



# Littlehampton Town Council Allotment Strategy 2022-2032



## **OVERVIEW**

This document has been produced by Littlehampton Town Council, working collaboratively with plot holders, primarily through the Littlehampton Allotments and Leisure Gardens Association (LALGA), to deliver allotments and support the town's community.

The strategy was initially created with guidance from an engagement exercise undertaken in Spring 2022 that set down current practices and future ambitions. Progress for delivering the Strategy is reviewed annually through an Action Plan and monitored by the Town Council's Community Resources Committee.

The structure of the Strategy is as follows:

**AIMS** – This summarises the purpose of the Strategy

**OBJECTIVES** – These are the areas that need to be considered, to achieve the Aims. These are then broken down into numbered and clear statements of 'What we will do'.

**ACTIONS** – Under each Objective is a list of Actions setting out how the Objectives could be met. It describes where some of the proposed actions have come from, including concerns and issues, alongside ideas and thoughts for resolving them. These could also be described as Goals or Targets.

**ACTION PLAN** – This contains some of the described Actions with set timeframes for monitoring progress and completing the Actions.

**ABOUT THE SERVICE** – This contains general information about the allotment sites, their current condition, activity and management.

**USEFUL INFORMATION** – This chapter contains details of other websites and guidance that has informed the development of the strategy and insights from the work undertaken when the Strategy was first implemented.

---

## **AIMS**

The aim of this strategy is to make allotments enjoyable, inclusive, safe, sustainable and affordable for residents of Littlehampton; whilst increasing efficient site management; exploring biodiversity and community engagement; and decreasing the gap between income and expenditure.

To achieve these aims, the Town Council will focus on the following objectives:

- **Facilities and Management**
- **Finance**
- **Biodiversity and Community**

## **OBJECTIVES**

### **FACILITIES AND MANAGEMENT**

The objectives are:

#### **1. To maintain and keep tidy all open spaces and vacant plots**

##### **ACTIONS**

- Meet with LALGA and site reps to identify areas for improvement on each site for green spaces, e.g. hedges, roadways etc.
- Create an audit of works, then set clear timelines for achieving these, with input from site reps and Allotments Working Group
- Carry out monthly inspections of all allotment sites and follow up with tenants on uncultivated plots
- Keep site reps up to date on the changing status of plots
- Turnaround (prep and let out) vacated plots within 4 weeks of being vacated
- Bring overgrown plots back into use within 1-3 months of being vacated
- Target 98% occupancy rate
- Consider under what circumstances a tenant would be permitted to have multiple plots
- Split plots to reduce Waiting List and aid inexperienced growers
- Realign 'landlocked' plots with a neighbouring plot, when they become vacant to ensure as many plots as possible have access to the haulage way

#### **2. To communicate with plot holders in a timely and clear way**

##### **ACTIONS**

- Meet regularly with LALGA and site reps to aid communication between Councillors and plot holders
- Create an Allotments Handbook for new tenants
- Set up digitisation of the system to field enquiries online to reduce administration time
- Install and update noticeboards on each site containing contact info, site rep, map etc.
- Use Allotments Newsletter and direct emails as necessary
- Tenancy Agreement to be reviewed for clarity and to contain necessary information only
- Translate Tenancy Agreement and Handbook into the language of the plot holder
- Keep website updated
- Encourage participation and membership of LALGA

#### **3. To improve the security and environment of the sites**

##### **ACTIONS**

- Meet with LALGA and site reps to identify areas for improvement on each site for infrastructure, e.g. security, fencing etc.
- Create an audit of works, then set clear timelines for achieving these, with input from the site reps and Allotments Working Group

- Don't allow hens on site (this action has been deferred - it should be noted that keeping hens is a statutory right under the Allotment Acts 1950)
- Don't allow bees on site (this action has been deferred)
- Investigate options for shared or self-management of sites
- Survey water systems at sites
- Source a contractor for surveying and maintaining trees
- Encourage plot holders to report crime and anti-social behaviour to Police (101) and Town Council

## **FINANCE**

The objectives are:

### **1. To reduce the gap between income and expenditure**

At the time that the original strategy was adopted (2022) the community was emerging from the impact of the worldwide Covid pandemic, and the decision was taken that future annual fee increases should be a minimum of the rate of inflation.

