

Cripley Meadow Allotments

Oxford City Council's Environmental Development Service will be carrying out soil tests to further explore the known contamination issue on the allotment site.

We will be exploring issues raised in the previous site investigation by testing for poly-aromatic hydrocarbons, which were not investigated previously.

We wish to look more closely at how easily the heavy metals could be absorbed into the body should soil and soil dust be accidentally ingested or inhaled. This will help us to understand better the level of risk to people using the site and advise appropriately if it warrants further action. We will do that by carrying out bioaccessibility testing of key heavy metals. This is different from looking simply at contamination concentration. We already know from the earlier study that these contaminants are present in the soils at elevated concentrations. We also know that vegetable uptake is not high and so we will not be repeating the work done at that time.

We have engaged consultants who are experts in this type of study and we are currently finalising the details with them. The start of the process will be a site visit on Tuesday 30th September, which will be followed by a further visit to take soil samples. The consultants will need to access some allotment plots, but not all and will take great care not to disturb or damage crops. Sampling positions will be selected on a random basis and once we have decided where the soil samples will be taken from we can let your Committee Chair know, so that you can see if it affects your plot.

Now that we have secured Government funds for this work we hope to progress things as swiftly as possible. If you have any concerns or would like to have anything clarified please feel free to contact Karen Seal either by telephone on 01865 252316 or email kseal@oxford.gov.uk

