

# North Hinksey Parish Council – Allotment Rules

## Part 1 - Plots, Rents, Duties and Powers of the Allotment Committee

### Allotment Plots

The Parish Council owns the following allotment sites

- Plots 20 to 42. Land between North Hinksey Lane and the Seacourt Stream.
- Plots 43 to 119. Land between North Hinksey Lane and the Southern By Pass.

In addition the following land owned by the Parish Council was previously used as an allotment site but has been converted for use as the North Hinksey Community Orchard and North Hinksey Nature Reserve and Memorial garden.

- Former plots 1 to 19. Land between North Hinksey Lane and Minns Industrial Estate.

There are 100 plots available for cultivation and each plot is considered to be part of NHPC's overall Allotment Gardens. If you are interested in hiring a plot, please contact: Councillor Ms. A. MacKeith email: [cllr.mackeith@yahoo.com](mailto:cllr.mackeith@yahoo.com) or Tel. 01865 724452.

### Allotment Rents

The 2020 charge for allotment hire is £2 a 'pole' per annum, and is due on the 1st April 2020. (A 'pole' is an historical term (5.5yards), used to measure allotments, a standard 10-pole allotment is about 300 square yards, or 250 square metres or one sixteenth of an acre.) The billing period is for 12 months in line with the growing season, and starts on 1st April each year. Please note that only one reminder will be sent out. You can also pay in cash to the committee chairman or the clerk at the annual public meeting.

**In response to the extraordinary circumstances of Coronavirus crisis, the parish council has agreed to waive the charges for the year 2020.** The cost of an allotment key for the year 2020 is still £5.00.

### Duties and Powers of the Allotment Committee

1. To promote proper cultivation of all allotment plots and administer the sites, giving preference to tenants from the parish of North Hinksey.
2. To hold an annual general meeting, giving 21 days' written notice of the date and agenda. This date will also be announced on the notice boards two weeks in advance, and subscriptions may be paid at the meeting.
3. Special general meetings may be called by the committee or by at least twenty plot holders writing to request this.
4. The committee will carry out up to four pre-announced inspections a year, plus unannounced spot checks to ensure the tenancy rules are being adhered to.
5. Any allotment tenant alleged to be in breach of tenancy agreement rules has the right to receive details of the allegation in writing and the right to state his case in writing and/or in person before the Parish Allotment's Committee before any decision is made. If it is found that the person has breached allotment rules that require that their tenancy should be ended, then the Allotment Committee will inform them in writing when that will happen.
6. In the event of a tenant's inability through ill-health (or even death) to work the allotment, the committee will exercise its discretion.
7. The committee has the power to deal with complaints, which should be made in writing. Where a complaint is against the committee or the Chairman of the committee, then it should be sent to the Parish Clerk. If against a committee member then it should be sent to the Chairman of the Committee and copied to the Parish Clerk. Any tenant against whom a complaint has been made will be made aware of the problem, and has the right to respond in writing or put their case to the committee in person.

## **Part 2 - Rules**

### **Current Allotment Tenancy Rules**

1. The allotment plot shall be used for growing vegetables, fruit or flowers. The allotment shall not be used for keeping poultry or livestock (except bees) nor shall it be used as a recreational garden or children's play area or extension thereof. Beekeeping may be permitted subject to the terms of a separate Beekeeping Agreement. The replacement of growing space with purely recreational features, such as lawns, gazebos, children's play equipment etc, is not acceptable. Any item must be removed within 21 days of a notice from the council to remove it.
2. The first allotment plot shall be kept tidy and in a reasonable state of cultivation, (70% minimum\*). Tenants wishing to cultivate less than 70% of a plot must have written permission from the Allotments Committee. If the allotment plot is being reclaimed it must show reasonable progress. Multiple plots may be allowed, subject to the current waiting list. If the waiting list subsequently increases, the Allotments Committee reserve the right to take back any multiple plot, provided the tenant is given 12 months' notice, expiring at the end of the current year. Second or even third plots will only be granted where plots already held are 100% cultivated and the waiting list is satisfied. The requirement for 70% cultivation will subsequently apply to one of the multiple plots, with 100% cultivation required on the other plots. Changes to the Rules regarding the number of allowed plots will not be applied retrospectively.

#### **DEFINITIONS: 70% Arable Cultivation of a Plot for single Plot Holders**

The 70% cultivation rule relates to that area of land that is left for arable use after taking into account approved structures e.g. sheds, compost bins, greenhouses or other structures, including reasonable plot pathways. Where 70% arable cultivation is not possible for valid reasons, a plot holder can approach the Allotments Committee and explain why the rule should be temporarily suspended in their case and a reduced level of cultivation will be agreed for a specified period. Such exemptions need to be special cases and will be considered on a one-by-one basis.

