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Gowkthrapple Allotment Feasibility Study

Final Report

by

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The regeneration of Gowkthrapple is a key priority project for North Lanarkshire Council (NLC). Having developed The Gowkthrapple Regeneration Masterplan and Gowkthrapple Green Network Strategy, NLC and its partners seek to promote a series of long term, sustainable changes to the living standards, place qualities and opportunities for communities under the themes of:

- Stronger Communities;
- Health Improvements;
- Biodiversity and Environment; and
- Enterprise Development.

As part of the regeneration project, and in line with recent support for allotment gardens from national and local government, North Lanarkshire Council, Glasgow Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership and Scottish Government identified the importance and ability of allotment gardens to deliver results on each of these sustainable themes.

Allotments have demonstrated an ability to facilitate and contribute to a wide spectrum of national and local plans and policies, related to enabling the move towards sustainable development, including:

- community and social inclusion;
- healthy living;
- lifelong learning;
- green space provision;
- thriving biodiversity; and
- increased awareness of sustainable issues (i.e. recycling).

NLC and its partners commissioned Ironside Farrar to undertake a detailed feasibility study on allotment provision in or around Gowkthrapple. This study assessed the feasibility of developing a community allotment garden on the existing Blaes Sports area, Gowkthrapple and provides guidance on management, legal obligations, allotment design and community engagement to better harness the social and environmental benefits.

NLC currently provides for three allotment sites with evidence that there is public demand for more sites. The assessment of the Blaes Sports pitch area concluded the site was suitable for development of an allotment garden. This site offered greater benefits when compared to two other potential sites within Gowkthrapple. Key factors include:

- A strong potential for initiating a thriving community hub due to location and setting.
- Potential for use of existing building facilities and services, (overall major financial advantage as start up costs will be relatively low);

Ironside Farrar attended a public engagement event at Gowkthrapple Community Centre as part of the study, which confirmed a level of local interest and willingness in running allotments that should be embraced and built upon for the future.

The report concludes with a number of recommendations to progress and develop allotment provision in Gowkthrapple and the wider North Lanarkshire Council area:

- Further consultation with the local population;
- Piloting the Gowkthrapple Allotment Garden project to gain vital experience (apply for all appropriate planning consents);
- Raise awareness and encourage local involvement in allotments; and
- Establish strong local authority support and guidance.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

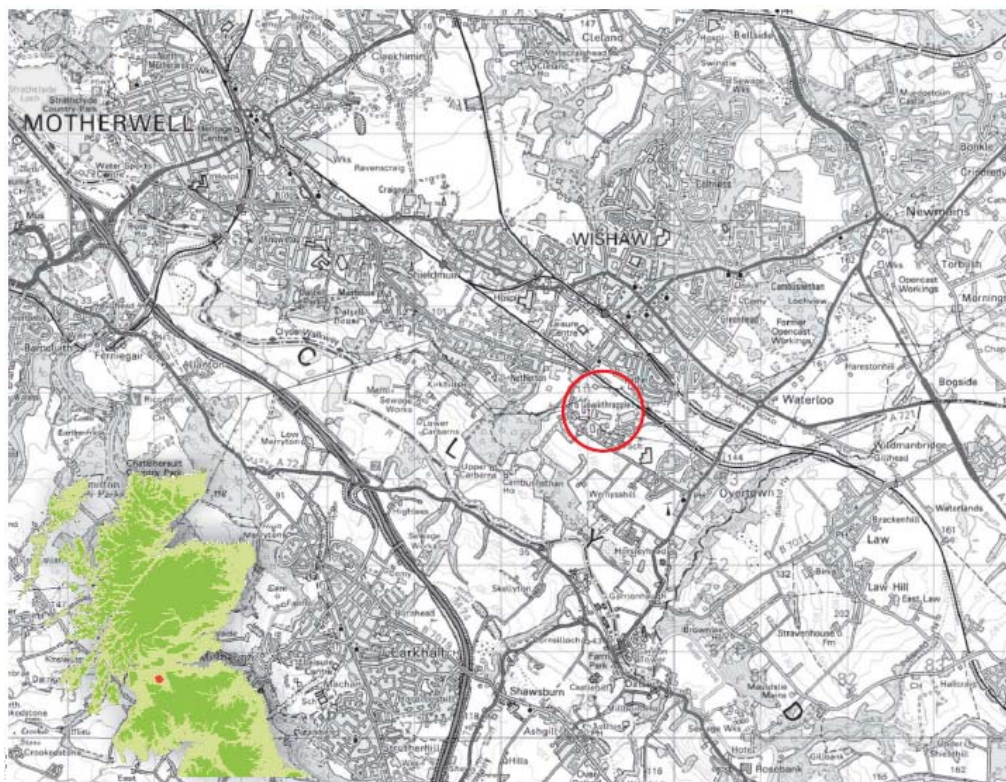
1.1 Background

The regeneration of Gowkthrapple is a key priority project for North Lanarkshire Council (NLC) which intends to work with public and private partners and the community to create a new sustainable settlement and a balanced community and neighbourhood structure.

The Gowkthrapple Regeneration Masterplan and Gowkthrapple Green Network Strategy seek to promote a series of long term, sustainable changes to the living standards, place qualities and opportunities for communities under the themes of:

- Stronger Communities;
- Health Improvements;
- Biodiversity and Environment; and
- Enterprise Development.

As part of the regeneration project and with the intention of delivering meaningful sustainability objectives on the ground, North Lanarkshire Council, Glasgow Clyde Valley Green Network Partnership and Scottish Government commissioned Ironside Farrar to undertake a detailed feasibility study on Allotment Provision in or around Gowkthrapple to review and consider in more detail the Masterplan Proposal for allotments in the area of the Community Centre and existing Blaes Sports Area.



Location of study

1.2 Study Purpose & Objectives

Allotments provide an important resource for communities and North Lanarkshire Council is considering developing a new strategy for allotments across the council area. A demand for allotments has been identified in the Motherwell / South Wishaw area and this opportunity together with the Gowkthrapple Green Network and Regeneration Strategy suggest opportunity may exist to link initiatives and secure area wide benefits.

