

Allotments

A PLOT HOLDER'S GUIDE

To contact the Allotment Office
Tel 01472 324646



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Section 1

ALLOTMENTS

– Some basic do's and don'ts

Helpful information about renting an allotment from North East Lincolnshire Council.

The Allotment Acts and Tenancy Agreements dictate how allotments should be used. This means most of the do's and don'ts are legal or North East Lincolnshire Council requirements. Failure to comply could result in the termination of your agreement.

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 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 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. This could include the cost of removing debris, repairing structures or rotavating the land.

7. Always ensure the gates are locked behind them when entering and leaving the site.
8. Use water sparingly, hand held hosepipes may be used to water crops or fill water butts.
9. Compost and recycle as much as possible
10. Ensure that children are closely supervised at all times.

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.

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 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 livestock or chickens 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- nuisance could include foul or abusive language, being intoxicated, playing loud music, bonfires etc.

18. Use any abusive or threatening behaviour on site, be it physical or verbal.

19. Allow anyone else to use the keys issued to you for the site.

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 12 calendar months' notice in writing. This must expire on any date before the 6 April or after the 29 September in any year.

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.

Please Note: this summary is provided as a guide and for information purposes only and is not intended to create any legally binding relationship with the Council or replace the terms of the Allotment Tenancy Agreement.

Section 2

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.
- 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.
- 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 allowing many different methods of payment.

Reduced Allotment Rental

Tenants are entitled to a reduced rental if they are:

- Over 60 years of age
- Unemployed for more than 12 months
- Registered as Disabled or in receipt of Incapacity Benefit

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

- 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 Incapacity Benefit, you will need to produce the necessary documentation as evidence.
- 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.

Any of the above evidence should be presented to the Customer Access Points at the Municipal Offices, Town Hall Square, Grimsby or Civic Offices, Knoll Street, Cleethorpes.

Section 3

Allotment Keys

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

- Tenants' copy of the Allotment Tenancy agreement
- Allotment ID card
- An authorisation letter supplied by the Allotment Office (Carr Lane only)

Keys can be obtained from the Fishing Heritage Centre, Grimsby or the Tourist Information Centre, Cleethorpes Library.

After presenting evidence of the tenancy at the Reception Desk you will be asked to complete a key application form and then your £10 deposit will be taken and your key issued.

If tenants wish to return allotment gate keys please present them to the Fishing Heritage Centre, Grimsby or the Tourist Information Centre, Cleethorpes Library. Upon receipt of these keys the Council will be able to refund any deposits you have previously given for them. However, we regret that such refunds cannot be paid out by post and that in order to receive a refund keys 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 Officer (Tel 324646) and a record will be kept.

Section 4

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.

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 on their plot. The Council will provide you with a temporary plot marker but do expect you to provide a more permanent plot marker.

Rotavation

If tenants feel they require their plot to be ploughed/rotavated by the Council, a request must be sent in writing

to North East Lincolnshire Council, Allotment Enquiries, Municipal Offices, Town Hall Square, Grimsby, DN31 1HU. This work will then be carried out within three weeks and will cost in the region of £50 plus VAT per plot (depending on the size of the plot). An invoice will be sent on completion of the works.

Section 5

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.

Section 6

A quick guide to planting on your allotment

The following information is given as guidance only. There is a wealth of 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 or greenhouse on your allotment you will require formal permission from the Council. Please complete the 'Application for the Placement of a Tool Shed or Greenhouse on an Allotment Area' which is provided in the Welcome Pack and return it to the Council.

Enquiries regarding the keys to the brick built sheds on the Weelsby Allotment site should be directed to

North East Lincolnshire Council

Allotment Enquiries

Municipal Offices

Town Hall Square

Grimsby

DN31 1HU

Tel (01472) 324646

Livestock

Tenants are able, with written permission from the Council, to keep 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 birds are brought onto site.

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. To do so provide the Allotment Officer with details of your plot and the name and address of those you wish to register.

One passport sized photograph of each helper will be required to enable an ID card to be produced and sent directly to your helper/s.

Section 8

Allotment Skip Provision

Skips are provided by the Council at various times during the year at allotment sites, for the removal of non-compostable horticultural waste and general allotment debris.

Each site is allocated a number of skips based on the number of tenanted plots on the site. The dates for delivery of the skips are available from the Site Representative.

Allotment Water Supply

At the majority of the Council's Allotment sites 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.

Allotment Associations and Allotment Forum

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 and information, easy access to discounted gardening materials and a voice for your comments and concerns at the Council's Allotment Forum. This is a meeting held periodically and each site is entitled to have up to two representatives present. It is an opportunity to discuss the strategic management of the allotments. Any enquiries concerning membership of your local Association should be directed to the Association Secretary at your site.

However, although an Association may provide advice and information, within the confines of the Allotment Tenants 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 **Allotment Enquiries Tel (01472) 324646**.

Section 9

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, in order 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. No bulk samples of any suspect materials have been taken for analysis at this time but the type of suspect material on allotments are made of Asbestos Cement. 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. The majority of 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, fallpipes, 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.



**For further information and advice,
or if tenants are concerned
about suspect material on their
allotment please contact:**

North East Lincolnshire Council
Allotment Enquiries
Municipal Offices
Town Hall Square
Grimsby
DN31 1HU
Tel (01472) 324646