Horfield & District Allotments Association

Cultivation Guidelines

The Tenancy Agreement

The Tenancy Agreement requires you, as the Tenant, to work your plot and to keep two-thirds of it cultivated and fulfilling this requirement is a significant commitment. You should aim to cultivate your plot regularly and, in summer, this will mean putting in four to six hours of work per week. If you find that you only come occasionally, or only when reminded to by your field representatives, you will not meet the cultivation requirement and your plot will be a burden to you. Should you find that being responsible for a plot has become a burden, please discuss other options with your field representatives, such as continuing on a smaller area that is easier to manage or handing your plot back to the Association – we have a long waiting list.

What counts as cultivation?

First and foremost, think about what to plant, where and when. You may to choose to use dig or no-dig, a row system, a bed system, raised beds or a combination of all of these. Whichever system you choose, the ground must be planted and tended throughout the normal cycle of growth, which means weeding, watering, feeding, providing plant supports, protecting, harvesting and pruning. Your field representatives may be able to help with planning and deciding on crop rotation, or you could obtain help from a fellow tenant on your field. We do not expect immediate two thirds cultivation when a new tenant takes on a neglected plot; the Field Representative will discuss the situation with the tenant and agree staged progress towards meeting the requirements of the Tenancy Agreement.

What does not count as cultivation?

In order to help establish a definition of cultivation, the list below includes what is not considered to be cultivation:

- Non-growing structures such as sheds, compost bins, out-of-use polytunnels and out-of-use greenhouses.
- Piles of material such as bricks, slabs, metal, plastic, rubbish etc.
- Paths within the plot boundary
- Trees, other than provision for two fruit trees grown on dwarfing root stock per five-perch plot and allowing for an area 1.5 times the spread of the tree canopies.[1]
- Areas where a boundary hedge has been allowed to encroach onto the plot.

[1] *Where a mature tree has been inherited from a previous tenant and field representatives have agreed that it can be retained, an area 1.5 times the spread of the tree's canopy can count as cultivated ground.*

- Any areas of grass, even if the grass is strimmed.
- Paved areas
- Areas covered in weed mat and /or woodchip, cardboard, or plastic sheeting, other than as a temporary measure agreed with the Field Representative for a specific period.
- Garden furniture
  The total area covered by all of the above must not exceed one-third of the area of the plot.