The study objectives are as follows:

- to assess the potential/ feasibility for an allotment on a potential site identified by the Gowkthrapple Masterplan;
- to identify the steps necessary for the formation of an Allotment Group that brings together members of the public from Gowkthrapple and the surrounding area;
- To test the feasibility of creating allotments in this location and report on issues of design, community engagement, demand, cost and make recommendations on the Way Forward;
- To consult with local community representatives and other stakeholders on allotments including officers of the council; and
- To provide information on implementation and management.

1.3 Structure

This document is prepared to provide interim guidance and report on progress of the NLC Allotment Strategy. Allotment provision in NLC is summarised and an assessment is made of sites identified as potential new allotment gardens in Gowkthrapple. Additionally, best practice allotment management and design information is described in detail as a source of reference and guidance for NLC and its partners.

2.0 ALLOTMENTS – HISTORY & STRATEGIC VALUE

2.1 Provision & Demand

Within the UK, allotments were originally provided as land put aside to enable families to grow their own food and supplement their diets, during the late 1800's. Since then, both provision and demand of allotments has changed with the prevailing social and economic conditions. Between the two world wars, people were encouraged to use allotments to help overcome food shortages. The number of plots in the UK reached a maximum of approximately 1.5million during the Second World War and the Dig for Victory campaign, with an estimated overall production rate of 3million tonnes of fruit and vegetables a year. After the war the popularity of allotments declined, largely due to greater national prosperity and a growing leisure industry, eventually allotment numbers stabilised during the 1990's.

Most recently, changing societal attitudes focussing on quality of life, increased awareness and rising concerns over the provenance of food, its agricultural treatment and the natural environment has seen the UK popularity of allotments increase. In Scotland, however, assessing changes in demand and provision is made difficult, attributed to the fact there is no central collation of figures and allotments are often classed by Local Authorities alongside other green spaces including parks, gardens and cemeteries.

Despite a lack of regularly updated national figures, two surveys have been undertaken. A 1999 survey by The Food Trust of Scotland estimated 4,000 to 4,500 allotment plots were in operation, two thirds of which were provided in the four cities of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dundee and Aberdeen. This figure is down from the peak of 70,000 plots in Scotland during the Second World War which is mainly attributed to the allotments either reverting to their former use or being lost to housing or commercial development. A second more comprehensive survey, carried out by the Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society in 2007, indicated an increase in recorded allotment sites with the total number of individual plots estimated at 6,300.

In addition, increased demand for plots is evident in full occupancy rates and waiting list figures for Edinburgh and Glasgow of 3 and 2-3 years respectively, although, across Scotland, it should be noted that levels of demand do vary and often the greatest demand is restricted to urban areas.

2.2 Strategic Value

In addition to public demand, allotments have also garnered national and local government support as they have been recognised for their ability to facilitate and contribute to a wide spectrum of national and local plans and policies, related to enabling the move towards sustainable development. Support can come in the form of community and social inclusion, healthy living, lifelong learning, green space provision, biodiversity and recycling. Details of the key benefits associated with thriving allotments are set out below:

Environmental Benefits

- Biodiversity – The natural allotment characteristics and gardening practices used within allotment sites plays a significantly active role in protecting and promoting biodiversity. The majority of fruiting trees, shrubs and vegetation commonly found on allotment sites depend on insect pollination whilst, at the same time, offering foraging and roosting habitat suitable for a wide variety of birds and mammals. Combined with organic practices commonly employed by

- plot holders, allotments can support a significant ecosystem, with particular benefit in built up areas where there may otherwise be an absence of cultivated green space;
- Sustainability – Allotments make a contribution to sustainability by promoting and facilitating composting and sustainability practices such as rain water harvesting and production of local food which doesn't require transportation and 'food mile' emissions.

Social Benefits

- Healthy Living – Allotments provide the opportunity for year-round exercise and social interaction whilst producing fresh fruit and vegetables which help improve a healthy lifestyle, reflecting the ideals of sustainability and well being. Additionally, the NHS has developed connections with local allotment sites where GPs prescribe patients to take up a plot with the intention of them benefiting from the associated social interaction and exercise;
- Social Interaction – Allotments foster community development and cohesiveness. Examples include allotment associations that show a commitment to their communities through organising open days and social events; those who tend to allotments often establish a community of people who interact, a benefit to everyone on site, in particular for individuals who would otherwise be isolated including the elderly, unemployed or those with mental ill health; and
- Education – Sites enable the local community to learn and develop new life skills. In particular, many allotments now reserve plots specifically for schools or youth/ adult training schemes.

Specific Benefits for the Gowkthrapple Community

- Social benefits attributed to allotment gardens are considered to be of particular relevance to Gowkthrapple, as this area remains in the 15% most deprived areas within North Lanarkshire (according to the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation). In addition, these benefits are seen to play a part in supporting the Government's Agenda. Particular benefits that could be achieved include:
 - Generation of a thriving heart to the community which stimulates social cohesion and the creation of a sense of community ownership and pride;
 - Increase the health of local individuals through participation in sustained and long term outdoor activities;
 - Improve individuals diets and eating habits;
 - Provision of opportunities which create a focus for, and sense of achievement to, local people who may be unemployed, suffering from an illness or disabled; and
 - Can act as a centre for education; raising awareness of sustainability issues and enable the teaching of new life skills.

3.0 POLICY & LEGISLATIVE CONTEXT

3.1 Policy

The provision of allotments is guided by local and national policies. At a national level, acknowledgement of the value of allotments to the quality of people's lives and the environment is reflected within the Scottish Planning Policy SPP11, Physical Activity and Open Space, which refers to the protection and provision of allotments. A response initiated by the 2003 Local Government Committee Inquiry into Allotments which recommended that 'the issue of allotment provision should be considered in future planning guidelines'.

