevant today?</i></p> <p>When the Charity was first created, it addressed energy poverty and food poverty. More than 200 years later, in addition to providing essential appliances such as cookers, fridges and washing machines, plus clothing, bedding, furniture etc, the growing areas of need are currently related to ... energy poverty and food poverty.</p>
28	<p><i>What are you doing with the Chapel Hill site that has remained redundant since your attempt to build housing on it?</i></p> <p>The subject of the meeting was “<i>the Kentwood Hill sites</i>” owned by the Charity. The Charity has made <u>no</u> pronouncements in respect of its other land-holdings.</p>
29	<p><i>How are you managing the builders yard to ensure you are securing the best return from that asset, before you look to sell the woodland?</i></p> <p>The Charity has recently renewed a commercial lease on improved terms.</p>
30	<p><i>Now that there is evidence of an extensive network of protected species on the site and the land is not needed to meet current housing targets will you review your decision to sell?</i></p> <p>Having taken professional advice, the Charity has made the firm and final decision to sell part of its land as being in the best interests of the Charity and its beneficiaries. Questions about housing targets should be addressed to the relevant local authority.</p>
31	<p><i>Are you under contract with Ridgpoint Homes?</i></p> <p>The Charity does not disclose confidential or commercially-sensitive information, and charities are not ‘public authorities’ covered by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.</p>