

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET – 18 AUGUST 2010

A FRAMEWORK FOR ALLOTMENT PROVISION

Report by Depute Chief Executive / Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To seek approval for a Framework for Allotment Provision in East Ayrshire.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 On April 1st 2009, Cabinet approved both the Leisure and Cultural Strategy and the Open Space Strategy for East Ayrshire. Both documents make specific references to the need to investigate latent demand for allotments and community gardens and, if required, to consider the preparation of arrangements to address this.
- 2.2 Work on a framework for the provision of allotments commenced in 27th April 2009 when 30 Community Councils were sent a questionnaire seeking their views on allotments and potential local demand for allotment facilities. 8 of the 17 Community Councils responding supported the need for local allotments and stated that there would be local demand. In addition to consultation with Community Councils, it was established that the existing Allotment Group in Kilmarnock, based at New Mill Road, have a waiting list of people wanting allotments showing that there is current unmet demand in Kilmarnock.
- 2.3 To assist with the preparation of the framework, a specialist consultancy company, Ironside Farrar, was appointed to draw together information from East Ayrshire and across Great Britain to produce a document that provides both strategic direction for allotment provision and a practical guide to establishing and managing sustainable allotment sites that will be useful to any group wishing to develop allotment provision. The framework document is available on the Members' Portal. Details of Ironside Farrar's submission are available as a background paper to this report.
- 2.4 Within Scotland, local authorities are provided specific powers and obligations under the Allotments (Scotland) Acts 1892, 1950 and 1992. The Allotments Act is the key statutory tool for local authorities as regards allotments and sets out their duties in relation to allotment provision.
- 2.5 Under the Allotments (Scotland) Act Councils have powers to:
- acquire land through purchase or lease and to do so by agreement or through compulsory measures;

- improve the land acquired for allotments. This may be by enclosing the land, draining it, dividing it into allotments or creating approaches or roads; and
- make regulations as they consider appropriate to regulate the letting of allotments. This covers matters such as eligibility, size of allotments, conditions as to how they may be cultivated, rent, period of notice. Such regulations require to be put to public consultation and then to the Scottish Ministers for confirmation.

In addition, Councils are required to:

- make the allotment regulations known by such means as it *thinks* fit and provide to any local resident upon demand a free copy of the regulations;
- keep a register available for public inspection showing the details of (i) the tenancy, acreage and rent of each allotment and (ii) any unlet allotments; and
- provide an annual statement of accounts in respect of the city's allotment provision.

2.6 The 'Allotments in Scotland: Guidance Notes for Scottish Councils' (COSLA 2006) give further guidance on Councils' legislative powers to acquire, manage and develop land for the purpose of allotments.

2.7 It should be noted that the provision of ground for allotments is not an absolute obligation on the Council but, if required, there is a statutory entitlement to acquire suitable land for this purpose.

3. KEY ELEMENTS OF THE PROPOSED ARRANGEMENTS

3.1 The framework sets out arrangements for the development of allotment provision in East Ayrshire underpinned by an Action Plan divided into three strands:-

- Supporting the development of allotments as part of the overall green infrastructure of East Ayrshire.
- Supporting and facilitating a community managed allotment service.
- Encouraging and providing environmental sustainability and healthy living initiatives, through increasing consumption of home grown produce, and improved land management.

3.2 The framework provides both a strategic context for allotment development and practical guide for the roll out of sustainable allotment provision managed by community groups with appropriate constitutions and skills. In addition to the wider strategic context, the document also gives detailed guidance on devolved management structures; lease and tenancy agreements; allotment rents; design and facility provision; maintenance; and allotment associations. This guidance would be particularly useful to any group wishing to consider the development of allotment gardens in any community. New allotment groups will require support

across a range of matters and the document has been designed specifically to be a useful, practical guide to setting up, developing and managing successful allotment gardens.

- 3.3 While the statutory position has been laid out in paragraphs 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 above, it is envisaged that the Council would undertake an enabling role to support and encourage community groups to form allotment associations and set up sustainable allotment facilities. The level of support required for individual projects will vary but the Council's support may include access to suitable Council land, advice on management and organisational issues, and assistance with the identification of potential funding sources.
- 3.4 It should be noted that interest has also been expressed in allotments in Dunlop, Annanhill and Stewarton, and a community garden in Netherthird. These projects are currently the subject of discussions with community groups.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The framework document follows on from actions arising from the Leisure and Cultural Strategy and Open Space Strategy. The framework will enable the Council to respond to local demand for allotments and assist in meeting community needs and expectations, minimising the risk of dissatisfaction with services.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 There are no additional financial implications arising from the proposals and individual allotment sites; development proposals will require specific consideration as they arise. The framework document is based on the Council undertaking an enabling role to encourage a community led approach and this will not necessarily require direct financial input.
- 5.2 Ironside Farrar's fees for the research and production of the Framework for Allotment Provision were £8,580.

6. LEGAL AUTHORITY/IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Legal background to the provision of allotments is explained in paragraphs 2.5, 2.6 and 2.7 above.

7. POLICY/COMMUNITY PLANNING IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 East Ayrshire's Community Plan Vision states that East Ayrshire "*will be a place with strong, vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs.*"

Provision of allotments links to the main themes of the community plan, as follows:

- i. Promoting Lifelong Learning
- ii. Improving Community Safety
- iii. Improving Health & Well Being
- iv. Improving Community Regeneration

8. CONCLUSIONS

- 8.1 The framework document identifies the strategic context for support for allotment provision across East Ayrshire. Responses from Community Councils and other local groups indicate that there is some limited unmet demand for allotments, and Council support for a community led approach to allotments represents the most cost effective way of meeting this demand as the Council has limited resources available to develop this new area of service provision.
- 8.2 The framework document also provides practical information on the management and development of allotments which will be very useful for new groups approaching the Council for assistance with allotment or community garden projects.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 9.1 It is recommended that Cabinet:-
- (i) approves the Framework for Allotment Provision; and
 - (ii) otherwise notes the contents of the report.

Elizabeth Morton
Depute Chief Executive/Executive Director of Neighbourhood Services

EM/JAG/CF
11th August 2010

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

1. A Framework for Allotment Provision – Draft Report
2. Ironside Farrar Consultancy Submission
3. Summary of Consultation Responses

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East Ayrshire - A Framework for Allotment Provision



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800.2313

EAST AYRSHIRE COUNCIL – A FRAMEWORK FOR ALLOTMENT PROVISION

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A key recommendation of the East Ayrshire Open Space Strategy is to consider open space development for allotments and community gardens. The Open Space Strategy recommended that the latent demand for allotments and community gardens be investigated and that the development of a framework for allotment provision as part of the Open Space Strategy be considered should the demand require it.

Allotments have demonstrated an ability to facilitate and contribute to a wide spectrum of national and local plans and policies, related to enabling the move towards sustainable development, including:

- Community and social inclusion;
- Healthy living;
- Lifelong learning;
- Green space provision;
- Thriving biodiversity; and
- Increased awareness of sustainable issues (i.e. recycling).

This document sets down a framework so as to improve and enhance allotment provision and service in East Ayrshire based on the following three strands which are supported by a series of actions

- Support the development of allotments as part of the overall green infrastructure of East Ayrshire
- Support and facilitate Community Managed Allotment Services
- Encourage and Promote Environmental Sustainability and Healthy Living Initiatives

The framework outlines a management approach that should deliver best value to the Council and all residents who live within East Ayrshire when it comes to allotments. Responding to demand will be carried out in a spatial manner which means addressing locations of highest demand. These can be anticipated as the largest population centres and/or those with higher housing densities. We will facilitate and support new sites working closely with Community Planning Partners. We will also work with those members of the community who come together as a formal group and who have demonstrated they have reviewed, and taken on board, this Strategy and its advice and recommendations.

We will actively encourage the establishment of formally constituted allotment associations for new allotment gardens with the level of management decided between the Council and the individual association. These associations will manage their respective allotment gardens addressing all day-to-day issues relating to tenants, leases, rent collection, finance, maintenance and enforcement.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Allotment gardens play a unique role within communities, facilitating the delivery of sustainable, wide ranging benefits through hands on cultivation and food awareness. Allotments provide opportunities to socialise, exercise and harvest fresh fruit and vegetables that benefit healthy living, active lifestyles, help promote social inclusion and support local biodiversity and nature conservation. The potential of allotments to support such benefits has been recognised at both a national and local level in Scottish Government policy.

As acknowledged in the East Ayrshire Open Space Strategy, allotments and community gardens are valuable green spaces and community assets that can help improve people's quality of life by promoting healthy food, exercise and community interaction.

A key recommendation of our Open Space Strategy is to consider open space development for allotments and community gardens. The Open Space Strategy recommended that the latent demand for allotments and community gardens be investigated and that the development of a framework for allotment provision as part of the Open Space Strategy be considered should the demand require it. As a result this framework will:

- Set out the policy and legislative obligations required by East Ayrshire Council
- Review best practice, national standards and advice
- Determine the current allotment provision in East Ayrshire
- Address the demand for allotments
- Increase the benefits derived from allotments

1.1 Objectives

Our main objective is to develop a clear succinct framework that recognises the Council's role in facilitating and supporting allotment groups where demand exists and developing a phased approach to allotments provision based on need, best value, resources and site opportunity.

The framework for the provision of allotments sets out the Council's objectives to:

- Develop a clear framework on the delivery of allotments including an Action Plan for the implementation of the framework
- Better understand the levels of sustainable demand for allotments and growing spaces across the Council area
- Support Community-Led Allotment Gardens
- Support best practice and help enable local communities, allotment associations and other stakeholder groups to take a more active management role

The framework will enable and guide the development of a robust, cost effective management structure, which will enhance allotment provision over the period 2010 - 2015 with a review as per the Open Space Strategy.

As well as meeting the requirements of local and national policy (Appendix 1), this framework also fulfils the Council's obligations set down in the Allotments (Scotland) Act and the Land Settlement (Scotland) Act. In addition, the Strategic Value of allotments is set out in Appendix 2

Furthermore, this framework has the following beneficial effects on the Main Themes of the East Ayrshire Community Plan.

1) Promoting Lifelong Learning

- Lifelong learning opportunities with the proposed knowledge sharing and communities learning together enhance social cohesion
- Social inclusiveness also helps to strengthen communities, with many opportunities to share something of value across generations and across communities

2) Improving community safety

- Security can offer a sense of safety for site users and may encourage a more diverse spectrum of the local population including families, the elderly and vulnerable people. Additionally, security and access are often of significant importance not only to allotment holders, who spend large amounts of time on site, but also to potential new allotment gardeners.

3) Improving health & well being

- Allotments contribute to physical wellbeing by supporting a healthy lifestyle through the exercise they provide and the fresh, healthy produce to support a healthy balanced diet.
- Allotments also contribute to mental wellbeing, through the benefits of physical activity and from the nature of its social inclusiveness.

4) Delivering Community Regeneration

- Sustainability benefits in reducing carbon footprints through lowering food miles and through incorporation of ecologically aware practices and principles into the design and use of allotments
- Biodiversity benefits from the range of habitats supported by allotments
- Improved landscape quality
- Economic benefits through the provision of low cost fresh food

20 CONTEXT

21 Historic Context

Allotments were originally provided as land put aside to enable families to grow their own food and supplement their diets, during the late 1800's. Since this time both the provision and demand of allotments has fluctuated with prevailing social and economic conditions. Between 1920 - 1945 allotments helped overcome economic deprivation and food shortages with the number of plots in the UK reaching approximately 1.5million during the Second World War and the Dig for Victory campaign. During this time allotments were estimated to offer a production rate of close to 3million tonnes of fruit and vegetables a year. Post war years saw the popularity of allotments decline, largely due to greater national prosperity, with allotment numbers stabilising during the 1980-1990's.