However, within Scotland, at a local level there is an inconsistent approach to management of allotments. The Finding Scotland's Allotments 2007 report by Scottish Allotments & Gardens Society found only one local authority has produced an Allotment Strategy; and Glasgow and Edinburgh are the only two local authorities which hold a policy relating specifically to allotments within their Local Plans.

Allotments also fall under the UK Biodiversity Action Plan Broad Habitat, 'Built Up Areas and Gardens,' and therefore are included in the national strategy for the conservation of biological diversity and the sustainable use of biological resources.

The Southern Area Local Plan (2008), under which the proposed allotment will be situated, currently does not provide a policy for the specific protection of allotments but it is North Lanarkshire Council's intention to develop an Allotment Strategy for the Council Area. This is currently being coordinated by John White (Technical Services Manager, Grounds and Estates).

3.2 Legislation

Legislation regarding allotment provision and protection varies across the UK. Local authorities in England and Wales are required to gain ministerial approval for disposal of allotments, but in Scotland and Northern Ireland there is no such legal obligation.

Despite the lack of statutory duty for the disposal of allotment sites, within Scotland, local authorities are provided specific powers and obligations under the Allotments (Scotland) Acts 1892, 1950 and 1992 and the Land Settlement (Scotland) Act 1919. The Allotments Act is the key statutory tool for local authorities as regards allotments and sets out their duties in relation to allotment provision.

The 1892 Act set out local authorities' duties in relation to allotment provision. "Allotment" is defined by size, to a maximum total area of one acre, enabling an allotment holder to keep farm animals.

The 1922 Act introduced the concept of the allotment garden – a smaller area of ground to be used mainly for the cultivation of vegetables for consumption by the allotment holder and his/her family. The current use of the term 'allotment' should properly be 'allotment garden'.

Under the Allotments (Scotland) Act Councils have powers to:

- acquire land through purchase or lease and to do so by agreement or through compulsory measures;
- improve the land acquired for allotments. This may be by enclosing the land, draining it, dividing it into allotments or creating approaches or roads; and
- make regulations as they consider appropriate to regulate the letting of allotments. This covers matters such as eligibility, size of allotments, conditions as to how they may be cultivated, rent, period of notice. Such regulations require to be put to public consultation and then to the Scottish Ministers for confirmation.

Councils are required to:

- make the allotment regulations known by such means as it *thinks* fit and provide to any local resident upon demand a free copy of the regulations;
- keep a register available for public inspection showing the details of (i) the tenancy, acreage and rent of each allotment and (ii) any unlet allotments; and
- provide an annual statement of accounts in respect of the city's allotment provision.

The legislation makes provision for the termination of allotment leases,

- where the council wishes to terminate the tenancy of land used as allotment; it *must* give the tenant a minimum of twelve months notice to expire on or before 1 May or 1 November in any year;
- where the allotments are ON land leased to the council for the purpose of subletting for use as allotments, *the* council is also subject to the statutory provisions for termination; and
- The lessor may also terminate the tenancy by resuming possession in the event of irritancy of the lease through a breach by the tenant of the allotment regulations.

'Allotments in Scotland: Guidance Notes for Scottish Councils' (COSLA 2006) give further guidance on councils' legislative powers to acquire, manage and develop land for the purpose of allotments.

4.0 LOCAL AUTHORITY GUIDANCE

The following guidance on the provision, management and protection of allotment sites is detailed further within the Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA) report entitled 'Allotments in Scotland – Guidance Notes for Scottish Councils 2006'.

This very useful report sets out a range of guidance to Local Authorities on the arrangement, management and best practice for allotment sites.

4.1 Allotment Provision and Management

Allotment management practices can vary between and within local authorities. The two methods for management of allotment sites include:

Centralised Management

The role of each council as a provider of allotments may vary considerably between local authorities. Depending on the scale of allotment sites under their jurisdiction councils may manage and run their allotments centrally where a designated allotments officer is given responsibility for the tasks of maintaining the sites, letting plots, charging rentals and operating waiting lists. However, often these responsibilities are shared between parks department staff.

Centralised running helps to maintain allotments as a priority within a council and may help with securing budgets for investment and repairs. It also ensures that plot holders can be assured of fair and equitable treatment.

Devolved Management

Where the number of allotment sites does not warrant the employment of a dedicated allotments officer, councils often devolve management responsibilities to the allotment holders in the form of site associations, and this devolvement can be either partial, or more-or-less total. Some operate a mix of centrally run and devolved sites and there are advantages to both approaches.

Devolved management tends to encourage plot holders to be more self-sufficient, increases their sense of ownership, and allows them to be creative in seeking funds for investment.

Best Practice:

- Councils are encouraged to accurately assess the number of plots within their area and the demand for them. When forming local plans, councils should count allotments separately from other forms of green space.
- Councils are encouraged to establish a clear point of officer contact for all queries relating to allotments. Requests for allotments should be dealt with in a clear and transparent manner. This will allow councils to take a consistent approach to any queries, and will enable them to build up a picture of the demand for allotments and the issues that local communities raise in relation to them.
- Councils should seek to ensure that site associations are properly constituted and that the terms of their constitutions ensure a fair, objective and non-discriminatory approach. A constitution determines the make up of the committee and a lease to give the allotment security of tenure (a draft constitution is provided in Appendix 1).

4.2 Protection and Promotion of Sites

It is accepted that there are inevitable resource and prioritisation issues when a council is providing allotment sites, particularly when creating new sites. Issues envisaged to be restrictive are lack of parcels of land of suitable size and location, and the prohibitive costs of acquisition. Nonetheless councils can act as enabler by promoting the development of a group of aspirant allotment growers and facilitating their lease of a privately owned or surplus plot of land, which could be wholly managed by the plot holders themselves. This model operates successfully in some council areas.

In addition, councils may also face pressure to sell off council owned sites for development, or to allow private sites to be built on. Particularly in urban areas where allotments may occupy prime locations which offer potentially significant financial returns. However, councils are encouraged to consider the benefits provided by allotments, as described in Paragraph 2.2, and the likely permanent loss of this amenity if development takes place. Where allotments have fallen into disuse it may seem hard to justify resisting such development, and in these circumstances a council may consider promoting the allotment site.

