



The Parish Centre, 50 Gerald's Way,
Chalford, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL6 8FJ

**As Trustees of 'Chalford Allotments for the Labouring Poor'
Registered Charity No. 206016**

Chalford Allotment Rules & Guidance

The rules contained within this document apply to all allotments controlled and maintained by Chalford Parish Council and are made pursuant to Allotment Act 1908 - 1950. The rules form part of your Tenancy Agreement, and failure to adhere to them may lead to eviction.

Use

Allotments must by definition be wholly or at least mainly cultivated for the production of fruit and vegetables. Tenants may not underlet, assign, or part with the allotment or any part of it; the granting of any lease or sub-lease is at the complete discretion of the Council. Tenants must not stay overnight on the allotment site.

Tenants must notify the Council immediately if they change the address where they live. If the tenant becomes resident more than one mile outside the boundary of the parish, the tenancy agreement will be terminated.

Cultivation

The cultivated area means the area which is cultivated for and subsequently planted with crops, namely fruit and vegetables. At any time, the tenant is required to have their plot in a cultivated state, to regularly dig or mulch, prune and weed not less than 75% of this total area. Compost bins, glass houses, cloches, water butts, poly tunnels and fruit cages are also included within the cultivated area. Green manures may also be included within the cultivated area.

A maximum of 25% of the allotment area is allowed for grass paths, shed space and/or a seating area or a meadow/wildflowers. The area of meadow/wildflowers must not exceed 10% of the total allotment area.

Plots must be properly cultivated. It is not sufficient to simply keep them clear of weeds or sheeted. Any such plots are considered uncultivated and in breach of tenancy.

New tenants are expected to have at least 25% of their plot cultivated within 3 months, 50% cultivated within 6 months, and 75% cultivated after 12 months. If this is not achieved a tenancy may be terminated and the plot re-let. The only exception is for tenants taking up their tenancy between December and February when this period will be discounted.

Allotment sites are regularly monitored by members of Chalford Parish Council (the "Council") who are Trustees for the Charity, *Chalford Allotments for the Labouring Poor*. Council members also carry out formal inspections in May, July and September. Any tenant who has not followed the rules set out in this document will receive a first warning letter outlining the issue(s) and giving them four weeks to rectify it/them. If no significant improvement follows, the Council will issue a Notice to Quit to the tenant, giving them a

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further four weeks to remove their belongings and clear any rubbish. Following this, the tenant will be sent a third and final letter terminating their tenancy. The Council has the right to seek compensation for the clearing of any plot left in an untidy condition.

The Council reserves the right to trim or mow any unkempt allotment and shall not be held responsible for any damage to the tenant's plants while carrying out this work.

The Council will take into account exceptional circumstance such as ill health if cultivation does not meet the requirements set out above. Tenants should notify the Council immediately if these circumstances occur, so that the enforcement procedure is put on hold. In such instances the tenant may nominate a co-worker to cultivate the plot during this time, with prior written consent from the Council. The co-worker will not however be entitled to take on the tenancy of the allotment concerned if the original tenant surrenders it, unless their name is at the top of the waiting list.

Where a tenant is struggling to maintain a plot for valid reasons, they may also avoid termination of the tenancy by giving up part of their plot. Tenants need written consent from the Council beforehand if they wish to split their allotment plot in this way.

Tenant's Responsibility

Tenants, and their visitors, must not cause any nuisance or annoyance to neighbouring plot holders. Tenants must not use abusive or threatening verbal or physical behaviour while on the allotment site. Aggressive, bullying or intimidatory behaviour are not tolerated. If concerns arise then please contact the Council.

Tenants and their visitors must not encroach or enter onto other plots, or remove, produce or any other items from another plot without the express permission of the allotment holder. Visitors are the responsibility of the tenants, and the tenant must explain to them the allotment rules.

Families are encouraged to take up allotment gardening. However, children must be supervised at all times and must not trespass onto other tenants' plots or paths. This is for their protection too, as children may be at risk from sharp-edged items, glass cloches etc.

Tenants must keep pathways and common areas clear from obstructions such as wheelbarrows and waste. The Council reserve the right to remove any items which it deems to be a nuisance.

Tenants must keep their allotment clear of weeds that may cause a nuisance to adjoining tenants. Grass covered paths between plots must be maintained by the tenant.

The Council reserves the right to freely enter any tenant's plot.

No soil, mineral, gravel, sand, clay or turf may be removed from the site. No non-compostable materials e.g. tyres, carpets, underlay, corrugated iron sheets, asbestos, may be brought onto the site.

The planting of invasive species such as Bamboo, Japanese Knotweed, Willow, Himalayan Balsam and Giant Hogweed is forbidden. If any are seen, they should be reported to the Council immediately. Tenants should not attempt to remove such species themselves.

