

Didcot Town Council

APPENDIX 1: DIDCOT TOWN COUNCIL ALLOTMENT RULES AND PROCEDURES



The aim of this Appendix attached to the Tenancy Agreement is:

- To set out the responsibilities of both the Council and Tenant in relation to the provision and renting of allotment plots.
- To ensure the appropriate use of allotment plots by the Tenant.
- To ensure it is clear the standards expected for maintaining plots and what is prohibited to take place on allotment sites.
- To make clear the processes for Council and Tenants' responsibilities.

In accordance with Clause 7 of the Tenancy Agreement, Allotment Holders are required to comply with the following Rules and Procedures

1. Security arrangements relating to each Council Allotment Site must be strictly observed. Where access is by a gate at an allotment site, it must be **kept locked at all times, when allotment holders are on site as well as when they leave.**
2. Allotment holders are only permitted to access and work their allotment plot between dawn and dusk. Vehicle parking is permitted in designated areas but is not allowed either for long periods, or overnight. Drivers and/or owners will be held responsible for any damage caused to the grounds, whilst using their vehicles on the allotment sites. Entering the site with vehicles is at the driver's and/or owner's risk.
3. Tenants are responsible for ensuring that their plots are kept tidy, free from weeds and in a good state of cultivation and fertility. At least 2 thirds of the plot should always be cultivated during the growing season. If a plot is seen not being actively cultivated at a Council inspection, the Council's Inspection Procedure will apply. Only one third of the plot can be used to grow flowers at any one time.
4. Part of an allotment plot may be part-covered in cardboard or polythene sheeting for a selected period, provided it is combined with active cultivation. The polythene sheeting should be black to stop sunlight penetrating the soil and should be porous to allow water and nutrients through. The use of carpeting and tyres is prohibited for environmental reasons.
5. The Tenant shall cultivate the allotment plot for the production of fruit, vegetables, flowers, and livestock for domestic consumption by the Tenant and their immediate family and friends. Sale of produce for business purposes is prohibited.
6. The 1.2-metre width of paths around each allotment plot, set out by the Council, must not be obstructed, diverted, or reduced in size. Paths must be kept clear of obstructions and available for access at all times by other tenants and to enable the Council to carry out periodic strimming.

7. Hens and rabbits are allowed on the allotments. A written request needs to be approved by the Council and the Council's Livestock policy will apply.
8. A suitable wire or heavy -duty plastic fence must be erected to keep hens within a confined space (at least 5 feet in height). The absolute minimum space for each hen in the run is 1 square metre per hen. No more than 6, but not less than 2 hens will be allowed on the allotment plot. Tenants will only be granted permission to keep hens on one allotment, irrespective of how many plots are rented.
9. The use of up to 1000L water tanks are permitted within plots but the tenant will need to seek permission for this. A maximum of 1 per plot is permitted only. Water butts do not require permission.
10. Tenants shall not, without Council consent, erect any building on their allotment plot. This includes sheds, poly-tunnels and greenhouses and chicken coops.
 - Maximum size of sheds: 8' x 6'
 - Maximum size of polytunnels: 12' x 10' unless written permission has been granted by Didcot Town Council - Community facilities *may* exceed these sizes at the Council's discretion.
 - Maximum size of greenhouses: 8' x 6'. Only glass substitutes such as polycarbonate, perspex or other alternatives may be used in any permitted structures.Tenants shall keep all sheds, greenhouses, polytunnels and other structures in good repair to the satisfaction of the Council.
 - Please note the Council will only consider allowing permission for one of each structure, per allotment plot.
11. Dogs are allowed on the allotment sites, if they are well behaved and always remain on a lead. The plot holder is responsible for their dog and will need to make sure that any dog mess is picked up and disposed of accordingly. Dogs are not to become a nuisance to any other plot holders. The Council's 'Dogs on Allotments Policy' applies.
 - The Council reserves the right to retract this, should these rules not be adhered to.
12. No bonfires are permitted on the allotment sites – occasional burns may be permitted under exceptional circumstances at Town Council's discretion.
13. The Council will be responsible for maintaining a water supply to all allotment sites.
14. Existing ponds as of 31st August 2022 are allowed to stay within the tenant's plot. Tenants shall not, without written Council consent, add a new pond to their allotment plot as of 1st September 2022.
15. No dumping on site or importing of any garden waste/waste soil onto allotment sites is permitted.

