Fooding on Birmingham Allotments

The following report was presented to the BDAC Webmaster February 2025.

In January 2025 all Birmingham allotment sites were contacted seeking information about the amount of flooding on their site and the effect it had.

Forty two sites replied and 33 reported flooding. The majority cause was a high water table but 8 reported a flooded stream was the cause. It seems that on one site some of the problems might be alleviated by additional soil.

Twenty five plots have been lost to cultivation. In some cases these have been put to use as eco areas or house a site facility that can be accessed in the drier months.

Severn Trent has been involved in some of the preventative maintenance but overwhelming the plotholders and committees feel that there is little support in dealing with these issues. In some cases regular follow up of such things as the poor implementation of work done outlined in the Bill of Quantities has resulted in no action. The overwhelming feeling of despondency and helplessness is noticeable.

In particular the repeated lack of repair to roads and nearby streams is causing deterioration of the amenities and frustration. Work done years ago is now needing repair. E.g. slabs falling into streams. The failure of the council to spend the Flo Pickering Fund when work has been scheduled has been noted by some sites. One site is now calling upon their local MP to support them.

There is some confusion of where responsibility lies. Is it the council or Severn Trent that needs to take action? Where flooding occurs due to a fallen tree who do sites contact?

One site where plots were flooded due to a burst pipe were told they could offer a discount to those plots affected. If the council accepts liability for such a failure why not others? This gives rise to so many questions about how it could operate and not be abused.

One plotholder has reported to me that he has threatened to withhold rent if his plot floods again, having been flooded 3 times during 2024. It seems that we as an executive should have a position on this topic.