

Hotwells & District Allotment Association

Plot Inspections Policy.

Introduction

Having worked hard over the years to bring all six of our allotment sites up to a high standard, the Association expects all its tenants to do their part by maintaining their plots in good shape. The minimum standard required of our tenants is set out in the Tenancy Agreement which all tenants sign on acceptance of a plot and the Association also publishes a list of '*Dos and Don'ts*', accessible by all new tenants in particular, to help them better understand what is required of them.

How the process of plot inspections operates

1. Timing of inspections

All plots are inspected at least once between March to August – initially by the Site Rep and then by another Committee member in order to provide an independent overview. The inspections are not intended to catch people out. They take place in order to check that tenants are fulfilling the basic requirements of cultivation and maintenance set out in the Tenancy Agreement and the inspectors use a checklist which matches these requirements.

2. What happens when faults are identified

When the inspection identifies a specific fault or faults on a plot, one of two courses of action will follow:

- i. For minor faults (eg. a missing plot number), the Site Rep will contact the tenant in person or via email to explain what action is required.
- ii. Where the problem is more serious (eg. lack of preparation and/or cultivation; neglected plot; encroaching grass/weeds; shed needing repair) the tenant will be sent a Notice to Remedy letter which sets out what action is required and a date by which this must be completed.

Follow-up plot inspections take place to check that all tenants issued with a Notice to Remedy have carried out the necessary action/s. In addition, this second inspection may identify further plots requiring a Notice to Remedy and appropriate action taken as above.

3. Putting things right

Tenants who receive a Notice to Remedy letter are usually given four weeks to address the problem/s. In cases where the tenant carries out the minimum of

remedial work and then allows the state of the plot to deteriorate again, the Notice period is automatically extended and if the plot is allowed to deteriorate, a Notice to Quit will be issued. In exceptional cases (eg. illness, disability, working away from home), a tenant may request further time to an agreed deadline. This should be done by contacting the Site Rep.

4. Repeat offenders

Any tenant who receives three Notices within a three year period and then continues to fail to maintain their plot to the required standard will automatically be issued with a Notice to Quit.

5. Eviction

Tenants who fail to act on a Notice to Remedy without good reason, will be issued with a Notice to Quit. This applies especially to those tenants who have a history of neglecting their plots (see 4). Also, in cases where it is clear that the tenant concerned has made little or no effort to keep the plot in good order – preparation, cultivation and general maintenance being the main bench marks. The notice period is one month (31 days). *This eviction will be in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement: rule 3, iii (b); and the Terms and Conditions set out in the Second Schedule, paragraph 3 in particular.*

Recovery costs

In cases where a tenant either resigns or is served notice to quit and the plot concerned is left in a state of severe neglect, the Association may levy a charge in accordance with the Allotment Act 1950 (clause 4) to recover the plot prior to re-letting. The tenant will be notified in writing of the amount to be charged.

Appeals

Any tenant who feels that s/he has been treated in an unfair manner during the plot inspection process may appeal by contacting the Chair of the Association by letter or email, who will then arrange for an independent arbitration to be carried out.