Changing attitudes and a growing environmental awareness linked to quality of life has witnessed an increased awareness over the provenance of food, its agricultural treatment and the natural environment with a resultant increase in the popularity of allotments.

In Scotland understanding the changing levels of demand has been made difficult due to a lack of national data with allotments often classed by Local Authorities alongside other green spaces including parks, gardens and cemeteries. This is changing as authorities complete detailed Open Space Audits in accord with Scottish Planning Policy.

A 1999 survey by The Food Trust of Scotland estimated 4,000 to 4,500 allotment plots were in operation, two thirds of which were provided in the four cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen. This figure is down from the peak of 70,000 plots in Scotland during the Second World War which is mainly attributed to the allotments either reverting to their former use or being lost to housing or commercial development. A second more comprehensive survey, carried out by the Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society in 2007, indicated an increase in recorded allotment sites with the total number of individual plots estimated at 6,300.

22 Current East Ayrshire Demand & Provision

East Ayrshire Council has no detailed figures on current allotment demand across the main traditional towns, other smaller towns and villages. However, the Open Space Strategy does state public interest in allotments has undergone a recent revival in line with current thinking on healthy eating, organic food and exercise and this has created a greater demand for allotments in some areas. Current allotments provision exists in New Mill Road, Kilmarnock.

3.0 ALLOTMENT MANAGEMENT

3.1 Devolved Management Structure

To encourage plot holders to be more self-sufficient, increases their sense of ownership, and allow them to be creative in seeking funds for investment it is proposed that management responsibilities for the allotments be delegated to allotment associations. Devolved management is the practice of devolving a share of the responsibility for managing allotment sites to the allotment gardeners themselves. This approach is beneficial, especially when the number of allotment sites does not warrant the employment of a dedicated allotments officer.

Advantages / Disadvantages

Allotment owners will have a feel good factor of 'we did it ourselves', which will help increase morale on the site. Promotion of vacant plots can be more effective and maintenance work would be carried out more quickly when undertaken by the people who care the most about the site. Allotments Associations are often better placed than local authorities to raise funds and the retention of rents ensures that plotholders' cash is invested directly back into the allotment site.

However, if devolved management is accepted at the wrong place or with little support significant problems may arise. For example plotholders may stop turning up for meetings, plot inspections may not be undertaken, plots become abandoned and un-lettable and it ends up with one person becoming responsible for all the work and running of the site.

Stages of Devolved Management

The Fact Sheet 'Gardners in Charge - A Guide to Devolved Management for Allotment Associations'¹ prepared by the Allotment Regeneration Initiative gives advice on the stages of Devolved Management. It advises that devolvement can be either partial, or more or less total with the different stages of devolved management as set out below. It may be that some associations will have more experience and confidence than others and may be capable of managing at a more devolved level than others. It will be at the discretion of the Council and the individual allotment association in consultation with East Ayrshire Outdoor Amenities Section to decide which management structure best fits their needs.

Dependence

- The plot holders and association do not play any practical role in site management
- There may be a site representative who acts as informal contact point between the plotholders and the Council
- There is no written devolved management agreement between plotholders and the allotment authority

Participation

- There is a site representative and plotholders informally accept responsibility for minor maintenance works
- There might be a mechanism by which the plotholders or site representatives can be consulted on capital expenditure and repairs by the allotment authority
- There is no written devolved management agreement between the plotholders and the Council

<http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari/documents/gardenersincharge.pdf>

Delegation

- The allotment association accepts formal responsibility for a range of duties, which might include arranging tenancies and carrying out regular maintenance duties
- Financial agreements release a proportion of rental income for this purpose, but leave the Council to carry out repairs, pay for overheads such as water, and undertake all legal formalities
- A written devolved management agreement or licence between the association and the Council is held

Semi-Autonomy

- The allotment association leases the site from the Council, arranges tenancy agreements, collective rents and reinvests revenue (which it manages) on maintenance, repair and capital items
- Depending on the terms of the lease, ploholders may become the tenants of the association rather than of the Council. The Council retains defined oversight and strategic functions
- A written devolved management agreement between the association and the allotment is held.

Autonomy

- At a much later date and when the allotment gardeners have gained much more experience, the allotment association purchases the land and operates independently
- The association may change its legal status, for example to a company limited by guarantee
- There is formal devolved management agreement as the association is working alone

Getting Started

Devolved management needs to be backed up by a robust legal structure. Most allotments choose to become a formally constituted Unincorporated Association with an elected committee, President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer. A sample constitution can be found in Appendix 3. Associations may also want to appoint additional officers to deal with specific tasks e.g. promotion or maintenance. In the future when there are a number of allotments in the Council area, we would advise they team up and work together as a forum or a federation.

Key to Success

The following three areas are key to ensure that devolved management is a success for allotment sites:

Commitment

- Devolved management will not work unless there is sustained commitment from the association, individual plot holders and the Council
- All parties need to be partners in a clear reciprocal agreement. The Council will need to have reassurances that allotment associations will remain committed, reliable and responsible, even when membership changes. Equally ploholders needs continuing commitment from the Council even when staff, policies and politics change.
- It needs to be taken into consideration that devolved management is unlikely to work if opposed by significant minority of members. From the outset there

needs to be agreement about members' level of commitment. For some members this means a commitment to take an active role in running site, while for others commitment simply means supportive tolerance of the efforts of others.

Capacity

- Associations need to be capable of dealing with the tasks and issues that arise when managing their site. Simple practical measures will ensure that associations recognise what capacity the association has and where training gaps need to be filled
- Associations need to negotiate who is to undertake which tasks, with each individual agreeing to their part and not having to worry about what other people are doing.
- In areas where associations lack capacity, associations may be able to find the required training, a publication, or someone with advice to fill that gap². Although they are not obliged to provide any training the allotment association should be able to make their needs known to the Council.

Accountability

- Being democratic and transparent in all aspects of the site management is crucial for maintaining support from ploholders, the Council and local supporters. Democracy is needed for member buy-in and being transparent shows that all is fair.
- Communication is essential to making efforts accessible and open for everyone. There needs to be regular and simple communication of key information, i.e. dates of meetings, minutes and accounts. Some associations produce a report but it should be sufficient to produce written, photocopied, A4 sheets, which can be posted on site notice boards and under shed doors to help save on postage costs.
Copies of the above should also be sent to the Council.
- Constant discussion and letting members know what is happening is required or they may become disillusioned and enthusiasm may wane

²Allotment Regeneration Initiative has a free mentoring service that gives help and support at a local level to anyone creating or regenerating allotments. Contact details can be found at:
<http://www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari/mentors/mentor-contact-details.html>

32 Allotment Associations

An Allotment Association comprises a committee of plotheolders and is a formally constituted body. Devolvement of allotment management to an association is a process whereby the following responsibilities are passed over to the association in the form of an Allotment Association Constitution.

Responsibilities:

- Responsibility for attending an Allotments Forum;
- Co-ordinate site management and follow up plot inspections;
- Work with site Management Committees in seeking to raise external funding and to facilitate self management of sites;
- Regularly review the Tenancy Agreements;
- Develop active social and educational roles through links with schools and other community organisations. These roles can be encouraged through specific initiatives which integrate allotments within other strategies and programmes and foster allotments within the wider community;
- Drive forward future reforms and recommendations;
- Enforcement of the Tenancy Agreement (i.e. posting letters regarding unkempt plots and notices of termination)

- Prepare 6 monthly and Year End Reports to East Ayrshire on allotment condition and repairs where necessary and accounts, tenancy, used/vacant plot, waiting list figures, etc.

Establishing allotment associations in a consistent manner is paramount to standardising the quality of service across the council area. This method of management is beneficial, especially with regards to minimising costs to East Ayrshire Council and encouraging community buy-in. To establish an association a constitution must be drawn up, detailing the objectives, responsibilities, rules and policies of the association.

Partnerships

Partnerships or individual community organisations should be given the opportunity to engage with or even manage community allotment gardens and their associations. This practice is successful in a number of other local authority schemes (i.e. Edinburgh's Bridgend Allotments) and can involve organisations or charities including the local NHS services, housing associations, local schools, National Trust, Woodland Trust or Central Scotland Forest Trust. This form of community engagement draws interested parties to an allotment garden where the public can work collectively on plots reserved specifically for an organised purpose, such as activity plots for those in rehabilitation, plots for local primary school children or plots for life skills education.

Setting one standard for engaging with a variety of organisations is as important as setting standards for allotment associations. This ensures rules and regulations are not developed and applied on a case by case basis, resulting in inefficiencies and difficult management prospects.

4.0 EAST AYRSHIRE - A FRAMEWORK FOR ALLOTMENT PROVISION

The document sets down a framework so as to improve and enhance allotment provision and service. Current provision has been established in preceding sections providing baseline information on the current condition of allotments across the Council area.

The main strands of the framework are set out below, based on the aims and objectives from Section 1.0 and will seek to address contemporary allotment management best practice:

- **Support the development of allotments as part of the overall green infrastructure of East Ayrshire**
- **Support and facilitate Community Managed Allotment Services**
- **Encourage and Promote Environmental Sustainability and Healthy Living Initiatives**



4.1 SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALLOTMENTS AS PART OF THE OVERALL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE OF EAST AYRSHIRE

4.1.1 Assessing & Responding to Demand

There are no detailed figures on current allotment demand across the main traditional towns, other smaller towns and villages of East Ayrshire. Neither are there any agreed national levels of provision to judge what should be provided. Current allotments provision exists in New Mill Road, Kilmarnock.

Responding to demand will be carried out in a spatial manner which means addressing locations of highest demand. These can be anticipated as the largest population centres and/or those with higher housing densities. As a result we will focus on a hierarchy of towns as set out below. Consideration of the level of accessibility of new allotment sites to these local communities will also be a priority to seek as wide an audience as possible.

- Kilmarnock
- Cumnock
- Rural Towns & Village (e.g. Stewarton, New Cumnock, etc.)

We will facilitate and support new sites working closely with Community Planning Partners. We will also work with those members of the community who come together as a formal group and who have demonstrated they have reviewed, and taken on board, this framework and its advice and recommendations.

We intend within this framework to extend community participation and act as a facilitator in the management of allotment gardens and allotments service promoting site self management through allotment associations. Support for allotment associations will be provided by improving the appearance and availability of allotments and working with local communities, stakeholders, community partners and the associations themselves to promote good and best practice and effective communication and service delivery.

We will seek to support new allotments across the Council area and seek to increase the provision during the initial framework period where resources permit.

4.1.2 Lease & Tenancy Agreements

We will seek to support individual allotment associations through contractual lease agreements, which will stipulate the responsibilities and roles of each association, including the organisation of tenancy agreements (as described below), maintenance and finances. This will enable us to oversee the management of the Framework for Allotment Provision and maintain accurate records of allotment provision throughout the Council area for ongoing review.

Lease to the Association (lease for the whole site)

In order for the Council to support and encourage the development of allotment associations, reasonable/ affordable lease charges for allotment sites will be set, especially to assist the association in accommodating any losses in rental income when plots are left vacant. Affordable lease charges will enable associations to both cover their outgoings and reinvest surplus monies, received from the rent of plots, back into the maintenance and management of the garden.

Tenancy Agreement (between the allotment association and plot holder)

The Council is responsible for the registration and recording of allotment tenants as set out in the Allotments (Scotland) Act. A tenancy agreement is a formal document which covers issues such as payment of rent, sub-letting, maintenance of plots and buildings. These agreements also provide the necessary information required of the council records. A draft Tenancy Agreement is provided in Appendix 4.