Councils should also consider including allotment sites, both private and council owned, in green and open space plans. During the planning applications process this can help councils determine where there is an established site. Some councils have developed a policy of refusing applications to build on allotment sites unless a new and alternative site can be provided in its place.

Best Practice:

- Councils should undertake the promotion of underused sites and take steps to promote allotment gardening as part of sustainability and healthy living initiatives. Use of the local authority website as a source of information and a tool to raise awareness of allotment provision is recommended.
- In line with the likely future requirements for local authorities to have regard to open and green space audits, an 'early warning scheme' should be established to alert officers with responsibility for allotments as to any planning application that might impact on allotment sites.

4.3 Issues

The purpose of this section is to determine the general issues affecting allotment provision and management across Scotland, including North Lanarkshire. As previously discussed, there is a variation in the pattern between local authority ownership and management, with many people denied access to a plot of land close to their home where they can garden. This is mainly as a result of the following:

- **Lack of statutory obligations** - Unlike in England, Scottish local authorities are not required to gain ministerial approval for disposal of statutory allotments, which is based on strict conditions. As described by the Scottish Allotments & Gardens Society, cases where an allotment site is lost is almost without exception due to the lack of a protective policy statement in the council's Local Plan rather than lack of demand.

- **Inadequate policy protection** - Council Local Plans are legal documents relating to current and future land use within local authority boundaries and they have a significant impact on the loss or gain of allotment provision. Glasgow and Edinburgh are currently the only two local authorities which provide policies relating to allotments within their Local Plans. In addition Edinburgh is the only local authority with an active Allotment Strategy. However, despite the lack of protective policy statements, development pressure in Scotland has been much less than that experienced in England throughout the 1990's.
- **Insufficient monitoring and assessment** - The overall level of provision of allotments is unclear as many councils have not kept sufficiently detailed records of both council and privately owned sites within their boundaries. In addition, allotments have been grouped with other features such as cemeteries in open space audits and Local Plans. Thus, increasing the difficulty of planning for future management of both existing sites and ascertaining the level of demand for new sites.
- **Shortfalls in delegation of responsibilities** – As few as nine councils have a designated Allotment Officer and only two of those have allotments as their main remit. Local authorities lack specific allotment contacts and are often unclear as to who is the staff member responsible for allotment queries. In some cases, those council officers offered responsibility for allotments hold little information regarding their management and have not visited many/ any of the allotment sites.

By following and implementing the best practice principles provided by COSLA in Chapter 4 and the requirements of the Allotments (Scotland) Act, local authorities should be capable of overcoming many of these shortfalls and potential hurdles.

Current Status of Allotment Provision in North Lanarkshire

North Lanarkshire Council currently provides for three allotment sites, none of which the council manages directly. The council has devolved management responsibilities to Allotment Associations for two sites, these include:

- Drumpellier Park (Coatbridge Allotments), Blair Road, Coatbridge (council owned).
- Cumbernauld, Cumbernauld (council owned)

The third allotment is privately owned and managed:

- Clyde Valley Avenue, Motherwell (independently owned)



Clyde Valley Avenue, Motherwell

Blair Road Allotments, Drumpellier Park



Cumbernauld Allotments, Cumbernauld House Park

Anecdotal evidence suggests that demand currently exists for allotments within North Lanarkshire. Currently all three allotment sites are at full tenancy capacity (total of 139 plots) and each holds a waiting list with approximately 28 individuals (registered in 2007). In addition to demand at these existing sites, identification of areas where demand is highest has, as yet, not been ascertained.

As part of this study an opportunity arose for Ironside Farrar to undertake an initial public consultation exercise at the Gowkthrapple Community Centre on 28th March 2009. This event helped assess the level of public interest in allotments. Key questionnaire feedback is summarised below:

Current demand exists for an allotment garden within the Gowkthrapple community;

- There is a willingness to share allotment plots;
- Support exists for the provision of a range of plot sizes; and
- A number of individuals are keen to help manage a new allotment garden.

These results demonstrate that a level of positive interest in allotments exists in Gowkthrapple. Harnessing this interest and engaging members of the public early will ensure a solid level of support which can be built on for the future. Full results from the public engagement questionnaire are provided in Appendix 5.

5.0 GOWKTHRAPPLE – POTENTIAL LOCAL ALLOTMENTS

5.1 Defining Needs & Opportunities

A demand for allotments has been identified in the Motherwell South / Wishaw area and this opportunity together with the Gowkthrapple Green Network and Regeneration Strategy suggests opportunity may exist to link initiatives and secure area wide benefits.

Further detailed consultation with Gowkthrapple Community Groups, South Wishaw Garden and Allotment Society and with NLC Regeneration and Technical Services offices is required to better establish need/ local demand, skills and capacity.

5.2 Site Options

The Gowkthrapple Masterplan and the Green Network Strategy both support allotment gardens and are seeking to develop a location in the Gowkthrapple Area. A number of locations have been considered and the initial stage of masterplanning will review all options before developing a design solution.

Site 1 - Birshaw Brae adjacent to the Community Centre / Blaes Sports Pitch



Birds eye view of Blaes pitch

Reasons for Selection	Central to community on land outwith the new build development areas yet offering reasonable site security and existing infrastructure
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overlooked; • Utilises the existing Community Hall (replaced by new Hub) i.e. sustainable; • Offers fairly ready security; • South facing slope maximises daylight and therefore capacity to grow vegetables; • Can use car parking and services (water /power/ toilets); • Little vegetation clearance required.
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blaes pitch area would require major earth works; • Soil conditions unknown; • Site security; • Proximity to Sub-Station.