#### **ACTIONS**

- The Community Resources Committee agreed that future annual fee increases should be a minimum of the rate of inflation (8 November 2022, Minute 48.2. refers)
- Investigate increasing plot deposit from £50 to £100
- Investigate introducing plot deposits based on size, e.g. Small £50, Medium £100, Large £150
- Investigate introducing a fee for joining the Waiting List
- Investigate apportioning costs of high-cost items and equipment over a longer time period
- Investigate introducing one-off charge for hens or bee keeping (this action has been deferred)
- Explore grant funding with LALGA
- Investigate introducing charging more for hen keepers to cover Pest Control prices (this action has been deferred)
- Explore options for decreasing outgoings, e.g. cost of materials

### **2. To ensure the cost to allotment holders is affordable and reasonable**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Investigate introducing an option for Direct Debits to assist payments
- Investigate introducing letting out overgrown plots for lower price, which also reduces Amenity Team costs
- Investigate introducing discount for plot holders in receipt of benefits or pension
- Maintain transparent and accessible accounts

## **BIODIVERSITY AND COMMUNITY**

The objectives are:

### **1. To improve sustainability and biodiversity on all sites**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Investigate innovative ways to compost better, research composting options
- Investigate at sustainable water supplies
- Create an 'organic' allotment site
- Investigate green waste collection

### **2. To encourage and support community engagement**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Work with local students to use this subject as a project
- Work with colleges to use our sites to support horticultural qualifications
- Launch working days with LALGA to increase a sense of ownership and community (and get some jobs done – littering etc.)
- Offer tracts of land to community groups for art, nature, scented garden projects
- Develop Community Growing Plots for local groups and schools
- Encourage plot holders to share their produce with Community Fridge etc.
- Arrange Open Days and workshops for learning new skills
- Establish a Community Growing plot
- Encourage support between plot holders as an informal type of 'Buddy System'
- Develop closer working relationship with LALGA and plot holders

### **3. To support, where possible and reasonable, people with disabilities to work an allotment**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Establish a Community Growing plot
- Prioritise accessible plots for those with clear need

### **4. To make the plots accessible for all nationalities**

#### **ACTIONS**

- Investigate translating all documents into the language of the plot holder
- Ensure the Community Growing plot is inclusive and encourage participation

---

## **THE ALLOTMENT SERVICE**

*This information sets out how the Service operates and is managed. It does not contain suggestions, specific or implied actions.*

## 1. Allotment Sites

Littlehampton's allotment community consists of six sites of varying sizes, as detailed below.

### **Worthing Road – BN17 6JQ**

Plots covering approx. 31,000 sq. m (7.66 acres)

This is the largest site and includes accessible allotment plots. Sited near the main road, it is easily accessible and has several spaces for parking. It is important to note the new Holly Drive allotments will be near to this allotment site.

### **Mill Lane – BN17 7PH**

Plots covering approx. 8,925 sq. m (2.20 acres)

This is the second largest site located by the Littlehampton Recycling Centre. It has a limited parking on site, but the roads directly outside the allotments offers alternative parking arrangements.

### **Fort Road – BN17 7EG**

Plots covering approx. 8,870 sq. m (2.20 acres)

This is a medium sized site offering allotments in a well-developed residential and industrial area. Parking is limited at site due to the nature of the location.

### **Trinidad – BN17 7PX**

Plots covering approx. 5,500 sq. m (1.35 acres)

This is a medium size site located off Lyminster Road. This site is currently bordered by vacant properties which creates issues in relation to pest control. Parking is limited but adequate.

### **Howard Road – BN17 7BT**

Plots covering approx. 1,375 sq. m (0.34 acres)

This is the smallest site with a few plots in a residential area. Parking is available and the site is easily accessed by foot from the town.

### **Kingley Gate – BN17 7AD**

Plots covering approx. 2,750 sq. m (0.68 acres)

This is the newest site, coming on board in 2018 as part of the development of Kingley Gate by Barratt Homes. This is a smaller site that also includes accessible plots. Parking is available on site.