As mentioned above and to develop a long term sustainable allotment service, we will develop a generic Tenancy Agreement and seek to delegate the responsibility of undertaking all administration relating to distribution, signing, collation and reporting of plot holder tenancy agreements to allotment associations.

We will:

- Support allotment associations on detailed management and leasing arrangements*
- Ensure reasonable lease charges are set and regularly reviewed to provide fair and sustainable leasing terms to allotment associations.*
- Prepare a standard tenancy agreement document to be distributed to each individual allotment association. The associations will ensure each plot holder signs this agreement.*
- Ensure accurate allotment records are maintained by delegating responsibility to allotment associations to record and report annually to the Council on occupancy rates and accounts. Subject to East Ayrshire Council ownership responsibility.*

4.1.3 Allotment Rents

Allotments require consistent levels of funding to invest in continual maintenance and management of existing sites and development of new sites. The funding has identified a number of improvements and actions that will require new levels of funding including significant improvements in material assets, administration and communication. The investment in allotments with only very limited rent returns make it imperative that they are properly managed. In determining allotment rents we will consider:

- The nature, quality and cost of facilities provided
- Expenditure on promotion and administration
- The present levels of rent and its historic tradition
- The likely effect of rent on plot take up

Rents depend on the size of plots and the number of facilities and services provided (as described in the allotment hierarchy in Appendix 5) but will not be excessive. Excessively high costs would discourage uptake of allotments by the most vulnerable groups in society, who stand to benefit the most from sustainable, affordable supplies of fresh fruit and vegetables, and the other benefits of allotment gardening.

Indicative plot rentals are provided in the following table and these should be reviewed on an annual basis to ensure they remain up-to-date.

Size of Allotment	Type of Plot	Size of Plots (m ₂)	Indicative Rent (£/annum)
Size A - 1-20 plots Small gardens with provision of basic facilities	Starter Plots	30 - 35	£10
	Small Plots	55 - 60	£15
	Medium Plots	125	£25
	Large (community) Plots	150-250	£60
Size B - 20+ plots Relatively large allotments providing a range of facilities including mains water.	Starter Plots	30 - 35	£12
	Small Plots	55 - 60	£20
	Medium Plots	125	£30
	Large (community) Plots	150-250	£70

Funding

We will pursue and seek to encourage allotment associations to bid for alternative streams of funding including sponsorship/ partnership from local organisations, Section 75 Agreements, fundraising events and external funding or grants which can often be applied for to fund specific improvement projects (These are detailed further in Section 5.2).

We will actively support and encourage mechanisms or initiatives to gain additional external funding for allotment gardens.

4.1.4 Design & Facility Provision

Quality allotments with appropriate security, ancillary facilities and services are vital in attracting new users and ensuring that sites operate at capacity. Additionally, security and access are often of significant importance not only to allotment holders, who spend large amounts of time on site, but also to potential new allotment gardeners. Security can offer a sense of safety for site users and may encourage a more diverse spectrum of the local population including families, the elderly and vulnerable people.

Thriving allotments can attribute their success to good design and facility provision, whereby considerate landscaping has created a community garden, by ensuring basic principles of a functioning allotment are provided. The overall aim is to draw people in by making them feel welcome.

Allotments provide health and social benefits but are often inaccessible for some groups that could benefit most. In order to improve access for those with disabilities and mental health needs the following principles set out by the Allotment Regeneration Initiative will be taken into account at all allotment sites; the need to do so is highlighted by the Disability Discrimination Act:

- Try to provide car parking close to plots and make plots nearest entrances available for people with mobility problems
- Ensure that gates are easy to open with handles that are accessible from wheelchairs
- Paths in allotments sites will be firm, non-slip, non-glare and level with turning space for wheelchairs
- Water supply should be provided close to plots, on level, firm ground and accessible from a wheelchair
- Meetings should be held accessible venues, whether on site or off site
- Ensure notices around the site should be clear, written in large letters and plain English. Simple pictorial signs may be easier to interpret for those with literacy problems. The needs for signs in different languages should also be considered if required
- A site free of hazards will reduce difficulties for all users. Due care should be taken to minimise hidden hosepipes, potholes, broken glass and uneven/unkept paths and encourage clearly labelled plots and boundaries
- Raised beds made waist high would make watering and tending to the plants easier for the old and weak by eliminating the need for bending over the plants.



Example of Raised Beds

Appendix 5 outlines a mechanism for providing facilities and amenities to allotments in relation to their size and provides a breakdown of the key elements which make a successful allotment site.

We will seek to support facility provision and consider all necessary design principles when considering proposals for new allotment gardens to ensure allotments are safe, welcoming, accessible and functional. Due regard will be paid to The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, Planning Advice Note (PAN) 78 and Scottish Planning Policy, which all promote the design of inclusive public spaces and environments that everyone can use.

4.1.5 Maintenance

Overgrown, weed ridden and unkempt allotments are a significant barrier to allotment uptake. Regular maintenance of facilities and vacant plots will avoid not only varying standards between allotment gardens but also repair backlogs, loss of functionality and general neglect.

We will encourage development of existing and new allotments and establish an effective maintenance regime across all allotment gardens to ensure they remain in an acceptable, welcoming and inclusive condition. Overall, an aesthetic and functional improvement will be experienced.

42 SUPPORT AND FACILITATE COMMUNITY MANAGED ALLOTMENT SERVICES

Allotments are essentially a community resource typically managed by allotment associations for the benefits of their members, which are in many areas supported through the local authority. We are keen to support allotment associations and help to bring the benefits and opportunity for food self-production and allotment gardening to as wide a number of active participants as possible.

We believe sustainable management of allotments is best delivered through partnership working with formally constituted allotment associations and other stakeholders and relevant bodies. We will work with local communities to support the formation of allotment associations based on existing and planned allotment provision and to work with local groups to establish open, inclusive access across the community.

4.2.1 Promoting Engagement

In order to address increasing levels of demand it is important to raise awareness and understanding. Information on all aspects including waiting list figures, allotment open/ training days and good practice gardening guides will all help to maintain motivation and encourage new members (see Appendix 6 for suitable content to be included within a good practice guide). Promotional initiatives are key to good communication and can often be organised by allotment members themselves, as they are best placed to act as champions of allotments within the community.

We will engage with the public and allotment interests on the Allotment Strategy and seek to secure support for the promotion of new facilities and encourage greater levels of interest and participation in conjunction with allotment associations.

4.2.2 Strategic Management

A number of strategic management options exist, and depending on available resources, the scale and number of allotments and the level of public or private participation, each option has individual advantages and disadvantages. In line with our commitment to develop a management method where we act as a facilitator, the devolved management approach will be developed. This approach is the most accommodating and the mechanism by which best value will be achieved through standardisation and efficiency. Section 3.0 describes the different management approaches, including the devolved management method.

To achieve devolved allotment administration standards, we will work with allotment associations to promote best practice allotment management.

4.2.3 Allotment Associations

Allotment associations are formally constituted bodies and are key to developing the devolved management approach. Importantly associations offer members of the local community to take ownership of their local allotment garden and manage the day to day administration and maintenance. This helps create a sense of ownership and pride amongst the community, whilst stimulating further investment and interest in allotments. The extent to which associations are formed will depend on the willingness of local volunteers to offer their time and expertise. A sensitive approach is necessary to encourage and support the development of associations.

Establishment of associations allows for the development of an enthusiastic and willing network within the community. The framework will seek to embrace this resource, organising, through the Steering Group, outlets for the promotion and championing of allotments within the community, by members of the community. Forging partnerships with organisations and charities and attendance of Galas by association members

would provide an outlet to demonstrate the benefits including healthy eating and lifestyle changes an allotment plot can offer.

The responsibilities of allotment associations and a draft allotments constitution are provided in Appendix 3.

The Council will encourage where possible the establishment of an allotment association for each allotment garden.

4.24 Allotment Federation/Forum

An Allotment Federation/Forum is proposed to represent all allotment associations and provide a forum for the associations and key stakeholder groups with the Council. This group would:

- Hold bi-annual forum meetings with the associations to consider the delivery of allotments and discuss issues of mutual interest;
- Coordinate activity between associations and the Council including publicity, allotment waiting lists, allotment availability and issues relating to management;
- Promote consultation and public engagement such as open days/ events where allotment information can be disseminated;

The Allotment Federation/Forum will act to share knowledge between experts and ploholders and facilitate the progression of this strategy in a structured manner.

To improve administration and efficiency and encourage the sharing of knowledge and skills we will encourage the development of a single East Ayrshire Allotments Federation including representatives from all allotment associations.

4.25 Garden Sharing

This is an initiative that will be setup linking people who have unused space in their gardens and are willing to share this with local committed growers. We will setup a listing of both growers and gardens that can be easily accessed on the Council webpages and where people can offer and request garden space. The service will aim to match and introduce committed enthusiastic growers with garden owners who want to see their gardens used more productively.

We will facilitate Garden Sharing and setup a database of gardens and growers on East Ayrshire Council website.

4.3 ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & HEALTHY LIVING INITIATIVES

Allotments provide a valuable network of green space which is of particular importance in developed areas where houses have small gardens and access to green space is limited. Across the UK, their importance as wildlife habitats is recognised in the designation of some allotments as wildlife sites or community nature reserves. In addition, allotments enable a reduction in carbon emissions as locally grown and harvested fruit and vegetables reduces reliance upon commercial fresh food and vegetables. Thus reducing 'food miles', processing and storage CO₂ emissions, supporting the principles outlined in the proactive Scottish Government Climate Change (Scotland) Bill.

Links with schools will also be sought where resources permit. Gardening and growing foods is both healthy and educational for children who could be supported by volunteers from allotments to grow their own produce at the school. Children could visit allotments to get an understanding where food comes from. It could range from one school and a few volunteers to a cluster of schools and lots of different volunteers.

The Council is committed to ensure that areas of land devoted to allotment gardens are managed in a manner which enhances community sustainability. In addition, the strategy seeks to embrace opportunities that will educate and encourage a move towards sustainable methods of gardening, recycling and water consumption. Links with schools will also be sought where resources permit to help promote allotments and the benefits they provide.

4.3.1 Biodiversity

Allotments offer significant opportunity to promote local biodiversity and ensure open spaces are managed to support key target species and offer habitat for endangered species particularly breeding birds. In line with the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004 the Framework for Allotment Provision seeks to '*further the conservation of biodiversity*' within East Ayrshire.

Allotments also provide the opportunity to educate and stimulate the learning of new life skills. Practices which benefit the environment are equally important to habitat creation and conservation. The diversity within allotments will help in demonstrating the important principles of sustainable gardening, through, for example, the links between the use of pesticides and the immediate effect on biodiversity on site.

Encouraging positive management for biodiversity with allotment associations and promoting dialogue between members and the Council's LBAP Officer will help meet the requirements set out within the Local Biodiversity Action Plan.

Supporting delivery of biodiversity targets within allotments and through allotment associations.

4.3.2 Composting

Composting vegetative waste within allotment gardens is a simple yet effective method for reducing the quantities of waste, creating a free source of organic fertiliser and soil conditioner and providing a habitat for a number of species of invertebrates, reptiles and small mammals.

Actively promote, support and ensure the development and maintenance of, allotment composting facilities for each allotment garden.