16. Any fruit tree planted by a Tenant must be of the DWARF variety only. Fruit trees should be planted sparingly and not be allowed to grow over 3 metres high. The Council will have the power to remove any excessive or high trees. Permission needs to be granted for any fruit trees and their position.
17. Tenants are not to cause a nuisance or annoyance to the occupier of any other allotment plot. Any nuisance behaviour should be reported to the Town Council.
18. Children and young people, whether individually or in family groups, whilst visiting the allotment plot must be fully supervised in the interests of their own safety and the safety of others and should not be permitted to wander the site unsupervised.
19. Action will be taken against any person causing malicious damage to Council property.
20. Although plot holders are not required to use totally organic methods on their plots, they are to note the instructions below on the use of weed killers:
 - Where a plot is totally weed infested and the tenant wishes to deal with the problem by spraying, the tenant must contact the Council which will undertake the spraying for a fee.
 - Limited use of shop bought weedkiller (pre-mixed, unconcentrated) is permitted to be undertaken by tenants where a limited amount of weed exists. No chemicals may be applied using a knapsack backpack sprayer or a 5-10 litre pressurised pump. If the tenant holds the PA1 and PA6 qualification and can provide proof of this to the Town Council, permission may be granted for that tenant to undertake the work themselves, provided it is not used near to any freshwater courses.
 - All chemicals must be stored securely, in original packaging and kept in a locked shed, if left on site.
21. Should an existing plot holder request an additional plot, the Outdoor Services Manager will carry out an inspection of their existing plot to ensure it is being worked properly before agreeing to allow the plot holder to take on a further plot.
22. Tenants are permitted to gather socially on the allotments (when restrictions no longer apply) with their family and other allotment tenants but are not to bring non-allotment holders onto the allotments.
23. Any tenant found to be growing illegal substances on an allotment site will have their allotment tenancy terminated immediately and the Police informed. The limited consumption of alcohol on allotments, is allowed but no person shall become/be drunk. Anti-social behaviour is strictly prohibited. All reports of anti-social behaviour will be investigated and could result in the immediate termination of the tenancy agreement.
24. Tenants are required to observe any special conditions which the Council consider necessary to comply with conditions and/or covenants under which the Council holds the land together with any conditions the Council may consider it necessary to introduce for any other reason. (Allotment tenants will be given written notice when such conditions are introduced).

25. Small, occasional, family (or close friends) BBQs are allowed on the plot provided they take place within the plot boundary. BBQs should be small in size, similar to a small kettle BBQ on legs, and must always be supervised, extinguished, and disposed of in an environmentally friendly way. Only charcoal/briquette are to be used as a fuel on the BBQs.

The tenant of the plot where the BBQ is being used will be held solely responsible. The Council will not be held responsible for loss by accident, fire, theft, or damage from the Allotment Site. All food waste should be taken home and disposed of.

If these rules are not adhered to, the tenants right to hold a BBQ on their plot, will be revoked. The Council reserves the right to amend this rule at any time.”

26. From the 1st of April 2021, the maximum number of allotments a new tenant can have, is two.

27. Wildlife/Trail cameras are permitted on the Allotment plots, subject to Council written approval. Cameras must only cover the area of the tenant’s plot, with minimal intrusion onto the shared paths. Any privacy concerns must be respected. The Council’s ‘Wildlife Cameras Policy’ Applies. The Council reserves the right to retract this, should these rules not be adhered to. The Council reserves the right to request any footage recorded or saved for any purpose deemed necessary. Signs must be displayed on every plot with cameras informing visitors that cameras are present.

28. Any existing tenant can add another person as a co-tenant on their allotment tenancy, provided that:

- The request received by the Town Council is submitted by the original tenant, and includes all correct and up to date contact information of the proposed co-tenant, including name, address, telephone number and email address
- The proposed co-tenant agrees with the co-tenancy and as such, signs their own copy of the tenancy agreement. This will be contractually binding between Didcot Town Council and the co-tenant
- The annual rent would be the responsibility of both tenants

29. A co-tenant can only take on the tenancy as a sole tenant when:

- The original tenant has submitted written confirmation of their desire to terminate their allotment agreement to Didcot Town Council, and;
- That the co-tenant has been named on the tenancy for a period of at least TWO YEARS

Rules updated on 13th November 2023