



# **Sudbury Town Council**

## **Allotments Policy**

### **Introduction**

1. This Policy applies to the allotment sites at Newton Road and Ballingdon Street managed by Sudbury Town Council and aims to maintain a high-quality environment for tenants, neighbours and residents.
2. The Town Council has delegated responsibility for the allotments policies to the Leisure and Environment Committee. The Town Clerk is responsible for the management and letting of the allotments, which are administered by the Deputy Town Clerk on his behalf.

### **Management of Applications**

Applicants to become tenants for allotment plots must be a minimum of 18 years old. An applicant must reside within Sudbury Town boundaries to be eligible for an allotment. If a tenant moves out of Sudbury, the allotment must be surrendered at the end of that year. Application can be made to the Town Council office by letter, email or in person at the Town Hall. Applications must be made in the name of one person who shall be the main user of the allotment, joint tenancies are not permitted. The waiting list is administered on a strictly first come, first served basis. If a vacant allotment is offered and not accepted within 14 days by the person at the top of the list, they will be removed from the list and the allotment will be offered to the next person on the list. Evicted tenants will not be permitted to reapply to re-join the waiting list for an allotment plot for two years.

### **Subdivision of Plots**

When a plot becomes vacant, the Town Council will assess whether it is suitable for resizing. Large plots will normally be split it into smaller plots if there are sufficient people on the waiting list.

### **Site Inspections**

All allotments will be inspected by the Town Council on a regular basis. Where an allotment is found to be in an unsatisfactory state written warning of termination of tenancy shall be sent, with the tenant having 14 days to remedy the situation before termination procedures are enforced.

### **Passing on Allotments**

Following the death of a tenant, no plot may be passed on but shall be returned to the Town Council once family members have collected crops and removed personal items.

Plots cannot be passed on to anyone else such as family members, helpers or co-workers. No human or animal ashes are permitted to be scattered on the allotment site and no memorial features are permitted.

### **Sub-Letting of Plots**

The tenant shall not enter into an agreement, verbal or written, to sub-let or reassign an allotment plot or any part of it to any party under any circumstances.

### **The Annual Contract**

All tenants will be required to sign the latest version of the Tenancy Agreement on an annual basis.

### **Allotment Rent**

Allotment rent will be reviewed by the Town Council annually on an annual basis. Allotment tenants will be notified of any increase in rent six months in advance (early March). Allotment rent will be invoiced annually in early September and must be paid by bank transfer (BACS) if possible. If this is not possible payment must be made over the counter in Lloyds Bank, Market Hill, Sudbury.

Non-payment of the annual invoice after 30 days will be taken as an indication of cessation of tenancy and the plot will be offered to another tenant.

There is a one-off, non-refundable charge (currently £25) payable on taking up an allotment to cover the cost of preparation.

### **Provision of Water**

The Town Council makes no guarantee of water for irrigation at any allotment site. If there is a problem with any water supply, the Council makes no guarantee that an alternative water source will be provided.

The Town Council will endeavour to provide water at the Newton Road allotment site on the basis of reasonable use by tenants. The Town Council will endeavour to maintain a solar powered pump at the Ballingdon Street allotments to lift water from the stream in the ditch into the water tank on site on the basis of reasonable use by tenants.

Reasonable use allows for the filling of hand-held watering cans but does not cover the use of hose pipes. Any tenant found to be using excessive amounts of water may result in the termination of their allotment contract.

### **Cultivation of Plots**

A minimum of 75% of the plot must be cultivated for growing produce – namely vegetables, herbs, fruit or other edible crops and flowers.

A maximum of 25% of the plot area may be put to other uses with the written permission of the Town Council.

No new trees are allowed to be planted on an allotment plot or any other part of the site.

Weeds must be controlled to prevent seeds spreading to other plots.

Business or trade use of an allotment plot is forbidden.

## **Animals on Plots**

Under the Allotment Act 1950 s.12, the keeping of hens and rabbits is permitted on allotments, so long as they are for the tenant's own use and not for business or profit. The tenant must apply to the Town Council in writing for permission prior to any animals being installed on the allotment. The application must provide full details of the structures and procedures to ensure for the animals' welfare. Hens and rabbits must not be kept on allotments unless their welfare needs can be assured in accordance with the Animal Welfare Act 2006.

## **Sheds, Fencing and Structures**

There is a general presumption that sheds, other structures and fencing will not be permitted on the allotments. No allotment tenant may erect any structure which causes another plot to be put in the shade. Tenants with any existing sheds, fencing or other structures must submit a written application if they wish to retain them. Any that are considered to be unsuitable or unsafe in the opinion of the Town Council must be removed or made safe by the tenant when requested. No new sheds or structures may be placed on an allotment without the prior written permission of the Town Council, signed by the Town Clerk. Suitable insurance to cover the full range of liabilities for any structures must be in place at all times and must be submitted with any new request. No shed or structure shall exceed the maximum dimension allowed in the Tenancy Agreement. Any authorised sheds, fencing and other structures must be clearly marked with the plot number and maintained in a good state of repair.

## **Waste Management**

Tenants are responsible for the correct handling and proper disposal of waste from their plot. It is forbidden to bring waste or other harmful material onto a plot. Fly tipping, dumping of waste or adding to dumped waste on any part of an allotment plot is forbidden and will result in immediate termination of the Tenancy Agreement.

## **Pest Control**

Tenants should inspect their plots regularly for rats and avoid stockpiling any materials which may attract rats. Tenants must not use rat poison in public places. Any vermin eradication work may only be carried out by the Town Council. The Town Council should be informed immediately of any issues with pests.

## **Termination of Contract**

Enforcement proceedings will be initiated which may result in the termination of the contract if the terms of the Allotments Policy or Tenancy Agreement have been broken in the opinion of the Town Council. Tenant may voluntarily terminate their contract at any time by informing the Town Council in writing.

## **Leaving a Plot**

When a tenant leaves a plot, it should be in good condition. It is the responsibility of the plot holder to inform the Town Council, in writing, of any change of address and update any other information relevant to their tenancy, such as illness or incapacity.

Any communication will be sent to the latest address provided and will be deemed by the Town Council to have been delivered to the plot holder.

Sudbury Town Council reserves the right to update the Allotments Policy at a time of its choosing in line with its procedures.