NB: The Allotments Act of 1925, Section 8, gives protection to land acquired specifically for use as allotments, so-called statutory allotment sites, by the requirement for consent of the Secretary of State in the event of sale or disposal. However, land which was originally acquired for other purposes, and which has been used for allotments in the interim – temporary allotments – is not protected in this way.

## 2. Tenancy Agreement

The Tenancy Agreement sets out the contractual arrangements between the landowner, Littlehampton Town Council, and the tenant. This document details the requirements for managing an allotment and the protocol Littlehampton Town Council take in relation to managing and administering the allotments, in line with the conditions set out within the agreement.

### **3. Allotment Fees**

Annual allotment fees are calculated on the cost of a rod, which is approx. 25 sq. m. The majority of plots come in three sizes: Large (10 rods), Medium (5 rods) and Small (2.5 rods).

The price of a rod is reviewed and set each year in the autumn by the Community Resources Committee, with a recommendation from the Allotments Working Group. As tenants are given a year's notice of any price increase, this decision is made over a year before it comes into effect. For example, Councillors reviewed 2025's rod fee in autumn 2023. See timeline below.

- August: Annual allotment fees are discussed at the Allotments Working Group and a recommendation made to the Community Resources Committee.
- September: Community Resources Committee meets to consider the Allotments Working Group's recommendation and agree a final amount.
- December: Community Resources Committee meets to consider and approve the budget for the following financial year, which includes the annual allotment fees. (Each Committee agrees its budget and recommends it to Full Council as part of the Council's overall budget setting discussion at the Full Council Committee meeting in January.)
- January: Allotment tenants receive 12 months' notice of how much the annual allotment fees will be in the following year.

The current deposit is £50 for new tenants irrespective of plot size, with an additional £10 deposit for a site key. Kingley Gate includes an extra key for vehicle access through an additional gate; this is also covered within the £10 deposit. There is no key deposit for Howard Road as combination locks are used for these gates.

### **4. Waiting List and New Tenants**

The Town Council maintains a Waiting List for Littlehampton residents who would like an allotment. In addition to contact details, the application asks for their preferences regarding site and size of plot.

When a plot becomes available the person at the top of the Waiting List for that site is contacted and a day and time is arranged to view the vacant plot. If the plot is accepted the new plot holder is sent the relevant forms, Tenancy Agreement and invoice (made up of plot deposit, key deposit and a proportion of the annual plot fee for the remainder of the current year). Once the invoice is paid and forms signed, the new tenant picks up a gate key from the Town Council office.

The Waiting List fluctuates, but it should be noted that half of these are waiting for the smaller allotment sites that do have plots becoming available that often. i.e. Kingley Gate and Howard Road.

## **5. Site Associations**

Site associations are official groups that bring together the allotment community on a voluntary basis. They may oversee the smooth running of an allotment site, undertake minor repairs, offer members opportunities to buy seeds or compost at a discount, represent the views of its members to others or initiate projects that align with the Town Council's aspirations for the allotments.

A site association can also provide a point of focus to help create community spirit. Site associations can join the national society which gives access to legal advice and wholesale supplies. They can also apply for grant funding for onsite activity.

There are three associations currently operating on the allotments:

- The Littlehampton Allotment and Leisure Gardens Association (LALGA) is the most established and affiliated with the National Allotment Society. They offer voluntary membership for plot holders across all six sites and have storage on Worthing Road from which they provide growing material and horticultural sundries for their members.
- The Arun and Chichester Food Partnership manages two plots on Worthing Road for community growing with local groups. One of these is an accessible plot.
- The newly formed Littlehampton Community Growers is developing a proposal for establishing an orchard on Worthing Road with the support of Brighton Permaculture Trust.

## **6. Site Representatives**

Each allotment site should also have a site representative. Though this is a voluntary role it carries certain responsibilities and is often the first point of contact for liaising between the Town Council and plot holders. Their name and contact details are displayed on the notice board or gate of each site. One representative for each site attends the Allotments Working Group.

## **7. Allotments Working Group**

The Town Council and any of its committees can set up working groups to carry out defined tasks and projects. Working groups provide a valuable forum for discussions around specific topics, formed from both councillors and members of the public. Their purpose is to meet to consider issues, explore options and develop proposals to report back to its establishing committee.