50 THE ACTION PLAN

A series of 32 Action Areas are detailed in response to the three themes of the framework. These actions will act as a plan to guide the process of managing and implementing the Strategy over the next 5 years. Anticipated outcomes from the Action Plan include:

- Sustainable allotments
- Promotion and encouragement to individual and communities interested in becoming involved in the cultivation of allotment gardens
- Efficient and appropriate allocation of resources
- Equal opportunities
- Educational opportunities
- Improve social inclusion
- Development of good environmental practices (e.g. recycling, composting, organic gardening, etc)

SUPPORT AND FACILITATE COMMUNITY MANAGED ALLOTMENT SERVICES				
	ACTION AREA	GOAL	TIMESCALES	PROGRESS / COMMENTS
01	We will adopt the framework and implement the proposed key actions over the next 5 years			
02	We will monitor the progress of the framework's key actions on an annual basis			
03	A review of the framework will be undertaken every 5 years			
04	Maintaining records on local demand for new allotment plots through implementing promotional initiatives that emphasise benefits, including for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> An East Ayrshire Council website link with allotment updates (i.e. details of waiting lists and, tenancy agreements); <input type="checkbox"/> Public notice boards on site; <input type="checkbox"/> Publication of an Allotment Good Practice Guide (see Appendix 6) for distribution amongst existing and prospective plot holders. Including 	Engage with the public and allotment interests on the framework and seek to secure support for the promotion of new facilities and encourage greater levels of interest and participation in conjunction with allotment associations.		

	<p>the following topics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Site safety o Description of good practice in terms of plot cultivation and site management o References for further information o Contacts for the site association and an explanation of their role <p>Requirements of the lease, inspection arrangements and the procedures for termination.</p>			
05	We will support and facilitate events which encourage engagement and consultation	Encourage greater levels of interest and participation in allotments		
06	Develop a consistent approach to engaging with new and existing partnership organisations and initiatives and actively explore avenues for establishing potential partners, including Scottish Gardens and Allotment Society.	Encourage greater levels of interest and participation in allotments		
07	Facilitate Garden Sharing and setup database of gardens and growers on East Ayrshire Council website.	Encourage greater levels of interest and participation in allotments		
08	We will work with allotment associations to standardise their allotment management model across East Ayrshire to reflect the devolved management approach	To achieve devolved allotment administration standards (See Section 3.1)		
09	Prepare a generic Allotment Association Constitution for new and existing allotment associations	Establishment of an allotment association for each allotment garden.		
10	Actively encourage and facilitate the formation of allotment associations and partnerships across the council area. Through initiatives such as web based forums that support a network of people and organisations to enable the sharing of knowledge, formation of groups and the development of associations	Establishment of an allotment association for each allotment garden.		
11	We will work with each individual allotment association to determine what level of devolved	Establishment of an allotment association for each allotment garden.		

	<p>management it shall operate under. It is envisaged by the end of the first five years of the strategy each association will have reached a level of autonomy.</p>			
<p>12</p>	<p>Ensure effective communication and improvement in customer services through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Establishing a working group from allotment association representatives <input type="checkbox"/> Actively supporting the Allotment Working Group to communicate with allotment associations and tenants <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting and recognising site representatives <input type="checkbox"/> Improving the quality of customer service through identifying lead contact at the Council. 	<p>Encourage the development of a single East Ayrshire Working Group including representatives from all allotment associations.</p>		

SUPPORT THE DEVELOPMENT OF ALLOTMENTS AS PART OF THE OVERALL GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE OF EAST AYRSHIRE				
	ACTION AREA	GOAL	TIMESCALES	PROGRESS / COMMENTS
13	To set and retain a figure for allotment provision across East Ayrshire	Facilitate and support new allotments across the Council area and seek to increase the provision during the initial strategy period where resources permit		
14	To ensure that new or revised Structure Plans / Local Plan / Local Development Plans consider allotment provision and protection	Facilitate and support new allotments across the Council area and seek to increase the provision during the initial strategy period where resources permit		
15	To consider all applications for new allotment gardens	Facilitate and support new allotments across the Council area and seek to increase the provision during the initial strategy period where resources permit		
16	Encourage Allotment Associations to become a member of a national allotment organisation and to take part in national projects which raise the profile of allotments	Facilitate and support new allotments across the Council area and seek to increase the provision during the initial strategy period where resources permit		
17	Ensure an up to date GIS map of allotment provision is developed and maintained	Facilitate and support new allotments across the Council area and seek to increase the provision during the initial strategy period where resources permit		
18	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Support allotment associations on detailed management and leasing arrangements <input type="checkbox"/> Ensure reasonable lease charges are set and regularly reviewed to provide fair and sustainable leasing terms to allotment associations <input type="checkbox"/> Delegate responsibility of allotment records to allotment associations with associations reporting annually to East Ayrshire Council on occupancy rates and accounts. (Subject to 	Enable local communities, allotment associations and other stakeholder groups can take a more active management role		

	Council ownership responsibility)			
19	Develop a clear and succinct Allotment Tenancy Agreement for distribution to managing allotment associations. Ensure associations report annually to us on occupancy rates and financial accounts were applicable. (Each association will ensure each plotholder signs this agreement)	Enable local communities, allotment associations and other stakeholder groups can take a more active management role		
20	Encourage allotment associations to effectively collect rents and promptly re-allocate vacant plots. This will assist in increasing revenue, the latter by increasing the proportion of plots in cultivation.	As Enable local communities, allotment associations and other stakeholder groups can take a more active management role		
21	Encourage associations to run allotment fundraising events to support their future investments	Actively support and encourage mechanisms or initiatives to gain additional external funding for allotment gardens		
22	Provide Allotment Associations with information on funding bodies that offer grants relating to allotments / community projects	Actively support and encourage mechanisms or initiatives to gain additional external funding for allotment gardens		
23	All allotment gardens will be designed as either a Local or Town allotment to apply the standards as described in Appendix 6 of the Allotment Framework	Improve facility provision and consider all necessary design principles when considering proposals for new allotments to ensure they are safe, welcoming and functional.		
24	Individual associations will be encouraged to undertake annual inspections of each site to identify underutilisation and maintenance issues.	Improve facility provision and consider all necessary design principles when considering proposals for new allotments to ensure they are safe, welcoming and functional.		
25	Assist in the assessment of suitable site for allotment gardens	Encourage development of new and existing allotments and establish an effective maintenance regime across all allotment gardens to ensure they remain in an acceptable, safe, welcoming and inclusive condition.		
26	Encourage allotment associations to manage allotments effectively and engage with local voluntary organisations that may be able to offer a low cost maintenance	Encourage development of new and existing allotments and establish an effective maintenance regime across all allotment gardens to ensure they remain in an acceptable, safe, welcoming and inclusive condition.		

ENCOURAGE AND PROMOTE ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY & HEALTHY LIVING INITIATIVES				
	ACTION AREA	GOAL	TIMESCALES	PROGRESS / COMMENTS
27	Encourage natural features and native vegetation and habitats to be maintained and integrated into existing and new gardens	Ensure that areas of land devoted to allotment gardens are managed in a manner which enhances community sustainability and supports local biodiversity. In addition, the strategy seeks to		
28	Seek links with local schools where sources permit to help promote allotments and the benefits they provide (i.e. fresh air and exercise, providing fresh fruit and vegetables, etc.).	Embrace opportunities that will educate and encourage a move towards sustainable methods of gardening, recycling and water consumption.		
29	Facilitate schools and further education establishments should they wish to use allotments as part of a curriculum or course.	Embrace opportunities that will educate and encourage a move towards sustainable methods of gardening, recycling and water consumption.		
30	Encourage and (where possible) support good environmental practice including organic alternatives to fertilisers and pesticides. This will include technical advice and assistance with composting techniques and organisation (e.g. communal composting).	Supporting delivery of biodiversity targets within allotments and through allotment associations		
31	Seek to develop face to face support and demonstration projects, drawing where possible on the expertise of existing allotment plot holders	Supporting delivery of biodiversity targets within allotments and through allotment associations		
32	Provide technical advice and financial support for materials to construct and maintain composting compartments. Ensure composting is actively encouraged and explained through inclusion in good practice guides and promotional materials	Actively promote, support and ensure the development and maintenance of, allotment composting facilities for each allotment garden.		

5.1 Implementation

Upon adoption of the framework we will endeavour to successfully implement the proposed actions.

In order to ensure the framework is consistently improving both allotment services and facilities across the council area, an appropriate review and monitoring schedule should be established. Progress can be established through review of the key actions of the framework on an annual basis and the document as a whole should be reviewed every 5 years

5.2 Funding

The main sources of external funding and details of grants most relevant for allotment projects are set out below. The below list is not exhaustive and it is important to note that new funding opportunities arise at various times and Allotment Associations will be encouraged to bid for these where possible.

Organisation	Grant Details	Contacts
Awards for All	Awards for All gives grants of between £500 and £10,000 for people to take part in art, sport and community activities, and projects that promote education, the environment and health in the local community.	0845 600 2040 for the regional office www.awardsforall.org.uk
Age Concern	General Grant: to support member groups in the development of new or existing projects for older people at a local level. The maximum grant amount will normally be up to £2000. Small Equipment Grants: to give financial assistance to groups who wish to purchase equipment or material to support activities for older people. The maximum grant amount will normally be up to £500	grantsunit@ace.ork.uk www.agesource.org.uk
B&Q Better Neighbourhood Grants	Grow your own: projects which will grow produce and involve the local community. Examples of activity might include creating a community allotment or raised vegetable beds in a school. The scheme provides £50 to £250 (at retail cost) of B&Q materials	www.diy.com/grants
The Co-operative Group Community Fund	Grant is for between £100 and £2,000. For a newly formed group (less than three months) the maximum can be applied for is £500.	0161 827 5879 customer.relations@co-op.co.uk

Community Food and Health Small Grant Scheme	Community Food and Health (Scotland) has an annual small grants scheme available for groups and agencies in Scotland who wish to improve access to, and take up of a healthy, varied and balanced diet. Grants from £500 to £4000 are available and grant recipients are expected to spend their grant money within one year. The small grant scheme opens in the spring and closes in the early summer. Successful applicants usually receive their grants by the autumn.	http://www.communityfoodandhealth.org.uk/funding/smallgrants.php
In Kind Direct	Distributes surplus goods from industry to voluntary organisations throughout the UK	0207 860 5927 www.inkinddirect.org.uk
Climate Challenge Fund	Grants are available to empower communities to take action to reduce their carbon footprint and make a real difference to the local and national environment by significantly reducing their carbon emissions. There is no set grant amount, no minimum, but a £1m maximum.	http://www.infoscotland.com/gogreener/33.html
People's Postcode Trust	People's Postcode Trust provides funding opportunities to small organisations, community groups and charities, through grants ranging from £500 - £10,000. (CHARITIES UP TO £10K AND NON-CHARITIES UP TO £2K). Eligible funding includes; promotion and advancement of environmental protection or improvement - also Health	0131 555 7287 www.postcodetrust.org.uk
Ayrshire Leader	Financial assistance is available through the Ayrshire LEADER programme for projects and activity that will contribute to the development of the rural community and rural economy in Ayrshire. There is a total fund of £3.38m for the Ayrshire LEADER programme for 2007-2013 Grants can fund a maximum of 50% of total eligible project costs. Funding is provided at the minimum rate for the project to proceed. The two themes are Building Rural Capacity and Revitalising Rural Communities. *LEADER focuses on rural settlements with a population of less than 10,000.	Sarah Baird - LEADER co-ordinator - 01292 673765 www.ayrshire-leader.com
Scottish Rural Development Programme	The SRDP is a £1.6 billion programme of economic, environmental and social measures designed to develop rural Scotland over the next six years. Individuals and groups may seek support to help deliver the Government's strategic objectives in rural Scotland. Measures will be delivered through: <input type="checkbox"/> Crofting Counties Agricultural Grant Scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Food Processing, Marketing and Co-operation Grant Scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Forestry Commission Challenge Funds <input type="checkbox"/> The LEADER initiative	The programmes which underpin the SRDP have their own individual application processes: Leader, Woodland in and around Towns, Forestry for People. See website for further details: www.scotland.gov.uk/topics/farmingrural/SRDP

