
ALLOTMENT RULES

to accompany tenancy agreement

These rules form part of the Councils Tenancy Agreement. Breach of these rules will be enforced under Section 7 of the signed Tenancy Agreement.



Allotment Office:
Aleandra Dock Business Centre, Fishermans Wharf, Grimsby, DN31 1UL
Email: allotments.enquiries@nelincs.gov.uk
Tel: 01472 324501

Welcome to your allotment!

This booklet will provide you with the information about renting an allotment from North East Lincolnshire Council. In addition to adhering to all the clauses of your Tenancy Agreement, this accompanying guide clarifies rules, to support the Tenancy Agreement. If you have any queries do not hesitate to contact the allotment office.

All plot holders must adhere to these rules and failure to do so could result in breach of your tenancy agreement. In the event of any breach of tenancy, North East Lincolnshire Council will serve a Termination Notice according with clause 7.

If you would like to receive this information in another format please contact the allotment office.

Allotments – Some basic do's and don't's

A Tenant is required to:

1. Cultivate the allotment properly, keeping it in a neat and tidy condition.
2. Display the number of the allotment plot clearly within the allotment plot.
3. Permit any Member or Officer of the Council to enter and inspect the allotment plot as required.
4. Live within the North East Lincolnshire Borough Boundary unless the Council consents otherwise.
5. Maintain sheds and greenhouses on the allotment plot. The Council can instruct a tenant to carry out necessary repairs or remove to these buildings at any time.
6. Leave the plot in a reasonable state when terminating their tenancy. If the tenant fails to do this, the Council can carry out any work needed to bring it into a reasonable state then recover the cost from the Tenant.
7. Always ensure the gates are locked behind them when entering and leaving the site gates.
8. Use water sparingly, hand held hosepipes may be used to water crops or fill water butts, sprinklers are not permitted.
9. Compost and recycle as much as possible
10. Ensure that children are always closely supervised.

An allotment Tenant must not:

1. Use the allotments plot for anything other than growing produce for the benefit of the tenant and their family.
2. Carry out any type of trade or business on the allotment.
3. Light fires on the allotment plot or roads between 1 March and 31 October.
4. Allow fires lit between 1 November and 28 February to be a nuisance to other allotment gardeners or to the residents of surrounding properties.
5. Cause a nuisance, damage or annoyance to the Council, other allotments tenants or the residents of surrounding properties.
6. Obstruct any paths or roadways that have been set out by the Council within the allotment site.
7. Underlet, assign or part with the possession of the allotment plot or any part of it.
8. Cut any timber or prune any trees on the allotment plot without permission from the Council. Only fruit trees are permitted to be planted. We do not encourage tree growing as large trees can cast shade and take water nutrients. You may be asked to remove trees at landlords discretion.
9. Remove or sell from the allotment site any mineral, gravel, sand or clay without permission from the Council.
10. Allow any unsightly materials including carpets to accumulate on the allotment plot.
11. Allow any noxious, dangerous or carcinogenic materials to be present on the allotment plot.
Therefore, the use of tyres or materials containing asbestos is not permitted.
12. Build a shed, greenhouse, pond or fence on the allotment without permission from the Council.
13. Use any building on the allotment as sleeping accommodation.
14. Keep any chickens, bees or rabbits on the allotment without written permission from the Council.
15. Use the skips provided on the site for disposing of anything other than non-recyclable allotment waste.

16. Use a sprinkler to water crops.
17. Cause a nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring properties. Unacceptable behaviour includes but is not limited to, intimidation, foul language, threatening behaviour, theft, causing damage, violence, being intoxicated, playing loud music and bonfires. The Council take such allegations very seriously and may work with outside partners including the Police. If following investigation, the Council believes that such behaviour has taken place it will be classified as a "breach of the terms of the tenancy". Either a written warning will be issued to the plot holder, or the tenancy will be terminated with immediate effect. There will be no appeals process in these instances.
18. Allow anyone else to use the keys issued to you for the site.

Official Warnings

We operate a 3-strike policy.

All formal warnings will be registered on your file. Continuation of rule breaking will result in your tenancy being terminated under clause 7c of your tenancy agreement.

More serious incidents may result in immediate termination.

What the Council shall not do:

The Council will not be liable for any loss of crops or damage done to the allotment caused by people, livestock or other animals straying or trespassing on to it.

The Tenancy Agreement between the Council and the Tenant will end:

1. If the Council or the Tenant gives notice in writing.
2. If the Council give the tenant one months' notice in writing following any breach of the terms of the Tenancy Agreement, including non-payment of rent.
3. If the tenant, or any person invited onto the allotment site by the tenant, is convicted of theft from any allotment plot, then the Tenancy Agreement will terminate immediately and without notice.