Initial site investigation indicates:

- Topsoil depths taken at 3 locations within the proposed area, turf topped, consistent 200mm throughout before ash like substance is encountered, soil was wet, not water logged, initial assessment indicated reasonable soil structure and organic content and appeared quite fertile.
- Grassed area between blaes pitch and power station suffers from reasonably steep gradients, approx, 1:7.5 to 1:10, but potentially useable for allotment development.
- Northern end of proposed allotment area, approx. 50sqm is quite water logged, no surface water noted, aquatic plants visible. Potential to add to biodiversity
- Nearby community centre provides tarmac car parking, approx. holds 15 cars, room to expand car park northward or utilise part of the blaes pitch for allotment storage / parking / etc
- Existing driveway entrance onto proposed site from Birkshaw Brae onto Blaes Pitch, before primary school entrance.
- Current brick building (former sports changing rooms), size, approx 5mx5m, accessible from Birkshaw Brae is suffering from roof deterioration, needs repairs. Ideal place to store garden implements. Could be used as interim solution before access to Community Hall.
- Available on road parking at adjacent tenement buildings.
- Easy access by car/foot to proposed allotments from nearby Housing Estate.
- Proximity to Sub station is noted, but should not affect proposal.
- Blaes pitch looks currently in use. Clearance of weeds from the pitch has been done recently. Goalposts are still erected.



View from Birkshaw Brae



View from potential allotment site at Birshaw Brae



Birshaw Brae - View from west showing broadly South facing slope back to old Community Centre



Topsoils typically brown earth type to minimum 200mm

Site 2 - Castlehill Road / Former Motherwell Nursery Proposed Site:



Birds eye view of potential site

Reasons for Selection	Close to community on land in NLC Ownership with potential for better ground conditions and offering some separation from recreation and housing areas
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landscape Structure offered by trees / nursery remnants • Anticipated better soils • Not on land anticipated for development • Could be co-ordinated with Green Farm access • Security offered by Castlehill Road • Ample on site parking
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers limited security; • No available services; • No secure building support; • Costs for services and facilities may impact on viability; • Not easily overlooked; • No clear link to community; • Access from Gowkthrapple only by crossing a busy main road.

Initial site investigation indicates:

- Proposed area has a fast flowing burn through the centre of the site which may offer benefits but limit capacity
- Site is quite steep, 1:7.5 along the southern boundary of the burn.
- Very little topsoil, < 50mm to be found over entire area. Large areas of moss growth. Topsoils appear to have been stripped from the site
- Site suffers from flooding due to burn overflowing and water retention (especially along the northern boundary), aquatic plants visible in large growth areas, approx 150sqm.
- Initial observation of plant assemblages / ruderal vegetation leans towards the land being of low fertility perhaps as a result of restricted topsoil depth.
- Area suffers from fly tipping, no contaminated material noted.
- Ample areas for parking within main site. Tarmac road runs through the centre of the site.
- Large amount of foliage clearance required, around established trees.
- Area is quite sheltered/hidden from public view along Castlehill Road.
- Site boundary fence (chainlink) would require full replacement. No benefits for re-use.
- Large areas of rubble visible requiring site clearance works.



View towards the burn and typical site conditions. Major services aligned through this site (surface water sewer)



View to Allershaw Tower. Overhead transmission lines would need to be avoided



Potential access dependent upon new Castlehill roundabout layout.

Site 3 - Potential area of land adjacent to the new Hub community centre



Aerial photograph of the Hub site option.

Reasons for Selection	Set amongst the community on land in NLC Ownership with good access.
Advantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Anticipated reasonable soil quality; • Partial security offered by views from nearby houses on Heathfield St and Woodgreen Court; • Little sight clearance required; • Potential to integrate with proposed Hub community centre; • South facing slope maximises daylight and therefore capacity to grow vegetables;
Disadvantages	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offers limited security in terms of boundary fencing; • Land potentially promoted for development • No available services or secure building support • No on-site parking; • Costs for services and facilities may impact on viability.

Initial site investigation indicates:

- Site is bound on the north and south by residential buildings.
- Power lines cross directly over proposed site, could limit plot number with potential safety issues.
- Construction of a site boundary fence would be required



Birds eye view of the Hub site option.

5.3 Site Selection Process

A simple method has been employed to determine which site exhibits the best overall viability. The advantages and disadvantages of each site are assessed against four selection criteria. These criteria include On-Site Security, Existing Community and Operating Facilities, Financial Viability and Soil Viability which relate to the proposed site descriptions provided above.

The scale used to describe advantages and disadvantages is provided below.

Scale and Associated Symbols

Scale	Symbol
Major Advantage	✓✓✓
Minor Advantage	✓
Neutral/ Unknown	-
Minor Disadvantage	✗
Major Disadvantage	✗✗✗

A comparison summary for the assessment of advantages and disadvantages for each site is given below.

Site assessment summary of advantages and disadvantages.

Selection Criteria	Site Options		
	Birshaw Brae	Castlehill Road	The Hub
On-Site Security (existing fences, level of site seclusion, proximity to houses)	✓	✗	✗
Existing Community and Operating Facilities (including parking, buildings, safestore, access)	✓✓✓	✓	✗
Financial viability (initial outlay costs for site clearance, construction, soil improvement)	✓✓✓	✗	✗
Soil Viability	✓	✗	✓
Positive Community Attributes (i.e. consideration of the potential to be a thriving community hub)	✓✓✓	✗	✓✓✓
Comments	Major financial and operational advantage offered by existing secure buildings and car park.	Large set up costs perceived with site clearance and boundary fencing.	Good access however, an exposed site which would require new boundary fencing and construction of necessary facilities.

Overall the Birshaw Brae site has been assessed as the site offering the greatest potential in terms of the available facilities, including the vacant buildings, car park and access to mains water. All of which significantly reduce the initial set up costs in comparison to the other two sites. Additionally, this site is considered to be best placed, in terms of distance to the local community, to enable the creation of a focal point and a place of activity which can garner a sense of community over time. The allotment may also attract members of the public from beyond the immediate community and help create a sense of welcoming within the area.

