

DRINKSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

Management policy for the allotments and other parish lands

November 2022

Allotments

1. The Council is obliged to provide allotments to satisfy legal requirements and community demand.
2. The Council considers the allotments to be a community amenity, managed by the Trustees of the Charity no 295860, and aims to ensure that they are run in such a way that they are accessible to any resident of Drinkstone parish, regardless of age, class, employment status, physical or mental disability or mental health, political belief, race, religion, sex, marital status or caring responsibilities, sexuality, unrelated criminal convictions.
3. The Trustees may offer vacant plots to non residents if there is no demand from Drinkstone residents. This should be done on the condition that should a Drinkstone resident request a plot, a non resident would be served notice. There would be a separate fixed term tenancy agreement and the notice period would be 12 months from notification.
4. The Trustees are responsible to the Council to ensure maximum occupancy, actively promotes the allotments as a community amenity and encourages take up of plots.
5. The Parish Council owns the land and, as landlord, is responsible for the following:
 - a. Issuing tenancy agreements, setting, reviewing and collecting rents annually in support of the trustees
 - b. Day to day management of the Financial affairs
 - c. Provide adequate insurance.
 - d. Paying for all outgoing e.g water bill, insurance premiums
 - e. Commissioning and paying for one off items of capital expenditure e.g. tree maintenance drainage, Water supply & Pest control.
6. The Council and the trustees will jointly agree to any substantial changes to the allotment management policy or the tenancy agreement. Prior to its introduction.
7. The Trustees will be responsible for the following:
 - a. Resolving tenant disputes
 - b. Notifying the Council of any long term non-cultivation of plots
 - c. Consulting tenants on the Council's & trustees behalf on any substantial changes to the management policy or tenancy agreement.
 - d. Managing the waiting list, signing up and appointing new tenants
 - e. Policing sites e.g. non-cultivation, vandalism, tenant disputes
 - f. Maintaining vacant plots
 - g. Carrying out/commissioning and paying for all repairs to hedges, fences, gates, sheds & charity owned equipment
 - h. The trustees will file annual accounts with the Charity Commission and fulfil its legal obligations as a registered charity, and ensuring that the land is managed and let as allotments and grazing land for as long as there is a need.

8. Tenant responsibilities are set out in the allotment rules for tenants.
9. For as long as there is a waiting list, the maximum area of land an individual tenant can cultivate should be the equivalent of a National Standard Plot – 250 square metres/300 square yards/10 rods. A tenant may cultivate more than the National standard plot should there be no body on the waiting list, however they will be served notice should a plot be required by a resident of Drinkstone.

Financial management

10. Rents for each allotment site (Gedding Road and Rattlesden Road) should be the same.
11. Rents should be set at a level which makes the allotments self-financing, and which does not create a barrier to accessibility on financial grounds.
12. The Parish Clerk will provide administrative support in managing the day- to -day finances and bank account

13. Annual water costs (included as part of the annual rent) will be payable by all allotment holders, and calculated per 125m² - equivalent to one half a National Standard allotment plot or smaller.

Rent setting process

15. Allotment rents are due on 1st April
16. Tenants are invoiced for a single rental amount, which includes water.
17. Rents are reviewed annually and set at the same time as the precept and jointly agreed between the trustees & PC

Other parish lands

The remaining 0.8 acres on Rattlesden Road is let under a separate lease, however still subject to the above management policy.

Foot note to be included in the charity Governing document

The 3 allotment trustees will be made up as follows one current Parish councillor, Two current allotment holders, one of whom will be Chair of the trustees, The allotment holder trustees will be appointed by the Allotment holders. In the event that two trustees cannot be appointed from existing tenants, then the allotment tenants can vote on an independent (non PC member) to fill the vacancy/vacancies.