#### **100% Arable Cultivation of a Plot (applies when a Plot Holder is requesting an additional Plot)**

The 100% arable cultivation rule relates to that area of land that is left for arable use after taking into account approved structures e.g. sheds, compost bins, greenhouses or other structures, including reasonable plot pathways. Where 100% occupancy is not possible for valid reasons, a plot holder can approach the Allotments Committee and explain why the rule should be suspended (either temporarily or for a specified period) in their specific case and a reduced level of cultivation will be agreed. Such exemptions need to be special cases and will be considered on a one by one basis.

If routine inspections reveal plots are being neglected, tenants will be given notice to cultivate them. Failure to comply may result in the termination of the tenancy.

3. The allotment plot shall be kept in a safe condition so that it does not present a hazard to others.
4. Allotment plots may not be sub-let, but if a plot holder feels unable to meet the minimum requirement for cultivation yet wishes to keep their plot, this may be temporarily divided, thereby allowing a person on the waiting list to make use of the other 50%. In these cases the 70% cultivation rule will apply to both half plots. If a full plot is already held by either tenant, then the 100% cultivation criterion will apply to the full plot. If either tenant subsequently gives up their half, the plot will be offered back to the other tenant before being let out again.
5. Allotment plots may not be used for any trade or business.
6. Tenants are responsible for mowing the adjoining pathways and keeping them free of obstacles.
7. Sheds, greenhouses, fruit cages, fences, gates etc, must be kept in reasonable repair.

8. If fences are erected, they should be made of posts and chicken wire to a maximum height of 5 feet. Under no circumstances should barbed wire be used.
9. New sheds and greenhouses will require the approval of the allotment committee. They must be built on shed lines where applicable and not encroach upon adjacent plots.
10. Trees may not be planted or cut down without the allotment committee's prior approval. New trees must grow no higher than 10 feet and must stay within the boundary of the plot.
11. No building materials, rubbish or materials of a toxic nature, or harmful to wildlife, may be deposited on the plot. Compostable vegetation is acceptable.
12. The allotment plot holder must not remove, sell or carry away any mineral, gravel, sand, earth or clay from their plot.
13. Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times.
14. The allotment plot holder must not be a nuisance or annoyance to tenants of any other plots. Any complaints must be made in writing to the chairman or vice chairman of the Allotments Committee. Tenants must engage with the Allotments Committee, councillors and officers of the council and each other in a respectful manner, failing which the committee reserves the right to terminate tenancies.
15. Gates must be closed and locked after entering and leaving the site.
16. Petrol and other flammable liquids must not be stored on site. Any herbicide left on the plot must be stored in a correct and proper manner.
17. Members of the public are not allowed onto the allotments unless accompanied by an allotment tenant.
18. Children must be supervised and not allowed to disturb other tenants.
19. Weeds may not be deposited on any part of the site, unless in a compost heap.
20. Tenants must take care bonfires do not cause a nuisance to neighbouring plots and houses. Failure to comply may lead to action being taken by the Vale of White Horse District Council.
21. Changes of address or other contact details must be advised to the Allotments Committee and the Parish Clerk for billing purposes.
22. Rent must be paid within one month of the date of the rent demand. Receipts will be given on request. After one month, a further reminder will be sent allowing a further 14 days to pay. After this period, unless good reason can be given the tenancy will cease.
23. When a tenancy ceases, all keys pertaining to the plot must be handed to a member of the allotment committee.
24. Where a tenancy is terminated following a breach of these Rules, no refund of fees already paid will be given to the former tenant by the Parish Council except in exceptional circumstances and where approved by the Allotments Committee.

*See next page for enrolment form.*

Please sign and date the form below and return it to the Parish Clerk, (29 Long Close, Eynsham Road, Oxford OX2 9SG) or to the Chair of the Allotments Committee (Ag MacKeith, South View House, Old Botley, Oxford OX2 0JR).

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- I have read and understood the allotment tenancy conditions and agree to comply with them.
- I understand that if I do not comply with these conditions my tenancy could be terminated without refund of unspent dues.
- I agree that my contact details provided here may be used to contact me about allotment-related matters. (A detailed Privacy Notice and Privacy Policy stating how NHPC will use your personal data can be found at <https://northinksey-pc.gov.uk/about/policies-code-of-conduct>)

**Plot number:**

**Name:**

**Address:** .....

**Telephone number:** ..... **Email:** .....

**Signature:** .....

**Date:** .....

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