6.0 ALLOTMENT LETTINGS & MANAGEMENT

6.1 Introduction

Implementation of simple, consistent and appropriate management will help North Lanarkshire Council to achieve maximum success from the development of a new allotment garden at Gowkthrapple. An allotment strategy, currently being developed by NLC, should act as a robust reference and management tool which facilitates this development process (case study examples are provided in Appendix 2)

The purpose of this chapter is to provide best practice guidance and recommendations for allotment management. The first section sets out the structural components of allotment management with the final part outlining the way in which a high quality of service can be obtained.

6.2 Designating Responsibility

The council should consider the designation of a member of staff or members of a department who are provided specific responsibilities for management of new and existing allotment sites. It should be noted, establishment of a dedicated Allotments Officer to whom both allotment association members and members of the public can contact is the preferred option. Especially as such an individual will gain an intimate knowledge of the allotment site and its leases. Responsibilities of an Allotment Officer include:

- Responsibility for setting up an Allotments Forum;
- Co-ordinate site management and follow up plot inspections;
- Work with site Management Committees in seeking to raise external funding and facilitate self management of sites;
- Regularly review the Tenancy Agreement;
- Develop active social and educational roles through links with schools and other community organisations. These roles can be encouraged through specific initiatives which integrate allotments within other strategies and programmes and foster allotments within the wider community;
- Drive forward future reforms and recommendations.

Partial or complete devolvement of these management responsibilities to an allotment association, as described in Chapter 4.0, can be beneficial, especially with regards to minimising costs to the local authority and encouraging community buy in. To establish an association a constitution must be drawn up, detailing the objectives, responsibilities, rules and policies of the association.

6.3 Tenancy Agreements

The local authority is responsible for the registration and recording of tenants as set out in the Allotments (Scotland) Act. A Tenancy Agreement covers issues such as payment of rent, sub-letting, maintenance of plots and buildings and should be developed to enable this process. All new plotholders would be required to sign this Tenancy Agreement.

The council will also be required to take responsibility for enforcement of the Tenancy Agreement (i.e. posting letters regarding unkempt plots and notices of termination). A Tenancy Agreement should contain the following information:

- rent, including water charges and rental of sheds or other structures. Fees vary across Scotland between £20 - £30 per 125 m², including water charges. However, there is flexibility on whether the charge is related to size of plot or is levied irrespective of size. Additional charges would be deposits (i.e. £5-10) for entrance keys. Concessionary prices for young families, the elderly and disadvantaged should be encouraged;
- collection of rent, including proportionate rent for part of year and date when rent becomes due;
- rent arrears;
- prevention of nuisance and annoyance. Issues should include: bonfires, taking dogs on site, use of water and chemicals such as pesticides & herbicides;
- the use of barbed wire;
- prohibition of subletting;
- determination of tenancy and notices to quit;
- compensation;
- observance of conditions of lease;
- prohibition of trade or business;
- erection of sheds, greenhouse and other structures. The normal approved dimensions for buildings are approximately 2.3m in height × 2.4m in length × 1.8m in width. The council should be informed, by application, of any new structures and permit or deny all construction;
- keeping of livestock including bees.
- Responsibilities. Including rubbish disposal, the continued maintenance of tenants plots, the paths and ditches, communal hedges and other features.

An example of an existing local authority tenancy agreement for an allotment site is provided in **Appendix 3**.

6.4 Finance

Effective lettings management will help secure a funding stream and keep the allotment in a strong financial position. In particular, the efficient collection of rents and the prompt re-allocation of vacant plots will assist in increasing revenue, the latter by increasing the proportion of plots in cultivation. The council should arrange for a dedicated and suitable budget allocated to allotment maintenance and management.

Grant Funding

Potential additional funding is available from external sources such as grants from the Big Lottery Fund or through sponsorship monies from local businesses. This funding can often be applied to fund specific improvement projects. Further information and advice can be found on the Allotments Regeneration Initiative website (<http://www.farmgarden.org.uk>).

6.5 Communication

Provision of information to the local community, existing and aspiring ploholders helps raise awareness and understanding of allotment provision in the local area whilst also influencing the level of demand. To maintain or raise local demand for allotment plots the council may implement the following promotional initiatives:

- Local authority website link to allotment updates and information, including details of waiting lists and the tenancy agreement
- Inclusion of information in local newsletters and magazines
- Notice boards on site
- Posters
- Publication of an Allotment Good Practice Guide for distribution amongst existing and prospective ploholders. A useful tool for disseminating information which could include the following topics:
 - Site safety
 - Description of good practice in terms of plot cultivation and site management
 - References for further information
 - Contacts for the site association and an explanation of their role
 - The requirements of the lease, inspection arrangements and the procedures for termination.

Additionally, keeping prospective ploholders regularly updated on the progress of the waiting list is good practice. Methods of regularly informing those on the waiting list include emailing, publication of the list on notice boards and inviting individuals to open days. The responsibility of management and processing of waiting lists can be either the council's or the allotment associations'.

Appendix 4 provides an example of the type of guidelines provided to prospective and active allotment holders by other local authorities.

6.6 Service Standards

Reasons behind the success or failure of an allotment are considered to be determined by four main barriers or deterrents. These include the following:

- Lack of communication/ promotion;
- Poor security and facilities;
- Poor quality of service; and
- Uncertainty over the future of the site.

Integrating these issues into a set of local standards for allotments provides a benchmark to which both the local authority and allotment associations can refer when managing an allotment site.

Good quality allotments with appropriate ancillary facilities are vital in attracting new users to the allotment and ensuring that sites operate at capacity. Additionally, security and access are often of significant importance not only to allotment holders, who spend large amounts of time on site, but also to potential new gardeners. Security can offer a sense of safety for site users and may encourage a more diverse spectrum of the local population including families, the elderly and vulnerable people.

A mechanism for maintaining a high level of service is through the establishment of a Management Plan, which incorporates each of these items. A management plan should cover the background to the site, designation, lettings, security, facilities and services. Under these headings future recommendations can be made for improving any area, where required. This would enable the provision of a plan for improvements to both the facilities and the management of the allotment and help in identifying any funding requirements needed to complete them.

