

NEWHALL ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

PLOT INSPECTION POLICY

1. Objectives:

- To ensure plot holders are adhering to conditions contained within the Tenancy Agreement.
- To improve the standard of cultivation whilst being mindful of busy life styles and that working a plot is a leisure activity to be enjoyed.
- To ensure that
 - plots are being cultivated:
 - weeds are being controlled
 - crops growing as expected at the time of year
 - the plot is adequately cultivated at peak growing season months i.e. May to September
 - crops are being harvested.
 - plots are appropriately managed such that if the tenancy ceases, the plot does not present an undue burden on potential incoming tenants.
 - plots are not likely to be an annoyance to allotment neighbours and in the case of perimeter plots, to householders surrounding the allotment sites.
 - paths trimmed and have no overhanging plants or other obstructions.
 - edges of paths are in good condition to reduce the risk of injury.
 - only trees that generate a harvest should be on your plot.
 - perennial cropping bushes are pruned appropriately.
 - no structures are erected that have not had agreed permission granted.
 - all structures are in good condition and are not a safety hazard.
 - rubbish is not accumulating on a plot.

2. Inspecting team

Usually the inspection team will consist of the Health and Safety Officer / Site Maintenance Officer or any member of the committee.

3. Plot Inspection Process

Inspections will be carried out throughout the year. Plot holders will be notified in advance of when inspections will take place.

4. WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

4.1 Plot is Satisfactory

If the plot is found to be satisfactory and no breaches are observed, then the tenant will NOT be contacted.

4.2 Minor improvements needed on plot

Notification to individuals regarding any improvements will be communicated directly with the plot holder. A notice for improvement, highlighting appropriate action with an end date for completion will be issued. (See Appendix 1)

4.3 Plot is unsatisfactory (see section 5)

5. Non-Cultivation (Sec 5 Part2) Allotment Management Birmingham City Council

It is a condition of an allotment tenancy that a plot is well cultivated i.e. the majority of the plot is used to grow crops. A maximum of 25% of the plot may be used for other purposes (shed, greenhouse, polytunnel, water storage etc).

PROCEDURE NOTE FOR DEALING WITH NON-CULTIVATION OF PLOTS

First stage

If a plot shows obvious signs of non-cultivation, the Association will make early contact with the plot holder to ascertain the cause. There may of course be very good reasons (illness, hospitalisation, family responsibilities, work commitments) why the plot is being neglected and it is therefore important to establish the reasons prior to more formal action under the second and third stages. Ideally, enquiries should be made by speaking to the plot holder, but if this is not possible, a simple polite communication can be sent (Letter of Concern – Appendix 2)

Second Stage

As part of the formal site inspection, which will be carried out monthly, the Association may issue a Letter of Intent. (Letter of Intent – Appendix 3)

A copy of this letter will be provided to the Association committee for recording and a further copy to the Council.

Third Stage

At the expiry of the period given in Stage 2 and where there are no signs of improvement, the Association may then request the Council to issue a formal Notice of Re-entry giving a final 28 days in which to improve the standard of cultivation.

If improvement is made in line with the actions, then the plot holder will be informed and the Council will also be informed in writing.

Final Stage

On the expiry of the Notice of Re-entry, the Association should inspect the plot and make a final decision on whether or not to recommend the termination of the tenancy.

If sufficient improvements are made then no further action will be taken and the plot holder will be informed by the Association. The plot will still continue to be inspected as part of the normal routine plot inspection process.

In the event of termination, the Association will write to the plot holder confirming the decision and give 7 days in which to clear personal items from the plot.

APPENDIX 1: MINOR IMPROVEMENT NOTICE

NEWHALL ALLOTMENTS – SUTTON COLDFIELD

Minor Improvements Notice	Date of Inspection/...../.....
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Dear Plot Holder

Plot Number:	<input type="text"/>
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The following item(s) has been identified for you to take action:

Compost area	<input type="checkbox"/>	Hazardous rubbish	<input type="checkbox"/>
Broken glass on plot	<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-Cultivation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Loose objects	<input type="checkbox"/>	Loose fixture and fittings e.g. fence	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sharp objects / tools	<input type="checkbox"/>	Bricks/slabs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Corrugated sheets Metal or plastic	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other Health and Safety items	<input type="checkbox"/>

Action to be taken by the plot holder

Completion date:

Signed

Date

APPENDIX 2: - LETTER OF CONCERN (Stage 1)

Date:

Allotment Plot Number:

Dear:

I am writing to you to express concern about the condition of your plot and to draw your attention to the lack of cultivation.

There may, of course, be genuine reasons of which the Association is not aware e.g. illness, family, or work commitments. Nevertheless, it would be helpful to know whether you

- a) expect to resume cultivation in the near future.
- b) need help or advice;
- c) no longer wish to rent the plot.

Please see the choices of reply listed below and let me have your completed response within 28 days from the date of this letter.

I do hope that we can resolve this situation without the need to commence more formal procedures.

Yours sincerely

Site Secretary on behalf of Newhall Allotment Association.

Within 28 days of the date of this Letter of Concern (Stage 1), please notify the Site Secretary of your response by selecting from the most appropriate options listed below. Whether replying by completed form, or by email, if you choose to improve cultivation of your plot within 28 days, you must provide a brief outline of your intentions below.

Plot number:

I will improve my cultivation within 28 days	
I am unable to improve my plot because	
I wish to surrender my tenancy with immediate effect	

Signed:..... Name:.....

Date:...../...../.....

APPENDIX 3: LETTER OF INTENT

Date:

Allotment Plot Number:

Dear:

The Association of Newhall Allotments has noted through its inspection process that the condition of your plot has been deteriorating recently and that the scale of cultivation this season, including the condition of your plot, is now falling short of the standard generally expected.

The Councils Allotment Rules 5.2 and 5.4 require that your plot be kept tidy and of a good standard of cultivation. I am therefore writing to advise you that your plot is giving concern and would therefore ask that within the next 28 days you take action to bring your plot to the required standard. See action below:

(Set out any specific issues e.g removal of rubbish, maintenance of pathways, cultivation etc).

If, during the formal inspection of plots, it is felt that you have not done sufficient to bring your plot to the required standard, the Association will be involving the Council to issue a Notice of Re-entry.

If there are any issues regarding the plot that you wish to bring to the Association's attention, then please contact me.

Yours sincerely

Site Secretary on behalf of Newhall Allotment Association.