



The Council currently owns and manages 138 allotment gardens at Duckmore Lane, most of which are half plots. The Council's total allotment ownership is 7.5 hectares, 2.1 hectares of which is let as grass keep. Grass keep is let to tenants on a short-term basis.

This allotment policy outlines the Council's commitment to the provision of allotments for the benefit of its residents and the wider community. Tring Town Council recognises the many benefits of allotment gardening and commits to the following objectives:

- To improve and enhance the fabric of the sites for the benefit of allotment gardeners by working with the Allotment Association and local groups to identify priorities for action
- Work in partnership to involve the wider community in the ongoing maintenance and management of the whole of the Duckmore Lane site to realise the full potential as a community asset. e.g. Friends of Millennium Wood and Tring Community Garden

ALLOTMENT CHARTER

Tring Town Council commits to:

1. Constantly maintain and improve the fabric of the sites under its care
2. Maintain and consider providing better access to the sites for all sections of the community
3. Draw up, from time to time, plans for improvements to the sites
4. Review the use of the land in its ownership abutting the allotment gardens, with a view to considering alternative, complementary uses
5. Review the potential use of any redundant allotment land in its ownership

Also included in the Allotment Tenancy Agreement:

1. REVIEW OF CHARGES, SERVICES AND RULES

The council reserves the right to review this policy and the charges for allotments and services as required. Before making any changes, the council will give tenants notice of such changes.

2. PAYMENT OF RENT AND TERMINATION DUE TO NON- PAYMENT

Allotments are leased annually from October 1st and payment is due in full within 40 days of October 1st. If tenants fail to pay, their tenancy may be terminated and the allotment re-let without further notice. The council or site manager will not be able to provide refunds.

3. ASSIGNMENT AND SUBLETTING

tenants are responsible for the allotment and may not sublet it or pass the tenancy on to anyone else, and tenants must notify the site manager in writing if tenants intend to give up their plot.

4. USE

Tenants may use the allotment for the cultivation of fruit, vegetables, flowers, and herbs for non-

commercial use and not for any other purposes. The majority of the allotment must be used for the cultivation of fruit and vegetables; no more than 10% may be laid to lawn or similar. Sheds or other permanent structures are not permitted on the site. A separate agreement is required to keep fowl – subject to site manager approval. Beekeeping is not permitted.

5. CULTIVATION

Tenants must keep the allotment in cultivation, keep weeds under control and maintain the soil in a healthy and fertile state. Failure to do so may lead to the issue of an improvement notice from the council. In the event of a failure to comply with the conditions set out in this notice the council may terminate the tenancy on 3 weeks' notice and under the 1950 Allotments Act may seek compensation for the cost of making good any deterioration to the land. In cases of appeals against eviction due to non-cultivation, the council's decision will be final. If tenants are issued with 3 improvement notices within 3 years, the tenancy may be terminated without further notice. See additional notes below.

ALLOTMENT RULES

6. INFRASTRUCTURE

Unless otherwise agreed, the council is responsible for the upkeep of hard standing, water supplies, fences and gates, hedges, ditches, main pathways and other communal areas and features of the allotment site. It is the tenant's responsibility to report damage to the site manager.

7. PATHS

Tenants are responsible for maintaining paths bordering their allotment in good order, healthy growth and free from obstruction. A clear passage at least 1 metre wide must be maintained at all times.

8. SHEDS, GREENHOUSES, FENCES, POLYTUNNELS & STRUCTURES

Sheds, greenhouses and fences are not permitted. Poly tunnels are permitted on a case by case basis. The final decision will be with the Town Warden. Apply to the site manager.

9. WASTE

Tenants must not take, sell or carry away any mineral, sand, earth or clay without the written consent of the council.

10. RUBBISH*

No rubbish may be left anywhere on the allotments. Tenants are responsible for removing all rubbish on their plot.

11. TREES*

Trees on the allotments must be managed so as not to adversely affect the use of neighbouring allotments or paths. Tenants must not cut or prune any timber from trees that belong to the council without consulting the council or the site manager.

12. WATER*

Tenants may not make excessive use of water, tamper with the supply, or connect a hosepipe to the supply. Tenants are responsible for reporting water leaks to the site manager. Where provided, water is normally available year round except in freezing conditions.

