



SUNNINGDALE PARISH COUNCIL

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Sunningdale Allotments - Plot Guidelines, Etiquette and Useful Information

Thank you for your interest in the Sunningdale Allotments. Any queries or problems that you may have should be directed to the Deputy Clerk. The Parish Council website has [an allotment page](#) which includes news, links to articles for new growers, plus a link to a detailed history of the site.

The objective of this document is to provide a comprehensive set of guidelines, plot etiquette and other useful information which are based on the tenancy agreement, the rules regarding plot inspections plus traditional site customs and conventions.

General

An annual plot inspection is carried out in early May each year to ensure that allotments are being cultivated. The basic criteria are:

- A minimum of 65% of the plot must show evidence of being under cultivation
- Any area that is not cultivated in one year must be cultivated the following year
- The grass paths that you are responsible for must be kept in reasonable condition.

Allowances for non-compliance can be made at the discretion of the Parish Council in the case of illness, recent arrival as a plot holder or other acceptable reason. Please report any problems that you may be having in meeting the criteria in good time.

A plot holder must always show consideration to neighbouring plot holders:

- avoid large shrubs or trees which will cast a shadow over a neighbour's plot
- do not allow brambles or pernicious weeds such as couch grass, bindweed and ground elder to invade your neighbour's plot
- similarly, do not allow annual weeds to seed and be blown over neighbouring plots.

Bonfires are only allowed in the incinerator (the metal cage in the SE corner). Fires are limited to the burning of predominantly woody material only, e.g. soft fruit prunings, soft fruit bushes that are no longer required, asparagus fronds at the end of the year, *et cetera*. Green material, e.g. weeds, dead plant material *et cetera*, must not be burned there. They should either be composted on your plot or removed from the site. If you propose to have a fire in the incinerator please check the weather conditions, particularly the wind direction, and ensure that your fire does not upset the local residents or other plot holders. While one or two plot holders may undertake the periodic burning of large amounts of woody material in the incinerator, please note that a free service is not being provided, i.e. do not simply leave material in the vicinity of the incinerator in the expectation that it will be burned for you. If you would like material to be burned for you then seek out the person(s) who perform the bulk burning and see if they are happy to do it for you.

The grass paths which a plot holder is responsible for must be kept in reasonable condition. The arrows on the accompanying site map indicate which paths each plot holder is responsible for. There is a cheap push mower for communal use which can be found in the copse at the east end of the site – although it is not really suitable for long grass or uneven ground.

Water is available during the growing season. The normal dates are: the Monday before the start of British Summer Time for turning the water on; and the Monday after the end of BST for turning it off.

Compost heaps must be actively managed to reduce the risk of rats & other vermin taking up residence.

It is a site convention that **surplus plants, produce or sundries** are left in the vicinity of the seat (just round the corner from the notice board) for other plot holders to take. Donors should remove any offerings which have not been taken after a reasonable time has passed, typically one month for non-perishable items.

Most plot holders obtain their **manure** from Broomhall Farm. If manure from the farm (or indeed anywhere else) cannot be delivered directly onto your plot it is advisable to put a sign with your plot number on wherever it is left, to prevent other plot holders from thinking that it is freely available.

The annual judging for the best plot awards normally takes place at the end of June.

The typical places where a vehicle may be parked on the site are shown on the attached site map. Do not park in the area shown in red, as other plot holders who wish to park in the SE or E side of the site need to use this space to turn their cars round. If you are parking in the far SE corner please park beyond the sign that is pinned to the deer fence.

The last plot holder to leave the site must lock the gate. If you are unsure, for whatever reason, that you are the last person, e.g. there is a car in the car park without a sign of anybody then close the gate and go through the motions of locking the gate without actually snapping the padlock shut (the padlock is hidden from normal view). This will allow anybody to get in/out without a key while looking to a casual observer from Church Road as if it is locked.

For parents / guardians – **children are very welcome**, particularly if they are learning about growing crops. However, it is important to realise that an allotment site can be a very dangerous place and should not be regarded as a playground. To minimise the likelihood of accidents please ensure that children do not go onto any plot other than your own.

What IS Allowed

The cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs, flowers and other decorative plants.

Any trees (fruit, nut, bay, *et cetera*) should be regularly pruned to avoid causing problems to neighbouring plot holders. Ideally, the overall height should not exceed 12 feet. For top fruit such as apples it is recommended that dwarf-rooting stock is used.

Hosepipes can be used. However, they must not be left unattended. Also, beware of leaking hose connectors wasting water and potentially flooding other plots.

Tool chests and storage containers (maximum 5 feet high).

Cloches (made of plastic, pvc, fleece or glass) and cold frames. They may be proprietary products or Heath Robinson affairs, e.g. double glazing panels.

Plastic structures, typically called “mini greenhouses”, up to 6 feet high, 4 feet 6 inches wide and 6 feet deep. They must be portable, i.e. not permanent, and they must not shade neighbouring plots. They should be taken down over the winter to prevent wind damage.

Non-walk-in polytunnels that are erected and dismantled each season.

As detailed in the general section above, bonfires are only allowed in the incinerator.

Fruit cages and other structures covered with netting or chicken wire that are used solely for the purpose of protecting crops from the wildlife.

Metal, plastic or wooden frames or canes (with/without netting) to support crops such as beans and blackberries.

Compost bins made of wood, metal mesh or plastic.

Raised beds. Raised bed surrounds (where they are used) can be made of wood or plastic. The paths between raised beds can be covered with bark, chippings, carpet, paving stones, bricks, weed suppressant fabric or black plastic.

The use of carpets, weed suppressant fabric or black plastic to cover areas of the allotment in an attempt to kill weeds, particularly on a recently acquired plot. However, their use should be limited to no more than one year on any given area. These materials can also be used over the winter to prevent weeds growing.

The use of fleece, enviromesh and similar products to protect crops.

What is NOT Allowed

Sheds and any permanent structures, e.g. greenhouses and walk-in polytunnels.

Any structure that is attached to a boundary fence.

The enclosure of all or part of the allotment by means of fencing, hedging or other material, except for compost bins and cages or other netting arrangements which are used solely to protect crops,.

Any structure which is construed as an attempt to prevent ordinary access to the plot or part of the plot by the Parish Council.

The storage of any items on an allotment or adjacent to it which the Parish Council considers do not relate to normal allotment activities.

Dogs are not allowed on the site except in exceptional circumstances and only with the written permission of the Parish Council.

The keeping of any animals on an allotment, e.g. pigs, poultry, pigeons *et cetera*.

The dumping of waste (green or non-green) anywhere on the site.

Bonfires are not allowed on your plot.

Please do not assume that anything which is not specifically mentioned above is automatically permitted. If you are in any doubt about what is allowed then consult the Parish Council who will act as the sole arbiters on these matters. The Parish Council may request the removal of any structure, tree, plant or shrub which it considers does not comply with these guidelines or with the spirit of the guidelines.

Nikki Tomlinson

Deputy Clerk to Sunningdale Parish Council

7th March 2023


Sunningdale Parish Council Allotment Site Map


version dated March 2023



Notes Arrows indicate paths for which individual plot holders are responsible for.

W = Water Tank **S** = Standpipe

 = car parking position(s) so long as you do not block anybody else

 = do not park here