6.7 Summary

To summarise, the allotment site should be managed in a simple, consistent and appropriate manner. In particular the allotment should be:

- a valued local greenspace;
- safe and secure;
- easily accessible to all users;
- free from unwanted and/or uncontrolled pests, weeds and diseases;
- free of debris and litter;
- maintained to a high standard by both owners and users;
- functional and have appropriate facilities for their intended purposes;
- consistent in plot sizing;
- consistent, transparent and affordable in cost to the customer;
- consistent in quality; and
- open to community involvement.

They should be managed in a manner that:

- maintains the standards outlined above;
- actively encourages direction from their users, and/or their representatives;
- encourages involvement from all sections of the community;
- actively seeks opportunities and resources for improvement;
- actively protects and enhances the environment;
- meets consistent local demand;
- is efficient in terms of letting; and
- is economically sustainable to the council.

7.0 ALLOTMENT DESIGN

The following guidelines set out parameters for development of a new allotment site which should be read in conjunction with the best practice sections provided throughout the report and the following chapter (Facility Provision and Allotment Garden Management). This will help ensure a comprehensive understanding of allotment design, management and the type of facilities provided within an allotment garden and help set a level of quality to which NLC may aspire.

7.1 Vision

To determine shared aims and values a community vision should be sought. A vision will facilitate the decision process, in particular, deciding the physical elements required of the site to meet the objectives. Essential physical elements are likely to include:

- Secure storage, i.e. purpose built shed
- Accessibility including, bicycle racks, path network and parking spaces.
- Communal site hub for meetings and events which could also be used as teaching spaces.
- Waste disposal, recycling facilities and composting areas
- Mains water supply and water harvesting equipment

7.2 Site Assessment

A site assessment is a way of gathering information about the site and is the research and observation phase of allotment design. An assessment is essential for the selection and planning process.

The assessment should include information regarding surrounding land features/ use and the surrounding community, ensuring the new site meets the requirements set out within the vision.

Most importantly allotment soil should provide an excellent medium for growing produce. It is important to remember to check a site for contamination prior to any allotment development.

7.3 Design

A thriving allotment can attribute its success to good design. In addition, considerate landscaping can facilitate the creation of a community garden, by ensuring basic principles of a functioning allotment are provided. This has the effect of drawing people in and making them feel welcome.

The design priority is to encourage the local community into the allotment by providing a convenient and accessible site. Initially, the maximum number of plots that can reasonably fit within the site boundary should be determined, leaving space for additional facilities and paths. All plots should be of equal size, the traditional standard size is considered to be 250m², however, smaller plots half the size at 125m² are more common. Plots are commonly arranged in a grid format to maximise capacity.



Aerial photo of an allotment site. Showing an example of the grid format employed for laying plots. The main access path is visible crossing the middle of the allotment with minor paths leading out to the plots.

General characteristics of an allotment include:

- Screen planting to provide some privacy whilst also allowing views into and out of the site.
- Clear separation between adjacent allotments.
- Signage at site entrances giving details of ownership and how to apply for an allotment; also emergency telephone numbers.
- Secure fencing with lockable gates.

Accessibility

- Site entrance should ideally be not more than 400m from the nearest bus stop (where available) and preferably not more than 250m. (The Disability Discrimination Act 1995, PAN 78 and SPP11 all promote the design of inclusive public spaces and environments that everyone can use).

Planting and Biodiversity

- Good mix of species or dense, bushy hedgerows around the perimeter of the site help to create a sense of privacy whilst providing habitat for local biodiversity.

Facilities and features

- Water point serving each group of allotments
- Communal composting facilities

Vehicle Access and Parking

- On-site parking for not less than 1 car per 10 allotments, with a minimum of 2 spaces.

Amenity

The environment of an allotment site can be significantly enhanced through provision of:

- Areas offering shade from the sun
- Areas which offer shelter from rain
- Installation of chairs/ benches offering places to rest

7.4 Design Proposal – Gowkthrapple Allotment Garden

A design proposal for a complete allotment garden at the Blaes Pitch area is provided in Figure 1. This area contains the following key features:

- Variable plot sizes, 2 larger plots to cater for such activities as education or community engagement. Most of the plots are relatively small to enable a greater number of plots but also to cater for a wider range of prospective allotment holders. In total there are 2 larger plots at 300m², 30 large plots at 150m² and 18 plots at 75m²;
- Good access point from main road, with potential to use the existing car park facilities;
- Potential for an allotment association and allotment holders to use the existing building as a safestore, meeting room, toilets and allotment shop;
- Boundary vegetation and secure fencing; and
- Potential expansion area should demand exceed supply.

Figure 2 illustrates a phased development approach which can be implemented to pilot the allotment project. Ironside Farrar propose up to 31 plots of differing sizes are initially developed for immediate use at Phase 1. Depending on the level of local interest and uptake the option remains to expand the allotment garden northwards with the installation of a further 19 plots at Phase 2, thus increasing the capacity.

Notes

- Planning permission is likely to be required for any structures that are erected within the allotment site. The use of land for allotments does not require planning permission, but there are no permitted development rights for the erection of sheds, storage units or any other structures.
- New allotment sites should not be sited within flood risk areas. Consultation with SEPA during site selection and design stages would ensure all flooding issues are addressed.

8.0 FACILITY PROVISION AND ALLOTMENT GARDEN MANAGEMENT

This chapter further details the type of facilities and infrastructure which a local authority should provide, whilst also offering best practice recommendations on the ways in which an allotment garden can be managed.

8.1 Allotment Plot Size

Plot sizes do vary between allotments, often this is to accommodate the requirements of site users or the restrictions of the site. Often the traditional 250 m² plots can be too large for individual requirements, both in terms of time involved cultivating it and the amount of produce. Reducing the size of plots or introducing shared plots are possible solutions to overcoming issues of large plot sizes.