It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that payment is received on time. If rent remains in arrears for more than forty days the Council may terminate your tenancy.

Weed Suppressant

The use of carpet as a weed suppressant is not permitted. If using a weed suppressant, tenants must ensure that it is fit for purpose and that it is properly secured. It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure any suppressant they use does not break down, and result in, for example, strands of plastic becoming detached. If this does occur it must be cleared immediately to avoid negative impact on neighbouring plots.

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Dogs

Public rights of way cross all Parish allotment sites. Dog walkers frequently use them. The Council has placed signs on gates asking dog walkers to keep their dogs on leads while they are on the footpaths in the allotment area to prevent their straying onto the plots. Tenants bringing dogs onto the allotments must keep their dog on a lead at all times. Dogs must be kept off other tenants' plots. The dog owner must immediately clear up any excrement. Any dog seen unsupervised at the allotments should be reported to the Council. The dog warden at Stroud District Council may also be contacted.

Bonfires

Bonfires are discouraged. They must not cause a nuisance through smoke. Ideally, tenants should only have bonfires during the winter months (October to February). Tenants should compost allotment waste wherever possible rather than burn it. If a tenant must light a bonfire, they should consider their neighbours and avoid lighting in unsuitable weather conditions. Tenants should never burn any domestic rubbish, plastic or garden waste and burn only dry woody material. They should never leave any fire unattended or smouldering.

Plot Identification

Tenants are responsible for ensuring that the number of their allotment plot remains clearly displayed, adjacent to the nearest main path. The Council will check this as part of inspections, and take action where plots are not clearly identified. The sign bearing the plot number should be fixed to a peg inserted in the ground at the front of the plot. Tenants must ensure the plot number is not obscured by plants.

Paths & Boundaries

Well-kept paths are an aid to allotment cultivation. Uncut paths create a nuisance, allowing weeds to encroach onto growing space and are possibly a hazard to safe movement. Tenants must keep paths and boundaries free of stones and waste material. Designated areas for stone piles are located as follows:
Middle Hill – adjacent to car-park;
Brownhill – behind plot 21, near the stile entrance into Beech Lane;
France Lynch – near the entrance to the recreation ground.

Physical Barriers

Tenants are not permitted to erect physical barriers such as walls, fences, hedges or tapes around the external boundary of a plot. Tenants must gain the consent of the Council before erecting any physical barriers within a plot. Physical barriers must not impede the maintenance of the grass paths between plots nor impede easy passage along paths. The Council will not permit any barrier which, in its opinion, has a significant visual or other adverse impact on other plots, paths between plots, or on the allotment site as a whole. In forming its opinion, the Council will have in mind that the allotment is in an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty, and whether there are effective alternatives creating a lesser impact.

Structures

Tenants must obtain the consent of the Council before erecting any structure on their allotment. Structures other than a polytunnel, should not be in excess of 1.8 metres wide x 1.2 metres deep x 2 metres high. Any structures must be properly maintained, in a good state of repair, and be fit for purpose. The Council has the right to demand the tenant removes any unfit structure. Before construction, consultation with any other tenants who may be affected is essential. Fruit cages must be no more than 2 metres high and the thickness of the upright post no more than 10cm x 10cm. Glass may be used in shed windows, small cold frames and cloches. These must be soundly constructed. Any broken frames or glass must be cleared up immediately. Glass panes must not be stored on the allotment. Glass may not be used in greenhouses.

Polytunnels

Tenants must seek permission from the Council before erecting a poly tunnel. Polytunnels should be no longer than 4.5m long, 3m wide and 2m high. Tenants must position them considerately in relation to their allotment neighbour, and not so that they overshadow their neighbour's plot. Polytunnels will be monitored and must be kept in a good condition. If damage occurs, it is the tenant's responsibility to

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repair and secure or remove the polytunnel as soon as possible. Tenants must make sure that they use suitable materials and secure the polytunnel properly to the ground to minimise the risk of this happening.

Health and Safety and Security

Tenants must ensure they remove potentially hazardous items from their allotment. Tenants must not use or store any rat poison anywhere on their allotment or the allotment site. Tenants must notify the Council if they discover a rodent or other pest infestation on their plot, to arrange suitable methods of control. This will be at the cost of the plot holder. Electric fences, barbed and razor wire are not permitted. Any broken glass must be removed from the site immediately. Tenants must consider potential risks to the safety of children at all times.

The allotment site should only be accessed by the designated entrance(s). Tenants must not make any other means of entrance or exit. Any breach of perimeter hedges or fences must be reported to the Council.

The Council is not liable for any loss or damage to the tenant's property, tools or crops; or for any injury or harm caused to the tenants, or their visitors, on their own plot. The Council is responsible for health and safety on the boundaries and communal areas of allotment sites.