13. BONFIRES*

Bonfires are allowed from 1st September to 30th April but only under the following conditions:

- In incinerators and only lit when the prevailing wind is away from residential properties
- Never left unattended and extinguished before leaving or if a nuisance arises
- tenants burn dry organic material only
- When this does not cause a nuisance to others

Tenants failing to follow the guidelines will be putting their tenancy at risk. In the case of sites located close to surrounding local residences, persistent complaints are likely to lead to a blanket ban on all site bonfires.

14. CHEMICALS*

Tring Town Council is committed to environmentally friendly practices, and pesticides and herbicides are not recommended on the allotment site.

15. NUISANCE*

Tenants must not cause undue nuisance or annoyance to any other tenant, a site manager or to the occupants of any premises adjoining the allotment site, either through an action or inaction, or by rude or offensive behaviour, whether through carelessness, ignorance, or persistent or deliberate action. The Council has a zero-tolerance approach to this rule and any tenant found causing a nuisance may result in the termination of the tenancy.

16. DOGS*

Any dog under tenants' control must not be allowed onto any allotment but their own, and excrement must be removed from the site promptly.

17. BARBED WIRE

Tenants must not use barbed wire, razor wire or similar on the allotment.

18. DISPUTES

Any dispute between tenants must be referred to the council or site manager whose decision will be final.

19. SPECIAL CONDITIONS

Tenants must observe and perform any special condition the council considers necessary to preserve the allotment from deterioration of which notice is given to tenants.

20. INSPECTION

Any authorised officer or representative of the council is entitled to inspect any part of the allotment and should have free unrestricted access to the plot.

21. LEGAL OBLIGATIONS

Tenants must observe and comply fully with all Acts, statutory instruments, local, parochial or other bye laws, orders or regulations affecting the allotment.

* Attention is drawn to the Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981, the Environmental Protection Act

Policy adopted in Allotments, Environment and Transport meeting dated 4th December 2023 (Minute 21691) Review in 4 years

1990, the Antisocial Behaviour Act 2003, and the Clean Neighbourhoods & Environment Act 2005, which provide the local authority with additional powers of enforcement for various allotment rules. If a fixed penalty or legal notice is served on tenants, this may lead to the termination of the tenancy.

22. ADMITTANCE

Any authorised officer or representative of the council has the right to refuse admittance to the allotment to any person other than the tenant or members of the tenant's family. The tenant is at all times responsible for anyone that they invite onto the allotment.

23. TERMINATION

The council may terminate the tenancy:

- (a) on failure to pay for the plot in full within 40 days of October 1st the tenancy may be terminated and the allotment re-let without further notice.
- (b) by giving 3 weeks' notice in writing, if tenants fail to comply with rule 5 and at least three months have elapsed from the start or renewal of the tenancy and 3 weeks have elapsed from the issue of an improvement notice. In the case of appeals the Deputy Clerk's decision will be final.
- (c) by giving notice in writing, if tenants fail to comply with any of the conditions in this agreement other than rule 5. In case of dispute tenants should write to the Deputy Clerk at the address above, whose decision will be final.

24. NOTICES

Any notice from the council may be served on tenants either personally or by leaving it at their last known address or letter sent by email or ordinary post or by fixing the same in some conspicuous place on the allotment. Tenants must immediately inform the site manager or the council of any change of address.

ALLOTMENT HEALTH & SAFETY

If tenants want to discuss anything about their tenancy, they will need to know the plot number and the name of the site.

The plot size is calculated by the council as a half plot or full plot. As a tenant, tenants are responsible for their plot and the paths around it and for their visitors.

The site manager must be informed of any change of address or email address, as either may be used for the council's communications.

TENANTS AND THEIR PLOTS

I. PATHS

Ensure that paths are not obstructed at any time; do not put stones on paths as these may fly up when the paths are strimmed; do not use weed killer or put wood chippings or carpet on grass paths as these will cause the paths to deteriorate; and keep grass paths trimmed so that the route is obvious. Any drainage ditches dug alongside paths should be kept clear of long grass and made visible to people using the paths.

II. CANES AND POSTS

Canes and narrow posts should be capped to avoid eye injury - an upturned plastic water bottle will do. Short metal posts should not be used near paths – they may cause a passer-by to trip.

III. PONDS

Ponds must be located away from paths and surrounded by material (plants, etc.) to offer the least possibility of accidents.