Invoice and payment information

The Allotment Tenancy Agreement gives provision for changes to the annual rent and water charge.

Allotment Invoices

Invoices for new plots taken will be issued on receipt of a completed Tenancy Agreement and on the basis of the following:

- Tenants who take an allotment on or before the 30 September in any year will be sent an allotment invoice for that year. You will pay the annual fee irrespective of your start date.
- Tenants who take an allotment on or after 1 October will be sent an allotment invoice shortly after 1 January in the following year for the following year.
- One invoice will be issued per plot and will include both rent and water charge. Invoices are for the period January - December.
- Please note that unless informed otherwise it is anticipated that on an annual basis the rental per plot will increase in line with the rate of inflation.
- Water charges will be based annually on the metered usage to the site divided equally pro rata between the tenanted plots.

When tenants receive an invoice, payment methods are clearly detailed on the invoice. If you have any difficulties paying your invoice or would like to request a 4-month instalment plan please contact the Allotment Office to discuss options.

Reduced Allotment Rental

Tenants are entitled to a reduced rental if they are:

- Student
- Over 60 years of age
- Unemployed for more than 12 months
- Registered as Disabled or in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP)
- Receipt of Universal Credit.

If you consider that you are eligible for a rent reduction the Council will require evidence of this as follows:

- If you are over 60 you will need to provide evidence of your date of birth, this is included in either your driving licence, passport or you can provide a copy of your birth certificate.
- If you are registered as disabled, or in receipt of Personal Independence Payment (PIP), you will need to produce the necessary documentation as evidence showing your name as recipient.
- If you have not been in employment for at least 12 months you will need to complete the 'Confirmation of Allotment Holders Employment Status' and have it stamped by Jobcentre Plus or alternative evidence.
- If you are in receipt of Universal Credit, you will need to produce the necessary documentation as evidence showing your name as recipient.

We will request this information annually to update records. Please do not ignore requests to resubmit evidence as this will result in a full fee invoice being issued.

Allotment Keys

To obtain a key for the Allotments, tenants must present evidence that they are an allotment tenant or registered helper, which can be one of the following:

- Tenants' copy of the Allotment Tenancy agreement
- Allotment ID card

Keys can be obtained from the Allotment Office. A £10 CASH deposit is required PER KEY.

If tenants wish to return allotment keys please present them to the Allotment Office. Upon receipt of these keys the Council will check the key is an official key and not a duplicate, once confirmed any deposit will be refunded. Refunds cannot be paid out by post, in order to receive a refund key must be returned in person.

Security

The Council requests that allotment holders ensure that gates are locked on entry and exit from the allotment sites. It is the responsibility of the tenant to ensure the continued security of the allotment sites by not copying or distributing allotment gate keys, which will be a serious breach of your tenancy agreement.

Unfortunately, allotment sites do suffer from trespass and vandalism, should your plot be a victim of crime in any form you must report the matter to the Police. By reporting your crime and receiving a log/crime reference you will enable the Police and Council to work together to try and reduce crime on allotment sites. Please pass on any crime reference details to the Allotment Office. A record will be kept.

Speed Limits

There is a speed limit of 10 kph (5 mph) on all allotments; this is for safety, to maintain the integrity of the roadways and must be always adhered to.

Starting work on your plot

As soon as the formal exchange of Allotment Tenancy Agreements has taken place the tenancy has officially started. New tenants should begin work on their plot within three months of the start of their tenancy.

Cultivation

Cultivated means the plot need to be planted, cropped and harvested or being prepared. It is not enough to keep your plot clear of weeds and then leave it unplanted.



Plots are regularly inspected and if acceptable standards of cultivation are not visible a formal Non-Cultivation Notice will be issued. This is the beginning of formal termination notice with the option to advice of mitigating circumstances. Lack of time due to work, travel or children is not a valid reason for failing to meet acceptable standards of cultivation.

Fires

Fires are only permitted between 1st November until 28th February. Waste should NOT be brought from off site to burn

If you are planning a fire, please first consider if this is the best way to dispose of material.

- Keep bonfires to a small size.
- Only have them during clear dry weather
- Only have them when there is little wind.
- Don't cause a nuisance to households or highways with smoke.
- NEVER leave them unattended
- Ensure they are FULLY extinguished before leaving plot.

Keep in mind that this during period is when site water is switched off so you should bring water or an extinguisher.