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Less Favoured Area Support Scheme <input type="checkbox"/> Rural Development Contracts <input type="checkbox"/> Skills Development Scheme. <p>Individuals and groups may seek support to help deliver the Government's strategic objectives in rural Scotland.</p>	
Score Environment	<p>EB Scotland and Score Environment are both environmental bodies registered under the Landfill Tax Regulations to operate within the Landfill Communities Fund (LCF). Since 1997 the companies worked to a general policy of supporting excellent projects which either enhanced society's management of waste or enhanced community assets. The companies merged as of April 2006 and the new entity is now known as EB Scotland Limited t/a Score Environment.</p> <p>Min/Max grant details not available</p> <p>Category A:</p> <p>The reclamation, remediation or restoration, or any other operation that facilitates the economic, social or environmental use of land where it has been prevented or restricted because of previous use. A site need not be contaminated to qualify for contributions. The creation of new wildlife habitats or public parks; redevelopment; or, other environmental or amenity improvements; are examples of projects that would qualify for contributions. No benefit must accrue to any person who carried out or knowingly permitted the previous use.</p>	<p>Score Environment 176 Bath Street Glasgow G2 4HG Tel: 0141 332 8460 Fax: 0141 331 0518 e-mail: web@score-environment.co.uk</p> <p>www.score-environment.co.uk</p>
East Ayrshire Council - Community Grant	<p>East Ayrshire Council offers a wide range of small grants to voluntary organisations as well as, in some instances, grants for business.</p>	<p>Contact East Ayrshire Council - Democratic Services Department on 01563 576000</p> <p>www.east-ayrshire.gov.uk</p>
Scottish Natural Heritage	<p>Scotland's natural heritage underpins our economy, our health, our education, our well-being. A healthy environment leads to healthy people and a healthy economy. Their mission is based on a simple principle: we must care for and sustain our natural heritage if we want it</p>	<p>19 Wellington Square, Ayr, KA7 1EZ Tel: 01292 261392 Fax: 01292 269493</p>

	<p>to sustain us. Our role is to look after the natural heritage, help people to enjoy and value it, and encourage people to use it sustainably.</p> <p>Supporting stronger communities. Attractive and safe green spaces, path networks and local landscapes in and around our towns help to improve people's quality of life and provide opportunities for volunteering on local community projects. SNH established Greenspace Scotland to promote improvements in green spaces in towns and cities, with these providing the space for healthier and more relaxing lifestyles. We fund BTCV and CSV to provide volunteer opportunities to people and communities across Scotland.</p> <p>Due to the competitive nature of our grants, our 2010-11 grant funding has already been allocated. Therefore our grant programme is currently unable to fund any new applications in 2010 for both our existing under £10K and £10K and over grant categories. As a result, our expected 15 April deadline for £10K and over projects has been postponed for 2010. For further information on when to submit an application, please refer to the categories below:</p> <p>£10K and over applications</p> <p>In light of the decision to postpone the 15 April 2010 deadline, we do not expect any applications to be submitted at this time. However, any applications received will be entered onto our system but no decisions will be taken until after the new deadline (still to be announced) and if further funding becomes available. We hope to update you on the next application submission date for this grant category, likely to be held early summer 2010, by the end of April.</p> <p>Under £10K applications</p> <p>Applications for this grant category are normally submitted at any time of year. You can still submit your application however, in light of the current funding situation, any applications received will be entered onto our system but no decisions will be taken until further funding becomes available.</p> <p>Please note that, in the event that further funding becomes available, decisions to fund will be based on how well the project supports SNH's new grant priorities and</p>	<p>www.snh.org.uk</p>
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	the outputs it will deliver.	
Cumnock and Doon Valley Minerals Trust	<input type="checkbox"/> Awards grants between £500 - £75,000 Sustainable community projects which benefit residents from settlements within the former coalfields of the Cumnock and Doon Valley	Quarterly - contact Ken Robinson, Programme Administrator on 01292 317150 for dates and detailed criteria
The Coalfields Trust	<input type="checkbox"/> Awards of between £10,000 and £100,000 can be awarded from the main grants programme. CRT will support projects that fit into one or more of the following funding themes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Employment <input type="checkbox"/> Education and Skills <input type="checkbox"/> Health and Wellbeing <input type="checkbox"/> Access to Opportunities. 	The current funding programme runs from 1 April 2008 and will close on the 31 March 2011. Contact address: 2/6 The e-centre, Cooperage Way Business Centre, Cooperage Way, Alloa FK10 3LP
Other corporate grants	Other banks, businesses and supermarkets may have national grant awarding trusts, which may run relevant schemes. Local stores and branches may also run small grant schemes but these are rarely relevant to allotments; however they may donate goods or produce.	

APPENDIX 1 - POLICY & LEGISLATION

1.0 POLICY

The National Performance Framework (NPF) provides the overarching focus for national and local strategy through setting strategic objectives, national outcomes, indicators and targets.

Specifically the provision of allotments is guided by national and local policies. At a national level, acknowledgement of the value of allotments to the quality of people's lives and the environment is reflected within the newly consolidated SPP. This advises that Local authorities have a statutory duty to provide allotments where there is proven demand. Existing, and where relevant potential, allotment sites should be safeguarded in the development plan that access to good quality open spaces and opportunities for sport and recreation make important contributions to a healthier Scotland. Access to good quality open spaces can encourage people to be physically active and aid health and wellbeing. The planning system has a role in helping to create an environment where physical wellbeing is improved and activity made easier.

In terms of National Heritage, the SPP states that all public bodies, including planning authorities, have a duty to further the conservation of biodiversity under the Nature Conservation (Scotland) Act 2004, and this should be reflected in development plans and development management decisions. Biodiversity is important because it provides natural services and products that we rely on, is an important element of sustainable development and makes an essential contribution to Scotland's economy and cultural heritage.

Despite these national policies, at a local level, in Scotland, there is an inconsistent approach to management of allotments. The Finding Scotland's Allotments 2007 report by Scottish Allotments & Gardens Society found only one local authority has produced an Allotment Strategy; and Glasgow and Edinburgh are the only two local authorities which hold a policy relating specifically to allotments within their Local Plans. These figures are known to have changed for the better with a number of local councils now developing and implementing allotment strategies.

Structure Plan

The Ayrshire Joint Structure Plan (Approved November 2007) policy ENV 4 states that the three Ayrshire Councils shall develop a green network for Ayrshire, while Schedule 1 of the Structure Plan states:

- Recreational and amenity open space will be safeguarded and enhanced
- Sites for local community needs will be identified and promoted

Local Plans

There is no direct policy relating to open space protection in the Adopted East Ayrshire Local Plan, however Paragraph 6.21 does that *'the Council will ensure that, in all instances, open space is provided in the context of the recreational and amenity needs of the wider area, is provided in the optimal locations and meets any identified deficiencies in existing supply'*

East Ayrshire Community Plan

East Ayrshire's Community Plan Vision states that East Ayrshire *will be a place with strong, vibrant communities where everyone has a good quality of life and access to opportunities, choices and high quality services which are sustainable, accessible and meet people's needs*" with 6 main themes to help deliver the Community Plan.

The Framework for Allotment Provision has the following beneficial effect on the Main Themes of the Plan.

1) Promoting Lifelong Learning

- Lifelong learning opportunities with the proposed knowledge sharing and communities learning together enhance social cohesion
- Social inclusiveness also helps to strengthen communities, with many opportunities to share something of value across generations and across communities

2) Improving community safety

- Security can offer a sense of safety for site users and may encourage a more diverse spectrum of the local population including families, the elderly and vulnerable people. Additionally, security and access are often of significant importance not only to allotment holders, who spend large amounts of time on site, but also to potential new allotment gardeners.

3) Improving health & well being

- Allotments contribute to physical wellbeing by supporting a healthy lifestyle through the exercise they provide and the fresh, healthy produce to support a healthy balanced diet.
- Allotments also contribute to mental wellbeing, through the benefits of physical activity and from the nature of its social inclusiveness.

4) Improving Community Regeneration

- Sustainability benefits in reducing carbon footprints through lowering food miles and through incorporation of ecologically aware practices and principles into the design and use of allotments
- Biodiversity benefits from the range of habitats supported by allotments
- Improved landscape quality
- Economic benefits through the provision of low cost fresh food

Leisure and Cultural Strategy

Set within the context of the Best Value Framework, the strategy outlines East Ayrshire Council's commitment to providing high quality, creative and cost effective services that the needs and aspirations of the various communities of East Ayrshire.

The Strategy shows how leisure and cultural activities are important to the delivery of the Community Plan and highlights through various action plans how the Council intend to deliver leisure and cultural services over a period of 3 years. Furthermore, the Strategy will also show the contributions that leisure and culture make to the Scottish Government's programme for government objectives: Wealthier and Fairer; Smarter; Healthier; Safer and Stronger; and Greener. The framework's contribution to these objectives is summarised above.

Under the Strategy one of the aims of Outdoor Amenities is to investigate the development of allotments, which this framework has aimed to achieve

Single Outcome Agreement

East Ayrshire Community Planning Single Outcome Agreement sets out the outcomes that reflect local needs, circumstances and priorities relevant to the national outcomes, underpinned by a range of national indicators. The frameworks contribution to these outcomes is summarised above.

East Ayrshire Open Space Strategy

The Open Space Strategy recognises that allotments and community gardens are valuable green spaces and community assets that can help improve people's quality of life by promoting healthy food, exercise and community interaction. Public interest in allotments has undergone a recent revival in line with current thinking on healthy eating, organic food and exercise. This has created a greater demand for allotments in some areas, which is critical to protecting them from a change of use in the future as a consequence of disuse or dereliction.

The Open Strategy further advises that East Ayrshire Council will protect existing allotments and community gardens and support the development of allotments and community gardens as part of sustainability and healthy living initiatives. The Council will investigate the latent demand for allotments and community gardens and will consider the development of a framework for allotment provision as part of the Open Space Strategy should the demand require it.

20 LEGISLATION

Legislation regarding allotment provision and protection varies across the UK. Local authorities in England and Wales are required to gain ministerial approval for disposal of allotments, but in Scotland and Northern Ireland there is no such legal obligation.

Despite the lack of statutory duty for the disposal of allotment sites, within Scotland, local authorities are provided specific powers and obligations under the Allotments (Scotland) Acts 1892, 1950 and 1992 and the Land Settlement (Scotland) Act 1919. The Allotments Act is the key statutory tool for local authorities as regards allotments and sets out their duties in relation to allotment provision.

The 1892 Act sets out local authorities' duties in relation to allotment provision. "Allotment" is defined by size, to a maximum total area of one acre, enabling an allotment holder to keep farm animals.

The 1922 Act introduced the concept of the allotment garden - a smaller area of ground to be used mainly for the cultivation of vegetables for consumption by the allotment holder and his/her family. The current use of the term 'allotment' should properly be 'allotment garden'.

Under the Allotments (Scotland) Act Councils have powers to:

- acquire land through purchase or lease and to do so by agreement or through compulsory measures;
- improve the land acquired for allotments. This may be by enclosing the land, draining it, dividing it into allotments or creating approaches or roads; and
- make regulations as they consider appropriate to regulate the letting of allotments. This covers matters such as eligibility, size of allotments, conditions as to how they may be cultivated, rent, period of notice. Such regulations require to be put to public consultation and then to the Scottish Ministers for confirmation.

