



Allotments

A plot holders guide

The Allotment Committee has drawn up the following guidance to accompany your Allotment Agreement. It highlights some of the frequent issues that arise and is intended to ensure allotment sites are clean, tidy, cultivated spaces for the enjoyment of everyone, including the surrounding community.

The Allotments Committee provide allotments for Colne residents to cultivate food crops for their immediate family. Historically, a limited number of plots have been cultivated as gardens and whilst some existing plot holders will continue to enjoy their plots as before, new plot holders are required to ensure that their plots are used for cultivation of fruit and vegetables for domestic consumption and not as garden space.

If you have just taken on a large plot you will be required to cultivate a minimum of $\frac{1}{4}$ of the plot as well as maintaining the rest to a basic level within the first year. In subsequent years you will be expected to cultivate an increasing area until at least 75% of the plot is brought into cultivation. If for any reason you are not able to manage your plot for a period of time, you should contact the Allotment Officer.

- 1. Plots must be maintained** in a weed-free cultivated state. You should not store materials on site unless they are needed for maintaining the allotment. You will need to remove materials including sheds and greenhouses etc unless you get consent from the allotments officer to leave them on site when you hand back the plot. If you fail to remove them or obtain consent you may be billed for the cost of removal and making good the plot. Plot inspections are carried out by the Allotments Officer and committee members at least once a year. Enforcement action may be taken if plots are found to be in an unsatisfactory condition.
- 2. Communal Areas and Internal fence and paths** must be kept and maintained to a reasonable, tidy and safe standard by the plot holders. The area around plots should be kept in a weed-free state and grass cut regularly. The perimeter fence of each allotment site is generally maintained by Colne Town Council or adjacent landowners.
- 3. Written consent** will be required from the Town Council to put up any structures on the plot. In general, consent may be given for:
 - A single shed not exceeding 6' x 8' (2.5 x 2m).
 - A greenhouse not exceeding 20' x 10' (6m x 3m) or a polytunnel not exceeding 15' x 10'
 - Flagging or decking of an area may not exceed 6m² for any 1 plot.

At least 75% of the allotment should be used for cultivating fruit and vegetables. Sheds, or space allocated to other things must not exceed more than 25% of the space available on the plot.

- 4. Animals (including poultry).** Plot holders are no longer permitted to keep livestock on allotment sites. The Town Council has indicated that no additional consent will be given to keep chickens or any other animals on Town Council allotment sites. Any plot holder who introduces animals to their plot will be in breach of their allotment conditions and will be asked to leave.

Dogs should not be brought on to the allotment site unless they have a placid temperament and secured within your own allotment. They must not be allowed to stray onto other plots or in communal areas. Any mess must be cleaned up and removed from the site.

4. **Visitors on your allotment** are your responsibility and must not be left alone on your plot. Children are expected to be respectful of other plots and tenants.
- 6 **Bonfires** are not permitted from 31st March to 29th September. Outside of this period bonfires will only be permitted where they are:
 - a. in a cleared area, at least 10 metres from any property/sheds/fencing.
 - b. not left unattended at any time.
 - c. extinguished at least one hour prior to leaving

In addition, a suitable fire extinguishing appliance must be kept available for immediate use. Water buckets may be acceptable. No plastics or materials likely to cause annoyance or damage to health may be burnt on the allotment site nor should waste be brought to the allotment site for burning. (see below for additional advice).

TEN Tips for a Better Bonfire

6. Let neighbours know.

Telling people when you're going to light a bonfire and where it is an important step finding out if it is likely to cause someone a problem and will help.

7. Avoid poor weather.

Lighting in unsuitable weather conditions as smoke can hang in the air on damp, still days and in the evening.

8. Check the wind direction.

Burning when the wind will carry the smoke on to other people's plots or gardens can cause problems. It is also importantly to make sure some will not blow over roads as this can cause serious accidents.

9. Check the air quality.

It is best to avoid burning when it is "poor" or "very poor". You can use web sites like the BBC weather site at: www.bbc.co.uk/weather to find out local information about wind speeds and air quality.

10. Only burn dry material.

Burning damp material will take longer and produce a lot of smoke.

1. Never leave a fire unattended.

If you are having a bonfire you need to be there to watch it, even when it is smoldering – If you have to leave, douse it with water if necessary but make sure it is completely out.

2. Never burn household rubbish.

Often containing things like rubber or plastic, foam or paint etc, they can produce harmful chemicals when burnt as well as acting as an accelerant.

3. Never use engine oil or spirits

Old engine, mentholated spirits or petrol are dangerous accelerants and should not be used to light the fire or to encourage it.

4. Avoid weekends.

Bonfires on weekend and on bank holidays are to be avoided as people are more likely to be in their garden. Restricting bonfires to between 9am to 11am will also help avoid complaints from neighbours.

5. Check for a Safe Space.

Look around where you are planning to light your fire to make sure it is not going to spread to sheds, trees or bushes.

You may wish to also check for hibernating hedgehogs and sleeping pets!