Allotment Cultivation Guidelines

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See Allotment Tenancy Confirmation and Allotment Rules

- Cultivated means the plot needs to be planted, cropped and harvested or being prepared and actively maintained. It is not enough to keep your plot clear of weeds, but then to leave it unplanted.
- Rule 3, 'You are responsible for the allotment…' means that cultivation is carried out by the tenant and that, if help is obtained from others, the tenant is present to supervise the majority of the time. If, for any reason, the tenant cannot be present when others are cultivating the plot, then prior permission must be sought from the Site Manager. If this is not obtained, then the tenant will be deemed to be in breach of this rule.

Main Growing Season

In the main growing season (typically March to October) the following is expected (Rules 4, 7, 8, 22, 25):

- The plotholder is regularly on site apart from holidays, but enough to keep on top of their plot
- Fruit, vegetables, herbs or flowers being grown
- Lawn and grass paths bordering plots mowed and trimmed
- As little weeds as possible going to seed and causing problems for other plotholders
- Fruit trees actively cultivated e.g. pruned, and pest protection deployed, the fruit harvested and windfalls cleared up
- Failure to comply with the above points will render the plotholder liable to a Non-Cultivation (NC) and Notice To Quit (NTQ) order.

Winter Months

In the winter months (typically November to February) the following is expected:

- The plotholder visits occasionally
- Fruit, veg and flowers are harvested and plants cleared as the die down. Winter crops may be sown and tended.
- Growing areas being prepared and kept weed free or covered to suppress them.
- If 'no dig' methods are being used - a clean bed with no weeds
- Plot tidied, all excess materials and rubbish cleared
- Failure to comply with the above points will render the plotholder liable to a Non-Cultivation (NC) and Notice To Quit (NTQ) order.

Cultivation area

As per rules 4, 5, 10, 13, 22, 25:

- The cultivation area includes greenhouses and/or polytunnels but not sheds.
- In the first 3 months of growing season, at least **25%** (a quarter) of the plot should be cultivated.
- After 6 months of the growing season up to **50%** (half) of the plot would expected to be cultivated.
- After 1 year **75%** (three-quarters) must be cultivated
- From the second year onwards, **75% or more** of the plot must be cultivated during the growing season.

- These amounts will vary if a tenant takes over a plot mid-season in which case the Site Manager will confirm the expected amount of cultivation.
- Areas of a plot which are covered e.g. by tarpaulin or cardboard are not considered to be cultivated.
- If the plotholder is engaged in wildlife gardening or similar such that their plot may appear to be non-cultivated they must advise the Site Manager.
- Trees must be managed in accordance with rule 13.
- Failure to comply with the above points will render the plotholder liable to a Non-Cultivation (NC) and Notice To Quit (NTQ) order.

Building Materials or Rubbish

As per rules 12, 25:

- There must not be excessive building materials or rubbish on the plot covering no more than 5% of the plot, maximum 5 sq m.
- Plotholders must advise the Site Manager by what date they intend to use materials or to clear rubbish on their plot (maximum one season.) At the request of the Site Manager, the items must be labelled with that date and a date agreed for rubbish clearance.
- Failure to use the materials or to clear rubbish by the agreed date will deem the plotholder liable to a Breach of Rules and Notice To Quit (NTQ) order.

Mitigation:

- If a tenant is suffering from a **serious illness** that prevents them from gardening, or **caring** for an immediate family member, the notice will be suspended for one growing season. (A growing season is defined as the spring and summer period of any given year.) They must inform the site manager in the first instance. Failure to inform the site manager in the first instance will deem the plotholder liable to a Non-Cultivation (NC) and Notice To Quit (NTQ) order.
- A tenant who is either **pregnant** or nursing a child up to the age of six months will be excused the requirement to cultivate the allotment for a maximum period of two growing seasons, subject to the condition that the allotment is managed to avoid the spread of weeds (that is, the allotment is covered, sown with a green manure or any weeds are regularly cut down).
- **Lack of time** due to work, travel, children or other commitments are **not valid** reasons for failing to meet acceptable standards of cultivation.