Councils are required to:

- make the allotment regulations known by such means as it *thinks* fit and provide to any local resident upon demand a free copy of the regulations;
- keep a register available for public inspection showing the details of (i) the tenancy, acreage and rent of each allotment and (ii) any unlet allotments; and
- provide an annual statement of accounts in respect of the city's allotment provision.

The legislation makes provision for the termination of allotment leases,

- where the Council wishes to terminate the tenancy of land used as allotment; it *must* give the tenant a minimum of twelve months notice to expire on or before 1st May or 1st November in any year;
- where the allotments are ON land leased to the Council for the purpose of subletting for use as allotments, *the* Council is also subject to the statutory provisions for termination; and
- The lessor may also terminate the tenancy by resuming possession in the event of irritancy of the lease through a breach by the tenant of the allotment regulations.

'Allotments in Scotland: Guidance Notes for Scottish Councils' (COSLA 2006) give further guidance on Councils' legislative powers to acquire, manage and develop land for the purpose of allotments.

APPENDIX 2 - STRATEGIC VALUE OF ALLOTMENTS

APPENDIX 2 - STRATEGIC VALUE OF ALLOTMENTS

Allotments are recognised for their ability to facilitate and contribute to a wide spectrum of national and local plans and policies that support the move towards sustainable development.

Allotment gardening is an enjoyable, engaging activity that supports and sustains community activity and can meaningfully address economic deprivation and support more active communities and well-being. Community, social inclusion and solidarity, healthy living, lifelong learning, green space provision, biodiversity and recycling are all important benefits associated with thriving allotments. Allotments are important for good and low cost food production; they are havens for wildlife and provide valuable recreational opportunities involving healthy activity and social contact as detailed below.

Social Benefits

- **Healthy Living** - Allotments provide the opportunity for year-round physical exercise and social interaction whilst producing fresh fruit and vegetables which help improve lifestyle qualities, reflecting the ideals of sustainability and well being, not only do these benefit the plot holder but also family and friends. Additionally, the NHS has developed connections with local allotment sites where GPs prescribe patients to take up a plot with the intention of them benefiting from the associated social interaction and exercise;
- **Social Interaction** - Allotments foster community development and cohesiveness. Examples include allotment associations that show a commitment to their communities through organising open days and social events; those who tend to allotments often establish a community of people who interact, a benefit to everyone on site, in particular for individuals who would otherwise be isolated including the elderly, unemployed or those with mental ill health; and
- **Education** - Sites enable the local community to learn and develop new life skills. In particular, many allotments now reserve plots specifically for schools or youth/ adult training schemes. Additionally, allotments are a good example of the principles of sustainable waste management.

Environmental Benefits

- **Biodiversity** - The natural allotment characteristics and gardening practices used within allotment sites plays a significantly active role in protecting and promoting biodiversity. The majority of fruiting trees, shrubs and vegetation commonly found on allotment sites depend on insect pollination whilst, at the same time, offering foraging and roosting habitat suitable for a wide variety of birds and mammals. Combined with organic practices commonly employed by plot holders, allotments can support a significant ecosystem, with particular benefit in built up areas where there may otherwise be an absence of cultivated green space;
- **Environment** - Allotments can result in a reduction in levels of energy and material consumption used for processing, packaging and distributing food, reducing food-miles and bringing organic and non-industrialised food production to communities without penalty of cost or choice. Recycling of materials, composting, community resource sharing all bring benefits for reduced environmental waste and lower emissions.
- **Sustainability** - Allotments make a contribution to sustainability by promoting and facilitating the opportunities to act locally and better appreciate and understand our environment and the impact and implications of lifestyle choices. Allotments help to promote a range of sustainable activities including composting, rain water harvesting and organic cultivation.

Economic Benefits

- **Productive Activity** - Allotments provide for food production offering opportunity for personal and group production of low cost fresh food and vegetables with economic, social and environmental benefits. Productive activity assists the non-productive/under-employed and unemployed to take more active roles and offers carers, voluntary and support sectors new additional routes for engagement and supports peer working and collaboration across a broad social mix.

APPENDIX 3 - DRAFT ALLOTMENT CONSTITUTION

APPENDIX 3 - DRAFT ALLOTMENT CONSTITUTION**Allotment Association**
CONSTITUTION (Date:)**1. NAME**

The Association shall be known as Allotments Association (hereinafter "the Association").

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Association shall be:

- a) to manage and supervise Allotments (within the location: area) for the benefit of the Members of the Association, in accordance with the Association's Rules and Regulations and in accordance with the Association's General Rules and Conditions of Let.
- b) to promote by whatever means agreed by the Membership, the suitable provision of Allotments in the East Ayrshire area.
- c) to provide, by whatever means agreed by the Membership, support for the plotheolders and opportunities for the public to learn about Allotments and their cultivation. In pursuit of these Objects, the Association shall be non-political, non-sectarian and non-racial.

3. MEMBERSHIP & FEES

- a) Membership shall be confined to persons who are resident in East Ayrshire and whose fees are fully paid by the due date, and who undertake to cultivate their Allotment in accordance with the Associations Rules and Regulations
- b) The due date for the payment of fees is normally the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or within 4 weeks of the AGM, at the Committee's discretion.
- c) The Annual Association Membership Fee shall be determined at the previous year's AGM. Members will be notified of any proposed changes in Fee, at least four weeks prior to the AGM. In addition to the Association Membership Fee, members pay an Annual Rent to the Association. Changes in the Annual Rent will be notified to members in advance of the AGM, but are not open to alteration by the AGM.
- d) It is permissible for an Allotment lease to be in the names of two eligible persons. Where a lease is in the names of two persons, the registered addressee must be a member of the Association, but it is permissible for the second person also to be a member. When the second person has paid a membership fee, he/she will be sent Association communications, have full voting rights at the AGM and be eligible for election to the Committee. It is not permissible for two of the Association's office bearers to be joint lessees of a plot.
- e) If a plotheolder wishes to introduce a second eligible person to the lease, they shall inform the Secretary. After a period of three years, or at the discretion of the Secretary, the second person would assume continuity rights as in 3d.
- f) The Association's Waiting List will be maintained in a strict, consecutive manner, by the Secretary. In adding names to the Waiting List, the Secretary will employ an equal opportunities policy. The Secretary may refuse to add to the Waiting List any person known to have been expelled from an Allotment Association elsewhere.

4. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- a) Association members shall appoint a Committee consisting of: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to eight other members.
- b) Office bearers shall be appointed for a period of three years and may stand for re-election. Committee members shall be elected annually and may also stand for re-election.
- c) The Committee shall have the powers to manage the affairs of the Association between AGMs. The Committee shall carry out any instructions given to them by a majority of Members at an AGM.

5. ADDITIONAL MEMBERS AND SUB-COMMITTEES

The Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to two additional members, as determined by the Committee. Co-optees shall have no voting rights on the Committee. The Committee shall have the power to appoint such sub-Committees as it may from time to time decide, and shall determine their powers and terms of reference.

6. MEETINGS

- a) The Committee shall meet Monthly during the growing season, or at the discretion of the President or Secretary.
- b) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in November of each year. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be summoned on the request, in writing, of 25 members.
- c) Notice, in writing, shall be given of motions or business to be brought forward at an AGM, at least 4 weeks prior to the AGM.
- d) At the discretion of the chair, relevant business may be discussed at the AGM, without prior notice.
- e) To ensure that AGM business is fully completed, any guest speaker invited to address the meeting will do so after the business of the AGM has been completed.

7. RULES AND PROCEDURES AT MEETINGS

- a) **Chair:** All meetings will be chaired by the President, or by another Association Member, as agreed by those present.
- b) **Voting:** All votes will be decided by a simple majority of the Members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair has a casting vote.
- c) **Quorum:** The quorum for Committee Meetings is 4 elected members, for other Meetings, 15 members.
- d) **Disputes:** In the event of any dispute over the conduct of a meeting, the Chair's decision shall be final.
- e) **Resolutions:** Any member may propose a resolution for discussion at a General Meeting. To ensure that a resolution is discussed, it should be submitted, in writing to the Secretary, along with the names of the Proposer and a Secunder, in time for it to be circulated to the Members 4 weeks in advance of the relevant meeting. Any member may propose a resolution at a General Meeting, but in this case, it will be the Chair's decision whether or not it will be put to the Meeting. Resolutions proposing alterations to the Constitution may only be put to an Annual General Meeting.

8. FINANCE

- a) All monies raised by the Committee shall be applied to further the objects of the Association (see Clause 2: a;b;c) and for no other purpose.

b) No member of the Committee shall normally be paid fees or receive any remuneration other than out-of pocket expenses.

c) The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Association and shall pay all monies not immediately required into a bank account in the name of the Association. The funds of the Association shall be held in a bank account operated by two office bearers.

d) The accounts shall be passed to an independent examiner who shall be appointed at the AGM, The accounts shall be passed to the independent examiner two months before the AGM, so that they can be circulated to the Members with the AGM papers.

9. DISSOLUTION

If the Committee, by a majority, decide at any time that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association, it shall call a meeting of all members of the Association. Notice shall be not less than four weeks, and shall state the terms of the resolution to be proposed.

10. ALTERATIONS

Proposals to alter this Constitution can only be made as Resolutions at an Annual General Meeting of the Association. Alterations will be made as a result of resolutions passed by a simple majority of members present.

ADOPTED AS THE CONSTITUTION OF ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION AT AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING DULY CONVENED AT ON THE DAY OF2009.

APPENDIX 4 - DRAFT TENANCY AGREEMENT

APPENDIX 4 - DRAFT TENANCY AGREEMENT**ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT**

AN AGREEMENT made the _____ day of _____ two thousand and nine and between the hand of its Secretary and duly authorised Agent of the one part and,

Name:- _____

Address:- _____ -

(hereinafter called "the Tenant") of the other part.

WHEREBY:-

1. The Association agrees to let and the tenant agrees to take on a yearly tenancy from the first day of April two thousand and seven the allotment garden numbered _____ on the allotment site at the ADDRESS..... at the yearly rent of pounds (£xx) to be reviewed annually and subject to the provisos and conditions hereinafter contained.

Note: The Council retains the option to make an increased charge to allotment holders living outside the parish

2. The tenant hereby agrees with the Association as follows:-

(a) To pay the rent hereby reserved on or before the first day of April in every year during the continuance of this tenancy without any deductions whatsoever:

(b) to use the allotment garden as an allotment garden and for no other purpose without the prior consent in writing of the Association:

(c) to keep the allotment garden clean, free from weeds and well manured and otherwise maintain it in a good state of cultivation and fertility and good condition and to keep any pathway or cart track included therein or abutting thereon reasonably free from weeds.

(d) not to cause or permit any nuisance or annoyance to the occupier of any other allotment garden or obstruct or encroach on any path or roadway set out by the Association for the use of the occupiers of the allotment garden within the said allotment site.

(e) not to underlet assign or part with the possession of the allotment garden or of any part thereof without the prior consent in writing of the Association:

(f) not without prior consent in writing of the Association to cut or prune any timber of other trees or take, sell or carry away any mineral, gravel, sand, earth or clay.

(g) not without prior consent in writing from the Association to erect any building on the allotment garden AND in regard to any building for which consent has been granted to erect the same in accordance with Association specification. (Sheds must be made of wood and no bigger than 2m x 1.5m (6ft x 4ft.) (Permission required for sheds and greenhouses but not poly tunnels or fruit frames.)

(h) not to erect any fence or barbed wire adjoining any path set out for use of occupancy of the allotment gardens:

(i) not to allow the roots and canopy of any trees planted to infringe on any other plot.

(j) not to deposit or allow any person to deposit on the allotment garden any refuse or decaying matter except manure and compost in such quantities as may reasonably be required to use in cultivation) or place any matter in any hedges ditches or dykes situate in the said allotment site or on any adjoining land.

