

Title	Allotments Policy
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ALLOTMENTS POLICY

1. Purpose of the policy

As a public authority Carhampton Parish Council has a duty under section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act (NERC) 2006 to have regard to conserving biodiversity in its policy and decision making.

This allotment policy applies to allotment plots provided by Carhampton Parish Council (either directly or through devolved management), not for privately owned sites.

The overall objectives of this policy are

- to increase the ability and opportunity for people to cultivate allotment plots in Parish
- to contribute to the conservation of biodiversity in the Parish by enabling the delivery of key ecosystem services such as food.
- to optimise the use of allotments for existing and potential plot holders
- to identify needs and meet demand; and
- To provide a framework allowing tenants to develop and manage their allotments in partnership with Carhampton Parish Council.

2. Introduction

The provision of allotments by local authorities is a statutory duty. Carhampton Parish Council will continue to provide and promote allotments not only because of this statutory requirement but because allotment gardening can make a valuable contribution to the Parish's sustainability by providing health, social, economic and environmental benefits. These can be summarised as -

- Low-cost fresh food production for the family
- Promotion of healthy affordable diets
- Healthy recreational activity
- The opportunity to maintain and develop skills
- Social contact and as a contribution to community spirit
- Better partnership working



Allotments are a valuable green sustainable open space within the rural environment. They contribute to the retention of traditional skills and wisdom as well as being highly beneficial to the wildlife of the area.

The Allotment Site operated by Carhampton Parish Council is situated at Park Lane, Carhampton, and is divided into 33 plots some full and some half size.

3. Management

The Allotment Site is currently managed on behalf of the Parish Council by an Allotment Association. The Allotment Association deals with the day-to-day administration of the Allotments, including:

- Administering enquiries from prospective tenants including site visits
- Letting plots and, supplying Tenancy Agreements [countersigned by the Parish Clerk]
- Collecting and administering allotment rents (Invoices sent out annually)
- Pay to the Parish Council the amount due for the Lease of the land
- Inspecting individual plots on a regular basis
- Resolving disputes and dealing with complaints
- Arranging day to day maintenance of the site including cutting back the boundary hedges and keeping the stream free running and clear of all obstructions
- In consultation with the Parish Council managing alterations and improvement works

The Parish Council's policy is to ensure that through the Allotment Association any vacated plots are cleared and left in a clean state ready for letting.

4. An Allotment Handbook

An Allotment Handbook has been created by the Parish Council. This explains the rules in the Tenancy Agreement and what can and cannot be done on the site, along with details of site management and contact details. The Handbook is reviewed and revised as needed.

5. Site Maintenance

The Parish Council owns no land in its own name; it rents the existing site at Park Lane. It is not anticipated that the Parish Council will be able to rent or purchase additional sites in the future. The aim therefore is to maximise the use of the existing site.

In addition to a 'residents only' policy, the Parish Council may exceptionally accept applications from Withycombe Parish or any voluntary community groups for the tenancy of allotment(s), where the proposed use is beneficial to the residents of Carhampton Parish and provided there are vacancies, and it has the effect of increasing allotment use.



6. Promoting Allotment Gardening

It is the Parish Council's policy to promote allotment gardening. The Allotment Handbook encourages organic gardening and where possible supports good environmental practices including use of organic alternatives to fertilizers and pesticides.

7. Maintaining Adequate Resources

At present the rental income from the site does not cover all running costs, with major capital costs having to be met from Parish Council. The salary of the Parish Clerk's time spent on allotment administration is met from the Parish Council's staffing budget and not from rental income. The Parish Council needs to balance the benefits of the allotments provision against the cost to the residents of Carhampton via the Council tax precept.

The Tenancy Agreement is for one year from 1st January to 31st December. The level of rent, plus any concessionary schemes is considered at the Annual General Meeting of the Allotment Association and in consultation with the Parish Council. Any increase to start from 1st January of the following year – to give Tenants a long period of notice of any such increase(s).