IV. POWER AND HAND TOOLS

Before using a power tool, ensure tenants are familiar with the instructions and use the recommended safety wear. Remember that a strimmer/brush cutter can throw a stone 15 metres, or over 3 plots. Whilst operating equipment, particularly on or adjacent to paths, be aware that others may walk up behind tenants without realising that tenants can't hear their approach. Do not leave tools lying on the path. Ensure that blades are sheathed or stored in a safe place when not in use. Lay rakes on the ground point-side down.

V. GARDENING CHEMICALS

Keep all chemicals in their original, labelled containers and follow the instructions carefully. Store the chemicals in a safe place, preferably out of the reach of children.

VI. MANURE

Horse manure and other manures should be composted for at least six months to avoid contamination of the soil by veterinary products.

VII. PETROL, PARAFFIN AND GAS

If tenants use a petrol-powered tool, bring sufficient fuel for their requirements and take away any fuel left over. If tenants use LPG gas to boil water, do not keep spare cylinders in the same area. If tenants have a paraffin greenhouse heater, make sure there are no flammable materials nearby.

VIII. BROKEN GLASS & SIMILAR HAZARDS

Wrap broken glass in newspaper and dispose of it and other hazards, e.g. scrap metal, safely away from the allotments.

IX. ASBESTOS CEMENT

Asbestos cement can be made safe by first thoroughly wetting it and, using gloves, wrapping it in plastic, avoiding any further breakage. Seal, label and store the bag on the plot where it is unlikely to be disturbed. Report it to the site manager so that collection can be arranged. Never bury asbestos cement or dispose of it anywhere on the allotments.

X. BONFIRES

Do not use petrol to start a bonfire, and tend the fire at all times to ensure it doesn't get out of control. Please refer to the Council bonfire guidance posted on the gate or noticeboard, also available online.

XI. GIANT HOGWEED

Giant Hogweed is often found close to rivers and canals. It contains a substance within its sap that makes the skin sensitive to ultraviolet light. This can result in severe burns, swelling and painful blistering. Contact occurs either by brushing against the bristles on the stem or breaking the stem/leaves. In the event of contact with the sap, the skin should be covered to reduce exposure to sunlight and washed immediately and thoroughly with soap and water, use protective clothing if tenants plan to dig it out.

If Japanese Knotweed is found, advise the site manager. Do not attempt to treat it and risk transferring it to other properties.

XII. FOR VISITORS

Tenants are responsible for their visitors at all times. Children are welcome at the allotments but must be supervised at all times. Please draw their attention to these points: Allotment paths are often crooked and uneven so be careful where tenants walk, and in particular watch out for obstructions that may be obscured by vegetation. Don't stray off the paths: soil which appears firm may be recently dug and thus soft; there are many ponds, some small; netting and fine cord (used to deter birds) may be invisible to the naked eye; broken glass is common. Never approach someone who is using a power tool, particularly if they are wearing ear defenders: they are unlikely to be aware of their approach and may swing round and catch tenants with a cutting blade or similar. Do not touch the ash of a bonfire: it can retain a high temperature for hours, even after heavy rain.

CULTIVATION

- In the first three months of growing season, usually March to May, at least 25% (a quarter) of the plot should be cultivated
- After six months of the growing season up to 50% (half) of the plot would expect to be cultivated
- After 1 year 75% (three-quarters) must be cultivated
- From the second year onwards, 75% or more of the plot must be cultivated during the growing season
- Areas of a plot which are covered for example by tarpaulin or cardboard are not considered to be cultivated
- Up to 10% of the total area of the plot can be used for a composting area and/or water storage. Polytunnels can cover a larger area provided they are used for cultivation and not storage
- If the plot holder is engaged in wildlife gardening or similar such that their plot may appear to be non-cultivated, they must seek prior approval from the site manager
- Trees must be managed in accordance with rule 11
- Failure to comply with the above points will render the plot holder liable to a Non-Cultivation (NC) and Notice to Quit (NTQ) order.

ADVICE/THE COUNCIL

If a serious issue requires prompt investigation or action (for instance, a tree in a potentially dangerous state) this should be reported to the council on 01442 823347, giving the allotment site name and approximate location of the danger. The council is responsible for ensuring proper use of the allotments, and carries out inspections to this end. If tenants believe a plot is not being properly used, please report this to the site manager.

4th December 2023