-
- (k) that they are responsible for the safety and good behaviour of any children brought onto the site.
- (l) to ensure that any dog brought into the said allotment site is securely held on a leash and that all dog excrement is removed from the site.
- (m) not to keep any animals or livestock of any kind upon the allotment garden without the prior consent in writing of the Association such consent not to be unreasonably allowed.
- (n) not to erect any notice or advertisement on the allotment garden.
- (o) to notify forthwith the Association of any change of address of the Tenant.
- (p) to yield up the allotment garden at the determination of the tenancy hereby created in such condition as shall be in compliance with the agreements herein contained:
- (q) to permit any officer or other agent or representative of the Association to enter on the allotment garden and inspect the condition thereof and of any building erected or being erected thereon:
- (r) to observe and perform any other special conditions which the Association consider necessary to preserve the allotment garden from deterioration and of which notice shall be given to the Tenant.
- (s) at all times during the tenancy to observe and comply fully with all enactments, statutory instruments, local, parochial or other bylaws, orders or regulations affecting the allotment garden.
- (t) to access to the site via the bike track entrance. There are no public rights of way across the site Cars should only be taken through the bike track for the purpose of loading and unloading. All cars should be parked on the lane by the entrance to the bike track. Please close all gates as you enter and leave the site.
- (u) that stand pipes on the site may be used to water plots. The use of hose pipes is allowed but these must be hand held. Use of sprinklers is not allowed. In hot summers use water sparingly. The water supply may be turned off in a harsh winter.
- (v) that they will not light bonfires. All green waste to be composted or recycled.
3. The Association hereby agrees with the Tenant that the tenant observing and performing the conditions and obligations on his part contained in this Agreement may peaceably use and enjoy the allotment garden without any interruption by the Association or any person claiming under or in trust for the Association.
4. This tenancy shall determine on the death of the tenant and may also be determined in the following manners:
- (a) by either party giving to the other three months previous notice in writing.
- (b) by re-entry by the Association at any time after giving three months previous notice in writing to the tenant on account of the allotment garden being required (i) for any purpose (not being the use of the same for agriculture) for which it has been appropriated under a statutory provision or (ii) for building, mining or any other industrial purpose or for any roads or sewers necessary in connection with any of those purposes.
- (c) by re-entry by the Association at any time after giving one months previous notice in writing to the tenant
- (i) if the rent or any part thereof is in arrears for not less than thirty days whether legally demanded or not; or
- (ii) if it appears to the Association that there has been a breach of the conditions and obligations on the part of the Tenant herein contained; or
- (iii) if the tenant shall become bankrupt or compound with his creditors.
5. Any notice required to be given by the Association to the Tenant may be signed on behalf of the Association by the Secretary for the time being and may be served on the Tenant either personally or by leaving it at his last known place of abode or by prepaid post addressed to him there or by fixing the notice in a

conspicuous manner on the allotment garden and any notice required to be given by the Tenant to the Association shall be sufficiently served if signed by the Tenant and sent by prepaid post to the Secretary of the Association at the Town Hall for the time being.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY.

The Associations allotments are available to anyone who requests a plot, irrespective of gender, age or ethnic background providing they observe the rules. Rental is conditional upon the annual rent being fully paid by the date set by the Association. No individual or group will be permitted to put the general allotment holder at

- disadvantage through their views or activities on site.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Each allotment holder is reminded that they have a duty of care towards other allotment holders and any members of the public who may be on site.

To this end, they should make sure that there are no obstructions on the paths,

that no hazardous chemicals are brought to the site,

that extreme care is taken when driving on site,

that any structures are solidly built and will not collapse

that anyone using garden machinery has read and understood the safety instructions.

AS WITNESS the hands of the parties hereto the day and year first before written

TENANT

Date _____ Signed _____

ASSOCIATION

Date _____ Signed _____

Secretary to the Association

APPENDIX 5 - ALLOTMENT DESIGN

APPENDIX 5 - ALLOTMENT DESIGN

1.0 Allotment Hierarchy

Allotment gardens accommodate various parcels of land within and outwith urban areas and require differing levels of service and maintenance. Therefore, in order to make improvements to allotment gardens a hierarchy can be applied to help determine the minimum standards for each and every allotment. The following is a proposed threshold:

Size A - Local Allotments

Criteria:

- 1 - 20plots approximately 0.4ha;
- Generally located close to the community in gap sites or larger sites with limitations on expansion;
- Provision of facilities are basic yet appropriate for supporting a small allotment association.

Size B - Town Allotments

Criteria:

- Large site of 20+ plots;
- Generally located in large parks or edges of settlements with good access;
- Full range of facilities should be considered to support a thriving allotment association;
- Potential for expansion.

20 Allotment Garden Design & Facility Provision

Key characteristics of successful allotments include:

General

- Availability of plots of different sizes to suit varying needs
- Screen planting to provide some privacy whilst also allowing views into and out of the site.
- Clear separation between adjacent allotments.
- Signage at site entrances (to advertise, provide information and outline rules).
- Secure fencing or natural boundary. Lockable access gates.

Accessibility

- Site entrance should ideally be not more than 400m from the nearest bus stop (where available). (The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, PAN 78 and SPP all promote the design of inclusive public spaces and environments that everyone can use).

Planting and Biodiversity

- Good mix of native species to grow a dense, bushy hedgerow around the perimeter of the site, helping to create a sense of privacy whilst providing habitat for local biodiversity.

Facilities and features

- Mains water points to serve all allotment plots
- Communal composting facilities

Vehicle Access and Parking

- On-site parking for not less than 1 car per 10 plots, with a minimum of 2 spaces.

Amenity

The environment of an allotment site can be significantly enhanced through provision of:

- Areas offering shade from the sun;
- Areas which offer shelter from rain;
- Installation of chairs/ benches offering places to rest.

APPENDIX 6 - BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR ALLOTMENT USERS

APPENDIX 6 - BEST PRACTICE GUIDANCE FOR ALLOTMENT USERS

This information relates to local authority guidelines and outline best practice information for allotment holders, describing and offering support regarding allotment issues and benefits.

Why Cultivate an Allotment

Here are some of the great benefits of cultivating an allotment:

- Relaxation/stress relief - what better way to unwind than to spend some time gardening, away from the stresses of modern city living?
- Fresh air and exercise - gardening is recommended as an excellent form of exercise for people of all ages and abilities.
- Fresh produce - home-grown crops are always far tastier than those bought in the shops, and at a fraction of the price. Why not grow your own 5 a day?
- Organic produce - there is real concern about the possibility of chemical residues in food. Cultivating your allotment organically can ensure that your vegetables are chemical free. (Please be aware that not all allotments are organic.)
- GM-free food - be sure that the food you eat is free of genetically modified product!
- Community groups and allotments associations - allotments are a great way of meeting other like-minded people from right across the community. If you wish, you could get involved in your allotment association.
- Open spaces - along with our parks and open spaces, allotment sites form the "green lungs" of the city. By cultivating an allotment you will be helping to ensure their preservation well into the future.
- Wildlife - a working allotment can be a wildlife haven, with foxes, badgers, slow-worms, birds and a host of other wildlife living right in the middle of the city.
- Herbs, fruit and flowers - allotments are not just about straight rows of vegetables. Many tenants grow flowers, fruit, herbs and spices, to get the most out of their allotment.
- No garden? - for people without a garden at home, their allotment is their garden and many tenants fill their plot with plantings and features as if it was their own garden!
- Convenience - Bath has over 900 allotments plots on 19 sites spread all over the city and many Parish Councils also have allotment sites. So wherever you live in Bath & North East Somerset, an allotment site should not be far away.

• **Beginners Guide to Allotments**

Starting up

Before you start cultivating your new allotment, you will need to plan how much time and money you have to spend and, if necessary, consider what help and other resources you may need.

Taking on an allotment does take a lot of commitment to initially clear and subsequently manage. Depending on the size of the plot, you will need to put in an average of at least a couple of hours a week to effectively manage it, although this will vary between summer and winter and on the type of crops grown.

A plot may be overgrown when you take it on, so you may have to spend a lot of time gradually clearing and digging it during the first season, or maybe get some friends to help you!

Before you start, remember to check the Health and Safety hints on these pages.

- On your first visit to your plot, decide what work you need to do to bring it back to cultivation. Adapt your gardening to your abilities and the amount of time you can spend.
- Digging the soil is one of the most physically demanding activities in gardening, as it involves continual bending and straightening of the back while lifting a spadeful of soil. Do a little at a time to prevent back problems. In a new plot, or a plot neglected for several years, digging the soil over thoroughly before planting is important. If the previous gardener looked after the plot well, you can probably use a fork or spade to hand dig the soil. Digging is important as it loosens the earth, letting air and moisture in and breaking up hard compacted earth - but take it easy with the hard labour, and do a little at a time.
- If the plot is overgrown with long grass or weeds such as brambles you may need to use a strimmer or hedge clippers to cut them down.
- Remember to inform the Allotments Team if you are unable to work your plot immediately for any reason, or you could risk losing your plot!
- On weedy plots, plant large leafed crops such as potatoes, courgettes or runner beans, which will smother weeds.
- You will still need to remove weeds regularly to prevent your crops being overrun by weeds during the first months of cultivation.
- Some people prefer to use methods of cultivation that do not involve digging. Mulches of compost or thick polythene are perfectly acceptable, as are green manures on fallow ground.
- The best time for digging is autumn or early winter if you want to be ready for seed sowing in spring. If you dig in compost, manure or the remnants of last year's crop, worms and micro-organisms will break it down over the winter.
- Specific plots that are unsuitable for letting as vegetable plots may be given permission for use as orchard plots. Contact the Allotments Team about this.
- If you are not an experienced gardener, feel free to ask your site rep or plot neighbours for advice or the Allotment Team.

Basic Do's and Don'ts

Allotments have their own legislation which dictates how allotments should be used and most of the do's and don'ts on this document are legal requirements. Failure to abide by these requirements means you could be breaking the law!

Do's

- You can plant herbs and flowers
- If your site has gates you **MUST** always ensure you lock them behind you
- You can bring your dog on site as long as it's kept on a lead at all times, and clear up any faeces
- You can have a small lawned area as long as it's regularly mown
- You **MUST** erect a clearly visible number board on your plot
- If you have fruit bushes/trees, etc, you **MUST** maintain the area around them and make sure they are pruned regularly
- You must cultivate at least 50% of your plot and keep the rest free from weeds and cut any long grass

- If you have a shed on your plot you must maintain it in a serviceable condition
- You MUST pay your allotment rent with 40 days of receiving an invoice
- If you vacate your plot you must pay any rent owed
- Always inform the Allotments Team if you change address
- Permit entry to sheds/structures for allotment staff at any time requested
- If you vacate your plot you MUST remove all belongings within two weeks
- Please be considerate to other plot holders

Dont's

- You are not allowed to sublet your plot
- You are not allowed to use your plot for any trade or business
- You are not allowed to bring rubbish onto the site - you may be charged for its removal
- You are not allowed to block communal pathways/haulingways
- You are not allowed to wash crops or tools in water troughs
- You are not allowed to use a hosepipe or a sprinkler to water crops
- You are not allowed to have smoky bonfires that cause a nuisance, or leave fires unattended (see Bonfire guidelines)
- You are not allowed to cause a nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring householders - nuisance could include bad language, getting drunk, playing loud music, racist language etc
- You are not allowed to go onto other people's plots unless they have given you permission
- If you have children or young people with you on site they are not allowed to wander around on other plots or make a mess
- You are not allowed to dig up paths between plots
- You are not allowed to use any form of violence on-site, be it physical or verbal
- You are not allowed to give your key to other people or allow them to visit your plot unsupervised
- You must obtain written permission to erect a shed
- You must obtain written permission to have poultry on a plot
- You must have written permission to plant fruit trees, trees or large shrubs
- It is advisable Not to bring old carpets onto site, as they can be difficult to get rid of and they are known to contaminate the soil.

