

BILBROOK PARISH COUNCIL
Allotment Policy and Procedures

1. Policy Statement

This document sets out the policy and procedures of Bilbrook Parish Council for the provision and management of allotments within the parish.

2. Eligibility

Bilbrook Parish Council provides allotments primarily for residents of Bilbrook. Residents of neighbouring parishes may also apply, but Bilbrook residents will be given priority, regardless of how long neighbouring residents have been on the waiting list.

2. Allocation of Plots

1. Each new allotment holder will be allocated a half plot or a smaller plot subject to their preference and the availability of plots.
2. Bilbrook Parish Council will not allocate full plots to new tenants.

3. Rents and Deposits

1. The Council may review the rent for each Allotment Plot once in any twelve-month period, typically coinciding with the start of the Council's financial or allotment year (or such other date as the Council shall determine).
2. The Council shall notify the Tenant in writing of any proposed change to the rent at least three (3) calendar months prior to the date when the revised rent is to take effect.
3. In determining any new rent, the Council shall have regard to:
 - a. the Council's reasonable costs in maintaining and managing the allotment site (including water supply, fencing, paths, waste disposal, administration, etc.)
 - b. significant changes in operating costs, inflation, or other relevant overheads;
 - c. the rents charged for comparable allotment plots in the local area; and
 - d. the need to ensure that rents remain fair, affordable, and proportionate.
4. In any single review, the new rent shall not exceed a reasonable level: that is, what a tenant may reasonably be expected to pay considering the facilities and services provided. Any increase must be justified based on costs or comparable local rents.
5. Notification of Rationale (on Request): If requested in writing by the Tenant within 28 days of receiving the rent-review notice, the Council will provide a summary explanation of the reasons for the increase.
6. Should the Tenant disagree with the proposed new rent, the Tenant may give written notice to terminate the tenancy before the increase takes effect. Termination under this clause shall take effect on the proposed date for the new rent.
7. The Council will review rents no more than once in each twelve-month period. If in any year the Council chooses not to change the rent, the same rent will continue until the next review.
8. New tenants must pay a **non-refundable administration fee of £20** for the first 12 months, in addition to the annual rent.

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3. Waiting List and Priority Order

The Parish Council will maintain a waiting list. Plots will be allocated in the following priority order:

1. Existing tenants wishing to exchange plots (subject to their current plot being well cultivated). Tenants must have had an agreement in place for a minimum of one month before any exchange is allowed.
2. Bilbrook residents without an allotment who are on the waiting list.
3. Existing tenants of a half plot who wish to upgrade to a full plot. (If a waiting list is in operation, they must join it. Additional plots will only be offered if their current plot is well cultivated.)
4. Non-Bilbrook residents without an allotment plot.

The Parish Council reserves the right to vary the order of priority for plot allocation when it is deemed reasonable and beneficial for the efficient management of the allotments.

5. Responsibilities of the Parish Clerk and/or Assistant Clerk

The Parish Clerk or Assistant will:

1. Receive and process allotment applications on a first-come, first-served basis, subject to Section 4 above.
2. Maintain the allotment register and site plan.
3. Keep the waiting list updated and periodically contact applicants to confirm continued interest.
4. Issue annual rent demands, payable on **1st January** each year.
5. Arrange regular inspections for the Parish Council Allotments Committee in March, June, and September.
6. Arrange inspections of new tenant plots one month after the tenancy start date. (See Figure 1 for process flow.)
7. Ensure allotment holders comply with the terms of their tenancy agreement and the rules set by the Allotments Committee.

6. Responsibilities of Allotment Holders

All allotment holders must comply with the terms of their tenancy agreement and with any allotment rules established by the Allotments Committee.

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History of Review

Date of Review	Description of Revision
Dec 2025	<p>Replaced the following entries under Section 3 Rents and Deposits:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Allotment rents will be reviewed annually by the Parish Council and notified in December. 2. New rental rates will take effect from the next renewal date <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) With The Council may review the rent for each Allotment Plot once in any twelve-month period, typically coinciding with the start of the Council's financial or allotment year (or such other date as the Council shall determine). 2) The Council shall notify the Tenant in writing of any proposed change to the rent at least three (3) calendar months prior to the date when the revised rent is to take effect. 3) In determining any new rent, the Council shall have regard to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) the Council's reasonable costs in maintaining and managing the allotment site (including water supply, fencing, paths, waste disposal, administration, etc.) b) significant changes in operating costs, inflation, or other relevant overheads; c) the rents charged for comparable allotment plots in the local area; and d) the need to ensure that rents remain fair, affordable, and proportionate. 4) In any single review, the new rent shall not exceed a reasonable level: that is, what a tenant may reasonably be expected to pay considering the facilities and services provided. Any increase must be justified based on costs or comparable local rents. 5) Notification of Rationale (on Request): If requested in writing by the Tenant within 28 days of receiving the rent-review notice, the Council will provide a summary explanation of the reasons for the increase. 6) Should the Tenant disagree with the proposed new rent, the Tenant may give written notice to terminate the tenancy before the increase takes effect. Termination under this clause shall take effect on the proposed date for the new rent. 7) The Council will review rents no more than once in each twelve-month period. If in any year the Council chooses not to change the rent, the same rent will continue until the next review.

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Sept 2025	<p>General: Document condensed. Section titles and bullet points added. Removed repetition. Added image of allotment inspection process flow.</p> <p>2.1 Replace “Each new allotment holder may be allocated either one full plot or one half plot” with “Each new allotment holder will be allocated a half plot or a smaller plot subject to their preference and the availability of plots”.</p> <p>2.2 Replaced “New tenants will only be offered a half plot in the first instance” with “Billbrook Parish Council will not allocate full plots to new tenants.”</p> <p>3.3 Replaced word ‘deposit’ with ‘administration fee’.</p> <p>4.1 Sentence added “Tenants must have had an agreement in place for a minimum of one month before any exchange is allowed.”</p> <p>4. Sentence added “The Parish Council reserves the right to vary the order of priority for plot allocation when it is deemed reasonable and beneficial for the efficient management of the allotments”.</p> <p>5.6 Replaced “Process flow to follow” with “See Image 1 below for process flow”.</p>
Oct 2024	<p>3. Replace “New tenants will be charged a rental of 2 x the usual rental fee for the first 12 months rental.” with “New Tenants will be charged a non-refundable deposit of £20 for the first 12 months, plus the annual rental.”</p> <p>4c. replace “take on another half plot” to “take on a full plot”</p>
Sept 2023	<p>3. Introduction of higher initial rental fee for new tenants.</p> <p>5.5 Addition of formal inspection schedule for all plots</p> <p>5.6 Addition of inspections of new tenant’s plots from 1 month after start of agreement (process flow to follow).</p>