

Harbour Court, Sherborne – housing development & allotment site

Strongvox Homes Ltd approached Sherborne Town Council in November 2017 to ask whether the company could take over the allotment site adjacent to their proposed housing development so as they could utilise the area as a builders' compound. Having taken the matter to a Council meeting, the Town Clerk drew up a formal agreement between Sherborne Town Council and Strongvox Homes Ltd regarding the agreed use of the site (erecting a mess hut and storing materials) for a maximum duration of 24 months and detailing the specifications regarding the return of the site to Sherborne Town Council as an improved allotment site.

The allotment site is bordered by two houses – one privately owned and one Housing Association. Both occupants were made aware of the proposed temporary use of the site. No objections were raised as the occupants were reassured that the result would be an enhanced allotment site with improved fencing surrounding their gardens.

The allotment site held four large plots. The site had always been a "hard to let" site as there was no water provision and the site had become scruffy and unattractive over the years. Nevertheless, all the plots were tenanted at the time of the agreement and so the tenants were consulted and offered alternative plots for the duration of Strongvox's occupation of the site.

On 14 March 2019, Ian Latham & Kim Bowen of Strongvox Homes Ltd formally handed the allotment site back to Sherborne Town Council – well within the agreed time frame. The allotment site had been transformed from a scruffy unattractive area into a site with ten bordered plots with gravel paths and a hardstanding for sheds, a water supply and trough, and all surrounded by close boarded fencing with three access gates.

Officers of Sherborne Town Council found Ian Latham and his team to be a pleasure to liaise with. All aspects of the agreement were adhered to throughout their occupation of the site with no complaints received by Sherborne Town Council regarding any aspect of their work. The agreement between Strongvox Homes Ltd and Sherborne Town Council has been of huge benefit to both parties. Strongvox appreciated being able to use Sherborne Town Council's land as a compound and Sherborne Town Council has now received a greatly enhanced allotment site which will be enjoyed by ten Sherborne residents.

18 March 2019

Photo 1: Kim Bowen, Cllr Anne Hall, Ian Latham, Deputy Mayor Cllr Jon Andrews.

Photo 2: Kim Bowen, Cllr Anne Hall, Ian Latham, Paul Newman (Grounds & Property Manage – Sherborne Town Council), Deputy Mayor Cllr Jon Andrews, Jeremy Gear (Allotment tenant).