

# Residents' & Environmental Services Policy Overview Committee - Allotments Report

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## REASON FOR ITEM

The Committee had requested an update on the provision of allotments in the Borough.

## OPTIONS OPEN TO THE COMMITTEE

The Committee is asked to note the contents of the current Allotments policy, acknowledge the current Allotment service and are invited to ask for further information if necessary.

## INFORMATION

This report is accompanied by *Appendix 1 - Joint Allotment Strategy*, and *Appendix 2 - Map of Allotment Sites in the Borough*.

1. Green Spaces employs a dedicated officer to manage all Borough allotments.
2. Allotment management are classified as Schemes:

### Scheme A

A simple scheme was identified to improve the condition of sites. Administrative work and collection of rents would remain with the Council. Any society undertaking the scheme would have a small float to cover postage or other expenses.

### Scheme B

This involves the society undertaking the renting of plots, including maintenance costs up to an agreed financial limit with the society retaining all of the rental income.

## 3. Statistics relating to the LBH Allotments

Complete number of plots borough wide - **1157**

- Number of allotment sites - **35**
- Number of Fully devolved self managed sites - **7**
- Number of L.B.H allotment sites - **27**
- Number of vacant plots - **236** (some plots are not as viable due to hydrology and drainage issues)
- Free plots issued to the over 65's - **314**
- 60 + disabled - **1**
- 60 + concession - **69**

#### **4. Fees and Charges**

Fees and Charges are frozen again for 2016/17.

Half price concessions are still being offered to residents on benefits and residents over the age of 60 at a 50% discount rate.

Allotments are free to those over the age of 65. All the fully devolved (fully managed) sites are re-reimbursed for the plots allocated to the over 65s, and the costs go towards onsite maintenance.

#### **5. Investment**

##### **Recent examples of Capital (Chrysalis) improvements**

2014-2015:

- Hill end Access track cost involved - **£21.000k**
- Western Avenue car park and fence - **£47.100k**
- Moor Lane access track and fence - **£30.100k**

##### **Scheduled for 2016**

- Southbourn (Oak Grove) Allotment Concrete access pad - **£26k**

#### **6. Maintenance**

The Borough assists with grass cutting of paths and the maintenance of uncultivated plots, and can also assist in the cultivation of new plots. Building and plumbing repairs are undertaken by our main term contractor.

#### **7. Meeting attendance**

Paul Richards, Head of Green Spaces, Sport and Culture, and Adrian Batten, Green Spaces Manager, will attend the meeting to introduce the report and answer Members' questions.