Tools and Equipment

If you have no tools, start by buying only the essentials first - spade, fork, hoe, rake, and trowel.

If you cannot afford brand new tools, it may be possible to buy old or reconditioned tools from auctions, market stalls, car boot sales or other gardeners.

- Both fork and spade are in constant use and should be as solid and strong as possible.
- The fork is used for raking and spreading compost, for harvesting vegetables, for digging and the removal of roots of perennial weeds.
- The spade is used for cutting edges, winter digging, making trenches and for emptying the compost heap.
- The rake is used for breaking down and leveling roughly dug earth to make a fine seedbed. It is also useful for gathering together debris such as weeds and hedge clippings.
- A wheelbarrow is essential for moving heavy or bulky material.
- Using water butts that are set-up to collect rainwater from sheds or other structures is
 - good way of saving on water consumption and a way to ensure you have your own supply.

Health and Safety Hints

Cultivating an allotment can be hazardous. Please bear the following hints in mind when you are on site:

- Hard physical work or lifting heavy or awkward loads requires care, practice and an understanding of your own capabilities and physical limitations, particularly if you are not used to it!
- Digging is one of the most physically demanding task in gardening, as it involves continued bending and straightening of the back when lifting a spade of soil. It needs to be approached with care. For your back's sake, do not rush your digging.
- Machinery - if you are using power mowers or strimmers, remember that you are responsible, as an allotment tenant, for the safety of other tenants and visitors.
- Bonfires are allowed on our allotment sites providing they do not cause a nuisance.
- Broken glass and other materials may be hazardous if left on your allotment.
- 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.
- Garden tools can be a hazard if they are not stored properly or are left lying around the plot when not in use.
- Chemicals must be kept securely locked in their own cupboard in your shed, in clearly marked containers. Do not keep them in lemonade bottles or other 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 neighbour's plot. They may garden organically and will not thank you for it!
- Rats can carry Weil's Disease via their urine. Any evidence of rats on your allotment should be reported to Allotments Team who will arrange appropriate control.
- First aid kit is always a wise addition to the tools kept in the 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 the bleeding if you are badly cut.

Using Pesticides

Pesticides are primarily chemical substances prepared or used to destroy harmful pests. By their very nature pesticides pose a potential hazard to the user, others in the area during and after use, and can have a bad effect on the environment if used incorrectly.

The actual risk can be reduced by the careful choice of pesticide, the time and methods of use, weather conditions and the knowledge of the person using the pesticide. Chemical pesticides should only be used as a last resort.

Pesticides include:

- weedkillers (herbicides)
- agents to kill fungal growth (fungicides)
- insect killers (insecticides),
- rodent (rat) bait (rodenticides),
- soil treatments
- wood preservatives

Pesticides are used by members of the public, often in the garden, and the potential hazard can be the same as for pesticides used in agriculture and other large scale operations.

Pesticides used by the public are likely to have been obtained from the local garden centre or hardware store, and be approved, with information on the label.

Please ensure that you read all the information on the label.

You need to know how you can protect yourself, others, children and animals, and how to safeguard our environment.

Before selecting a pesticide consider the following:

- Always identify the pest before any treatment is applied.
- Do you really need a pesticide?
- Can the problem be solved by changing environmental conditions, for example cleaning up or preventing damp?
- Is there a way to deal with the pest without using a pesticide, for example using a hoe or hand fork, cultivation or catch and trap?
- Chemical pesticides may often kill beneficial organisms which help to keep pests under control.

If a pesticide is to be used take account of the following:

- Pesticide sprays based on fatty acids are effective, relatively safe and environmentally friendly.
- Pesticides based on synthetic pyrethroids are generally less toxic than many others.
- Pesticides containing organophosphorous chemicals (-pos) are potentially hazardous because of their effect on the nervous system and are to be avoided where possible.
- Water based wood preservatives are a good choice when animals occupy the adjoining area or plants are growing nearby.
- Always seek professional help with a problem with rodents (rats).

How can I be safe?

- Always read the label when selecting a pesticide.
- Always follow the instructions exactly.
- Always wear impervious gloves when using pesticides and wash your hands immediately after use.
- Always wash off splashes as soon as they occur.
- Always store pesticides in a safe place, out of reach of children, and always keep in their original container.
- Never use a pesticide in wet and windy conditions and avoid spray drifting off the target area.
- Never eat, drink or smoke when handling a pesticide.
- Never use pesticides in a confined space.
- Never use pesticides near food and food preparation.
- Never reuse an empty container.

Always take care with the disposal of pesticides, working solutions and empty containers.

Best of all do not use a pesticide

Manure Deliveries

Manure can be accepted onto the sites with vehicle access. Nevertheless, care must be taken not to cause damage to facilities on the site or neighbouring plots. Manure should not be left across access paths to block vehicle or pedestrian access. It will be removed by the council if it causes an obstruction.

Adding farmyard manure and garden compost can contribute small amounts of nutrients. It can, when mixed into the soil, attract worms to improve soil structure and stimulate the activity of soil micro-organisms. These break down organic matter and release a balance of nutrients for uptake by plant roots. Organic matter such as leaves or compost also helps to retain moisture and reduce the need for watering.

An alternative to compost heaps is to dig plant remains direct into a trench. Left over the winter months, worms will ensure that it has all disappeared by spring, and improved the soil in the process.

Please note that the council can provide leaves to sites with vehicle access during the autumn, as we are anxious to ensure that they are delivered locally for allotment and garden use rather than transporting them to landfill and other sites.

Please be aware that deliveries may not be possible on some sites with poor vehicle access.

Bonfire Guidelines

THINK

Before you light up

- 1) Do you really need a bonfire, all green waste can be composted, have two compost areas for fast and slower rotting waste.
- 2) It is an offence to create smoke which becomes a nuisance. You can be prosecuted under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also the Highways Act 1980 if smoke drifts across a road endangering traffic.
- 3) Bonfires can be dangerous and care should be taken when children are around, keep a look out for wild animals and pets in a bonfire before you light it.
- 4) All green waste can be composted and this will effectively convert it into valuable compost and thereby eliminating the need for a bonfire.
- 5) If you feel that you have waste that cannot be burned or composted, it can be taken to the local Civic Amenity site to be recycled free of charge for domestic householders.

THINK

Before you light up

- 1) Always be considerate to other allotment holders and surrounding houses when starting a bonfire.
- 2) Make sure all green material has been well dried before its is burnt, this reduces the amount of smoke produced.
- 3) Make sure that the wind will not blow smoke onto or towards nearby plot holders and surrounding houses.
- 4) Do not light on windless or damp days as the smoke will linger at lower levels thereby penetrating houses and polluting the air we breathe.
- 5) Do not leave the fire unattended or leave it burning overnight, stay with the fire at all times.
- 6) Do not burn plastics household waste, tyres or anything containing foam, paint or chemicals.

Vegetable sowing guide**• planting table to help you make the most of your plot:**

Name	Time to sow	When ready	Remarks
Artichoke, Globe	Plant March and April, 2-3ft apart	June to October	These do not bear well the first year; the flowerhead bracts can be eaten.
Artichoke, Jerusalem	Plant February to March in rows 3 feet apart	November to March	
Asparagus	Plant April, 15 inches apart	Three years after sowing	Care must be given during the first few years, then it will bear prolifically for many seasons
Bean, Broad	Sow November to April 2-3ft between double rows	June and July	Need well-manured soil
Bean, Dwarf French	Sow May in rows 18in-2ft apart	June and July	Very early and late crops must be sown under glass.
Bean, Runner	May and June, rows 6-8ft apart	July to Oct	Early crops should be sown in boxes and planted out in June
Beetroot	Sow April to July, rows 4-5ft apart	Late autumn to October	Beet will grow on any soil; animal manure must be kept from the roots.
Broccoli, Autumn Broccoli, Winter Broccoli, Spring Broccoli, Summer	Sow March to May. Plant May to July, 12-15in apart	September to June	All plants should be transplanted as soon as possible.
Brussels Sprouts	Sow March and April in rows 2-3ft apart. Plant May and June.	September to April	Should be picked after frosts. Do not cut tops until stalks have completely ripened.
Cabbage (spring sown)	Plant early August	September to February	Requires a well-manured soil in good position. Should be hoed occasionally
Cabbage (autumn sown)	March to May rows 18-24 inches apart	May to July	Requires a well-manured soil in good position. Should be hoed occasionally
Carrot	Sow March to early August	June onwards. In October lift and store in ashes.	Requires a well-cultivated soil.
Cauliflower (spring sown / autumn	Plant April to July, or September to February with 24-30 inches between rows	All year	

sown)			
Celery	April, sow in rows four feet apart	August to October	Preferably grown in well watered trenches
Chicory	Sow March, plant May 12in between rows	October to February	Blanch leaves by lifting plants and standing in a cool place in fine damp soil.
Courgettes	Sow indoors April - May	July - October	Plant out late May/June
Cucumber (outdoor)	Sow May, four feet between rows	August to September	Requires plenty of manure and moisture.
Endive	Sow April, 12-15 inches between rows	June to October	Blanch by covering plants with flower-pots, three weeks before use.
Leek	Sow February and March Plant out May or June, 18 inches between rows	Can be left in ground until required for use in winter	Large specimens required plenty of manure. Blanch by covering with collars of brown paper
Lettuce	Sow March, with successional sowing throughout the summer	June onwards	Moisture promotes rapid growth which is necessary. Soil should be prepared some time before planting
Onion (Spring)	Sow under glass in Feb. Plant out in May, 9-12in between rows	September - finished off in dry open shed	Can be hung up and kept a winter in a dry place
Onion (Winter)	Sow in August, set out in February	June to October	Useful for supplementing spring-sown stock
Parsley	Sow March to July, 12 inches between rows	All year round	
Parsnip	Sow February and March, 18 inches between rows	November to March	
Pea (early)	Sow February and March	June	
Pea (second early)	Sow March and April	June and July	
Pea (maincrop)	Sow April to June	July to September	Deeply dug and well manured. A mulch will help to retain moisture in latest sown crops.
Potato (early)	Plant March, 18 inches between rows	June	Potatoes should be sprouted before being planted.
Potato (maincrop)	Plant April, 18-36 inches between rows	July, August and on	Soot is beneficial to the crop.

Pumpkin	Sow indoors April	September - October	
Radish	Sow March to September	All year round	
Radish	Sow March to September	All year round	
Rhubarb	Plant spring and autumn, 3-4ft between rows	April - July	
Seakale	Plant March and April, 30 inches between rows	In November lift and store in moist sand	
Shallot	February and March, 9-12 inches between rows	Lift in July when top withers and store until required	Will grow in any soil
Spinach (summer)	Sow February to August	May to January	
Spinach (winter)	July to September 12-15 inches between rows	May to January	
Spinach (perpetual)	April to July, 12 inches between rows	May to January	
Squash	Sow indoors April	September October	
Swede	Sow April to July 15 inches between rows	October to March	
Tomato (indoor)	Sow January to March under glass	May to October	
Tomato (outdoor)	Plant out in May, 18-24in between rows	August to October	
Turnip	Sow March to August, 12- 15 inches between rows	July to November	For "tops" sow in September and leave unthinned
Vegetable Marrow	Sow March , 4-5 feet between rows	July to November	Allow plenty of moisture for manure