Anyone found not obeying the above will receive an official warning.

Note that by law you could be fined if you light a fire and allow the smoke to drift across a road and become a danger to traffic.

If you cause a nuisance by frequently having fires or allowing smoke to drift into neighbouring properties, the Council will investigate, and you can be fined under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 to cause a statutory smoke nuisance.

Marking your plot

In order to assist the administration of allotments, tenants are asked to make sure that their plot number is always displayed in an obvious position at the front of their plot. Inspections are carried out and a reminder will be issued if a plot number is not visible.

Dogs on allotments

Keep your dog under control at all times when on the allotment site. This will mean keeping it on a lead and may mean being muzzled. You are responsible for your dog. Do not allow your dog to leave your allotment unaccompanied, dogs must be kept on a lead and under strict control. Clear up any mess made by your dog. Failing to clear up your dog's faeces is an offence under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996, a fixed penalty notice may be issued. Make sure your dog has a collar and ID tag. Do not let your dog be a nuisance, ensure you clear up your dog's mess and ensure that you do not let your dog bark constantly.

BBQ's

You are allowed small BBQs on your plot, but this must be limited to plot holders and helpers only.

Registered Helpers

Only allotment tenants or registered helpers are permitted to enter any allotment site. Unauthorised entry to any site is deemed trespass. You may register members of your family, friends, neighbours or colleagues to assist you with working on your allotment. Application for a helper can be made via the NELC Allotments webpage or by contacting the allotments office to request an application form.

ID cards are produced and sent back to you to issue to your helper/s.

A quick guide to planting on your allotment

The following information is given as guidance only. There is a wealth of online information available to new gardeners on establishing a new allotment and there are many different methods of gardening.

JANUARY
Plan what you will grow. Make bean trenches. Sow sweet peas indoors. Complete pruning of apples and pears.
FEBRUARY
Sow broad beans in a cold frame. Chit potatoes. Plant Jerusalem artichokes, onions and shallots.
MARCH
Sow parsnips, broad beans, carrots, spring onions and early peas outdoors. Sow marrows, runner beans, pumpkins and cucumbers indoors. Plant early potatoes.
APRIL
Sow broccoli, spinach, cabbage, beetroot, lettuce, radish, turnips, leeks and more peas outdoors. Sow courgettes and sweetcorn indoors. Plant out main crop potatoes.
MAY
Sow more carrots. Put up frames for beans. Sow French beans, swedes, radishes, kohlrabi and peas. Stake broad beans. Plant out runner beans, tomatoes and leeks.
JUNE
Pull first rhubarb. Sow more carrots. Plant out cabbage, leeks, broccoli, kale, pumpkins, marrows, courgettes, lettuce and celery. Prune cherry trees.
JULY
Pinch tops out of broad beans. Sow radishes, cabbages, lettuce, turnips. Dig up first potatoes.
AUGUST
Harvest garlic. Sow winter lettuces. Pick soft fruit. Cut canes on finished raspberries. Plant new strawberries.
SEPTEMBER
Lift onions and shallots. Harvest main crop potatoes. Cut down Jerusalem artichoke tops. Sow green manure crops and broad beans. Plant out spring cabbage.
OCTOBER
Dig over and mulch/manure beds. Cut back hedges. Tie in brambles. Cut out old, fruited wood on currants and raspberries. Plant garlic.
NOVEMBER
Mend fences, gates, shed and give a coat of paint. Winter prune apple and pear trees. Make a leaf mulch bin.
DECEMBER
Make sure next year's seed list is sent off. Finish digging over and tidying the plot.



Structures

Should you wish to place a shed, greenhouse or boundary fence on your allotment you will require formal Permission from the Council and to comply with size guidelines. Please complete the online application via NELC Allotments website or contact the allotment office if you require a paper application.

Livestock

Tenants are able, with written permission from the Council, to keep certain livestock on their allotment as per clause 4 (n) of the tenancy agreement. Tenants must write in the first instance requesting permission, written confirmation from the Allotment Officer **must** be received in writing prior to the construction of any housing and before any livestock is brought onto site.

Allotment Skip Provision

Skips are provided by the Council at various times during the year at allotment sites, for the removal of noncompostable horticultural waste and general allotment debris. Allotments sites should be as self-sustainable. Please recycle as much as possible. Skips are provided for waste generated on the allotment site **ONLY**. Waste should not be brought from home.

The Allotment Office will send an email 1 week before the delivery of a skip.