Though a working group is more informal than a committee meeting it is not open to the public. Members of the public can be invited to participate if they have a specific interest or involvement in the matters being discussed.

The Allotments Working Group meets at least three times a year. It does not have decision-making authority, but it reports and can make recommendations to the Community Resources Committee.

Minutes of the Allotments Working Group are made public through the Community Resources Committee agendas and on their own dedicated page on the Town Council website. Membership of the Allotments Working Group is made up of Councillors, site reps and representatives of the associations operating on the allotment sites.

## **8. Pest Control**

Pest control is provided by a contactor on a three-year agreement. This covers all sites except Kingley Gate.

The job specification is as follows:

- To provide a programme to monitor and control rodent activity, visiting each allotment site at least 12 times in the year. Inspect the premises and carry out such pest control works as considered appropriate.
- To submit a regular report on the general condition of the premises (in relation to pest control), current infestation and treatments, and recommendations for any preventative action required by tenants or landlord (Littlehampton Town Council).
- To include the removal of up to 10 wasp nests if required, across all sites (including Kingley Gate allotment site).

## **9. Finance**

The budget for allotments is set each year in December as part of the Council's budget setting process. Costs are allocated under budget headings such as Maintenance, Security, Water etc.

Details of the allotments income and expenditure are shared with the Allotments Working Group, reported to the Community Resources Committee and published with the meeting papers on the Town Council website.

## STRATEGY ACTION PLAN

| No. | Action  | By Whom  | Time frame         |
|-----|---|--|--------------------|
| 1   | Reduce the gap between income and expenditure – through the annual review of fees and as part of the Town Council's budget setting process. | Allotments Working Group and Recommendation to the Community Resources Committee | Annually - August  |
| 2   | Annual review of Allotment Strategy Action Plan progress  | Community Resources Committee  | Annually - October |
| 3   | Deliver Infrastructure Priorities (see table of prioritised works below)  | Community Resources Committee  | Ongoing            |
| 4   | Sustainability – improve measures through investigation of green waste initiatives, composting, biodiversity                                | Allotments Working Group investigation and implementation                        | Ongoing            |
| 5   | Review and complete Allotment Handbook  | Officer and Allotments Working Group   | September 2025     |
| 6   | Review Tenancy Agreement  | Allotments Working Group and Recommendation to the Community Resources Committee | TBC                |

| <b>Actions that have been completed @ June 2025</b> |
|---|
|---|

|   |
|---|
| Infrastructure Priorities – reserve and works prioritised and plan implemented. |
|---|

|  |
|--|
| Two community growing initiatives implemented. |
|--|

|   |
|---|
| Allotments Working Group dedicated website page with Agendas and Minutes. |
|---|

|  |
|--|
| Removed the option for a free rotavation for new plot holders. |
|--|

|                               |
|-------------------------------|
| Increased key deposit to £10. |
|-------------------------------|

|  |
|--|
| Allotments noted for inclusion in council wide business continuity plan. |
|--|

| <b>Allotment Strategy Action Plan Infrastructure Priorities</b> |                      |                           |  |
|---|----------------------|---------------------------|--|
| <b>Priority</b>   | <b>Site</b>          | <b>Description</b>        | <b>Estimated Cost (Inc. Labour &amp; materials &amp; Excl.VAT)</b> |
| <b>1</b>  | <b>Trinidad</b>      | South and Southeast Fence | £ 7,707.00   |
| <b>2</b>  | <b>Worthing Road</b> | Central Track             | £ 9,190.00   |
| <b>3</b>  |                      | North Fence and Gate      | £ 12,545.00  |
| <b>4</b>  | <b>Mill Lane</b>     | South Fence Section       | £ 1,200.00   |