The Council will maintain central paths and perimeters of the allotment sites regularly, up to four times a year.

Fruit Trees & Shrubs

Tenants must not plant fruit trees without first obtaining consent from the Council. If written consent is given, trees must be planted away from the paths on a dwarf root stock and must not be allowed to grow over 1.8m tall. Tenants must ensure that they do not plant fruit trees in a position which will cast a shadow over neighbouring plots. The tenant is responsible for maintaining the tree(s) in good order, including height and spread.

Ponds

A small shallow pond is permitted on an allotment. Tenants must not create a pond without first obtaining written consent from the Council. Ponds must be temporary and must not be formed using concrete or other hard landscaping material. The maximum surface area for a pond is 1.5 square metres. It must be no deeper than 50cm. Ponds must have an 'escape route' of sloping sides to prevent drowning by mammals who come to drink. This applies to ponds of any size. Ponds must be well maintained, and not concealed with vegetation. The use of sunken baths or sinks as ponds or for water storage is not permitted on safety grounds. A grid should be installed to cover the pond area. It is the tenant's responsibility to carry out a risk assessment to avoid any risk to other site users.

Refuse

Tenants must keep allotments in an orderly and tidy condition, free from rubbish. The tenant is responsible for removal of any refuse.

Chickens

Under the 1950 Allotments Act, tenants may keep chickens (but not cockerels) in suitable structures on their allotments, but not for the purpose of any business or trade, nor in any place or in any manner that might be a hazard to health or might cause a nuisance. Any chickens must be completely contained within a run and have an area to nest. Any structure for housing chickens, including runs, must be no more than 5 metres long, 3.5 metres wide and 2 metres high, and must not take up more than 25% of a tenant's plot. Tenants must supply details of the run they plan to use to the Council and gain its approval before proceeding. The Council will issue a notice to the tenant should any chickens cause a nuisance or, in the opinion of the Council, become a hazard to health. The tenant must then remove the chickens within one month of notice being given. An emergency contact telephone number must be displayed prominently on any chicken house.

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Bee Keeping

Bee-keeping on an allotment must be carried out by someone with experience and knowledge. Local branches of the British Bee Keepers Association (BBKA) www.bbka.org.uk run 10 week 'Beekeeping for Beginners' courses and offer advice, advanced training and examinations to their members. BBKA also offers public liability insurance and supplies a handy leaflet for allotment beekeepers. Beekeepers should be members of their local association and new beekeepers should have an experienced mentor to assist and support them. Hives must be sited away from other plot holders, paths and public roads. The bees should be encouraged to fly over high hedges, fences or 2m screens around the hives, especially if their flight path crosses a footpath. Contact details for the beekeeper must be displayed on site. Tenants considering keeping bees at the allotment site must first contact the Council to discuss the matter. The Council will need evidence that the tenant has the relevant knowledge and experience, and has attended the bee keeping course for beginners.

Fertilisers and Pesticides

Most tenants like to grow organically. The spraying of chemicals is discouraged, to ensure that neighbouring plots are not affected. Control of Pesticides Regulations (amended 1997) places responsibility on anyone who uses pesticides to ensure all reasonable precautions to protect the health of humans, creatures and plants, safeguard the environment, and avoid the pollution of water. The Council recommends that tenants cultivate their allotment with regard for wildlife. Weed control using mulch and removal by hand is preferable. The Council also endorses the use of organic compost where possible. A tenant may decide that there is no alternative to chemicals for a one-off use. In these circumstances, the tenant has a duty of care to store, use and dispose of any pesticides, fertilisers, weed killers and fungicides properly and in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. All such materials must be locked away securely and out of the reach of children. The use of pesticides originating from outside the UK is not permitted.

Hosepipes and Water Wastage

The use of sprinklers to water crops is not allowed. This is due to water regulations, and to conserve water. Tenants who fail to comply are liable to receive a Notice to Quit. Tenants should water crops using cans or other suitable containers or systems. Tenants may use hose pipes when their use does not interfere with access to the water supply for other tenants. Tenants should not wash tools and produce in the troughs as this results in a build-up of silt and potentially transfers weed seeds and chemical substances onto other plots. Tenants are encouraged to harvest water on their plots. This can be relatively straightforward if the tenant has a shed, but can also be achieved with other, simpler constructions. The water supply is normally turned off between November and March, in order to avoid burst pipes or waste.

Parking at Middle Hill

Tenants should park in the car park at all times. Access to plots by vehicle is only permitted for loading and unloading, vehicles must be returned to the car park once this has been carried out

Vandalism/Theft

The Council accepts no responsibility for any loss or damage to the tenant's property. If a tenant's property is damaged or stolen from an allotment, it is most important that the tenant contacts the police using the non-emergency helpline number 101, and also notifies the Council.

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