Allotment Water Supply

The water supply is turned off during winter months, usually at the beginning of December. This is to protect the underground pipes from frost damage that would otherwise cause very high repair bills. The supply is re-connected in the Spring when there is no longer a risk of severe frost. The water supply provided at the network of standpipes on the Council's allotment sites is intended for the purposes of horticulture only. Although the supply is of mains water quality the standpipes are open to the elements and to contamination from other sources. It is therefore recommended that tenants do not drink water from the network of standpipes on the Council's allotment sites.

Water is a precious commodity, please use it sparingly and report any leaks immediately to the allotment office. **We strongly encourage the use of water butts.**

Sprinklers are NOT permitted.

Do not leave hoses unattended.

In the event of a water leak the water will be switched off until a repair is completed.

Allotment Associations *(Private groups not affiliated with the landlord)*

Some Allotment sites have active Allotment Holder Associations operating on them. Such Associations can be of great benefit to you as an allotment tenant, providing advice, information and potential access to discount gardening materials. Any enquiries concerning membership of your local Association should be directed to the Association Secretary at your site. Information regarding committee members should be on the site notice board.

However, although an Association may provide advice and information, within the confines of the Allotment Tenancy Agreement, it may not act as an agent for either the Tenant or the Landlord. Any enquiries concerning; applications for further allotments, termination of an Allotment Agreement, or changes in personal circumstances must be addressed to the Council. If you require further details about the Allotment Association at your site please contact the Allotment Office.

Site Representative

You may have already met your site rep at your initial site visit to view and select a plot?

The Site Representative role is completely voluntary.

The principal role of the Site Representative (Site Rep) is to liaise with plot holders/potential plot holders, seeking and representing the Council/Allotment Office. They will assist or advise you contact the Allotment Office as required.

All tenants are expected to treat the Site Representative with respect at all times.

If you are not sure who your site rep is please contact the Allotment Office.

If the position becomes available, the allotment office will send an email asking for expressions of interest.

Some health and safety information

Ponds...can encourage wildlife but ensure that they have shallow sloping sides so that children and wildlife are less likely to fall in. A barrier or markers will ensure that a pond overgrown with weeds and algae will be more visible and less hazardous.

Tetanus...is an illness caused by bacteria present in soil and manure, which can enter the body through the tiniest abrasion, scratch, thorn puncture or cut. Make sure that you have a vaccination that can protect you against the disease. Your GP may be able to help.

Chemicals...must be kept securely locked in their own cupboard in your shed, in clearly marked containers. Do not keep them in drinks bottles or food containers or leave them lying around your plot. If you must use slug pellets and other chemicals, please keep them to your own plot and do not put them on your neighbours' plot. They may garden organically and will not thank you for it.

First Aid Kit...is always a wise addition to the tools kept in your garden shed. A small selection of adhesive plasters, antiseptic ointment, a pair of tweezers for removing thorns and splinters and a gauze or lint pad to use as a compress to stop bleeding if you are badly cut.

Allotment Soil contents...National guidelines suggest that the application of manure and bonfire ash (particularly from the burning of painted or preserved wood) can lead to increased levels of heavy metals and other contaminants in soils. It is understood that both of these practices have been carried out on allotments for many years but that if contaminants are present, they are not likely to be taken up into any plants grown but remain in the soil. Therefore, to safeguard against the human uptake of any soil contaminants through the consumptions of produce grown on allotments, it is recommended that all produce grown in direct contact with the soil is thoroughly washed to remove all traces of soil before cooking or eating.

Asbestos on Allotments...Asbestos based material may or may not be present on your allotments. Historically Asbestos Cement sheets were common use on allotments. And would be the main type of suspect material on allotments. Asbestos Cement is predominantly a mixture of cement and asbestos which when in a dry state has a density greater than 1 tonne per cubic metre. It is a light grey and hard material which generally contains 10% to 15% asbestos fibres. Most asbestos cement products contain only chrysotile (white) asbestos. Asbestos cement products include profile sheets, moulded products and flat compressed sheets. They are used for roofing, wall cladding, soffits, fascia boards, propagation beds, manure bins, fencing, gutters, downpipes, roofing components (ridges and ventilators), flue pipes and window/flower boxes. The above is only an indication of asbestos cement products and is not exhaustive. **If tenants are concerned about suspect material on their allotment plot, please contact the Allotment Office immediately.** An Asbestos Guide is issued to all tenants at the beginning of tenancy.



Enjoy your allotment!

If you have any queries or concerns, do not hesitate to contact us:

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Open: Monday – Friday (excluding Bank Holidays)
8.30 – 12.30 then 13.00 – 16.30