|                                |                      |                  |                 |
|--------------------------------|----------------------|------------------|-----------------|
| <b>Priority to be reviewed</b> | <b>Worthing Road</b> | South Fence      | £ 5,950.00      |
|                                |                      | Entrance Road    | £ 10,860.00     |
|                                |                      | Side Tracks x3   | £ 12,490.00     |
|                                | <b>Trinidad</b>      | North Fence      | £ 6,750.00      |
|                                |                      | East Fence       | £ 5,757.00      |
|                                |                      | West Fence       | £ 7,362.00      |
|                                |                      | Green Clearance  | To be confirmed |
|                                | <b>Mill Lane</b>     | North Fence      | £ 9,520.00      |
|                                | <b>Howard Road</b>   | Boundary Fencing | £ 17,750.00     |

|              |
|--------------|
| £ 107,081.00 |
|--------------|

|  |                 |
|--|-----------------|
|  | Ist Phase works |
|  | 2nd Phase works |

## USEFUL INFORMATION

The Allotments Act 1925  
[Allotments Act 1925](#)

Arun District Council Leisure and Cultural Strategy  
[Leisure Cultural Strategy for Publication April 14](#) – arun.gov.uk

West Sussex County Council Prevention Assessment Teams  
[Health and wellbeing | Living independently | West Sussex Connect to Support](#)

Sussex Community NHS Health 4 Families Programme  
[Health4Families Programme \(West Sussex\) – sussexcommunity.nhs.uk](#)

The National Allotment Society  
Social interaction on sites – [NAS-110-Policy-Document-110-SOCIAL-INTERACTION-ON-ALLOTMENT-SITES.pdf](#) – nsalg.org.uk

Community Access and Security – [NAS-Policy-Document-104-COMMUNITY-ACCESS-AND-SECURITY.pdf](#) – nsalg.org.uk

Use of land designated for allotments for other forms of gardening – [NAS-107-Policy-Document-USE-OF-LAND-DESIGNATED-ALLOTMENTS-FOR-OTHER-FORMS-OF-GARDENING.pdf](#) – nsalg.org.uk

Allotment facilities in Growing in the community: a good practice guide for the management of allotments. [growing-community-second--8f5.pdf](#) – local.gov.uk

## **INSIGHTS FROM THE ORIGINAL STRATEGY**

The information in this section was part of the first edition of the Allotment Strategy. It is now out of date or may no longer be relevant. It has been retained to assist in understanding the background to this policy that contributed to its formation.

### **The Pandemic and our Allotment Sites**

In light of the recent pandemic, it is important to highlight the impact on our allotment service and review what these sites delivered to our community. Throughout the pandemic we managed to keep our allotments open due to them being in an open environment and forming part of people's daily exercise.

In terms of provision of service, the pandemic highlighted issues around distancing and close working. We developed a Risk Assessment to ensure staff safety and that also enabled us to deliver continuation of service. Should further restrictions come into force we would be able to maintain the service with little disruption.

The pandemic brought issues with the cultivation of plots as plot holders went through their own issues, ill health, bereavement and long periods of isolation all made plot holders reluctant to return to normal activity. It also became evident that prospective plot holders need alternative options to view plots and guidance on expectations when taking on a plot.

The pandemic has seen Littlehampton Town Council change the communication methods it has in place and move to a newsletter via email. This has allowed Littlehampton Town Council to continue providing information in relation to the allotments when face to face meetings or conversations had not been possible.

It is important to note the pandemic has brought a significant shift in the need within Littlehampton for open space. This has been further exacerbated with the current cost of living crisis and as such demand for our allotments continues to grow. In 2018 we had no residents on the waiting list and at its peak in 2021 we had 220 on the list. This trend looks set to continue.

### **Engagement**

Allotment holders were invited to participate in an engagement exercise in Spring 2022 to obtain views and opinions on the service and provide a forum for ideas for improvements that can be made.

Information from the engagement exercise is within this report and a summary of the findings has been compiled in Appendix 1.

The current system for processing payments and refunds is very antiquated and resource heavy. This is being reviewed as part of the Digitisation Project.

Currently renewals commence in October. This means that processing generally completes in January. It is better in terms of plot turnover that the end date for renewals is 31 March – links with end of year and could lead to Littlehampton Town Council getting back plots that are in better condition and where it is easier for new tenants to commence with allotment preparation and planting.

The engagement survey asked plot holders their view on adding an administration charge to cover costs, but this met resistance.