In addition, all plots should be maintained of equal size, and the option to rent two adjoining plots should be permitted to allow flexibility to the plotholders.

8.2 Utilities and Infrastructure

Safestore/ Clubhouse

Provision of site huts or a clubhouse enables effective management of the site, serving as a place for plot holders to meet, for the storage of bulk materials and as a centre for the sale or distribution of seeds and equipment. In the absence of a building, a shipping container is a suitable alternative offering adequate security.

Materials & Communal Produce

Establishment of an allotment garden store, in conjunction with a clubhouse or safestore, is an effective way of keeping plotholder costs down whilst also increasing the allotments revenue. Additionally, they provide the focus for the allotment garden and association. Examples of supplies which can be bought in bulk and distributed to plotholders include:

- Fertilisers/ compost
- Bean poles,
- Tools
- Seeds; and
- Plant sets

Access

Access to allotment gardens and plots should be incorporated into the design and be safe and secure and not in itself a barrier to any group of users, such as people with disabilities. Key points to consider include:

- An adequate access road/ track into the site that can cope with any vehicles that are associated with the allotment and its related works.
- The main access point should have a secured gate, which is locked, with keys distributed among allotment holders.

- A recommended minimum width of main paths is 1.5 metres. To maintain access, particularly during wet periods, the use of any of the following materials will help keep paths free of vegetation and well drained, reducing the likelihood of the formation of an uneven surface:
 - Aggregate;
 - Pavement;
 - Wood chips;
 - Geotextile material; or
 - Simply well compacted, solid grass turf.
- Main paths should be maintained and kept clear (from vegetation, structures and tools) by the local authority/ allotment association. Minor paths, bordering plots, should be made the responsibility of the plotholders. The tenancy agreement would provide details of plotholder responsibilities including, for example, the restriction of herbicide use on paths.
- Provision of secure and safe parking spaces is best practice, additionally reserving plots for those with disabilities close to the car park allows the provision of suitable access for all.
- Bicycle racks may also be provided to encourage sustainable travel to/ from the site.



Typical layout of established allotment plots. Main path can be seen to the right of the photograph. Minor paths running between plots can be viewed, laid using stepping stones.

Water

An accessible water supply is essential. The allotment authority should ensure every plot holder has access to a mains water supply and that it is easy for elderly and disabled gardeners to use it, i.e. necessary fixings (hoses, taps etc) are in place.

Water stand-pipes should be installed at regular intervals throughout the allotment to allow each plotholder direct access to water (i.e. with the use of a hose). The cost of water is often incorporated into the rent for each plot, however, water is an additional cost to the council, especially if there is little to no regulation and there is no specific water charge. Methods of lowering water consumption rates and costs of the garden include:

- Provision of water butts for harvesting rainwater
- Installation of a water meter and devolving water management responsibilities to the plotholders or association.
- Use of watering cans instead of hose pipes
- Laying of mulch on plots to help retain water within the soil.
- Banning the use of sprinklers.



A secure standpipe connected to the water mains supply.

Toilets

Allotment authorities may provide basic toilet and washing facilities. The provision of these facilities is not mandatory but they can encourage a wider range of user groups. The most cost effective options, over and above a mains connected toilet are either a septic tank or compost toilet.

Waste Services

Development of a waste management plan for the allotment site is important to maintain a welcoming and healthy environment. A plan may include:

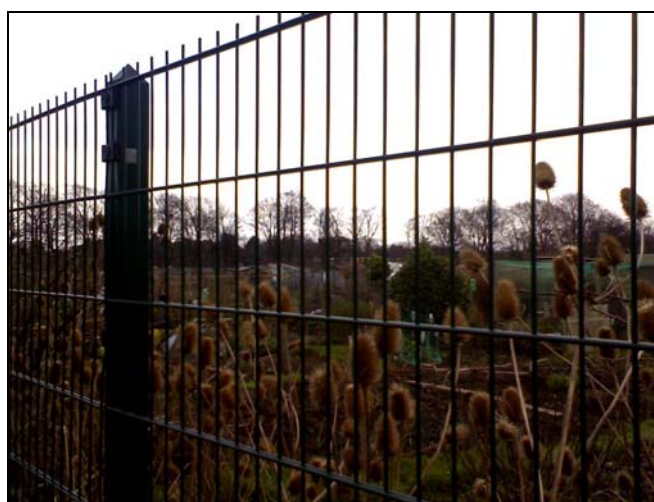
- Supply of communal composting areas on site
- Provision of skips for green waste delivered on demand
- Recycling schemes for certain wastes e.g. bags, plant pots.



Provision of facilities at an allotment site, including compost compartments.

Perimeter Fence

Site security is of great importance and provision of a sturdy perimeter fence/ hedge is essential. The allotment site should be surrounded by a secure fence or established hedge that will act as a deterrent to trespassers. However, it is imperative that any fence be incorporated into the design so that it blends with the surrounding environment. A well-designed, aesthetically pleasing boundary fence can often become a more effective deterrent than most types of high security fencing. Maintenance of the perimeter boundary should include regular checks for areas that may need repair or pruning.



Secure, unobtrusive fencing which does not compromise on visual amenity.

Allotment Buildings

Sheds provide a safe place to keep gardening equipment and glasshouses, cloches, poly tunnels are useful structures, enabling quicker plant cultivation. These structures are regularly permitted on allotments but a general restriction on footprint size should be enforced (see table below). The structures should be sound, solid structures and regularly inspected/ repaired to prevent the presence of dilapidated and unsafe eyesores within the site. Provision of sheds for plot holders is also commonplace and local councils could potentially charge rent for these facilities. If this is the case, the authority should ensure that they are well maintained.



Common features of established allotment plots, including private tool sheds and glasshouses.

Recommendations

- A commercially-produced sectional building, which complies with approved planning design standards should be used. Alternatively, any proposed structure must comply with a similar standard and must be maintained in a good state of repair.
- Allotment buildings and bases should be temporary and of conventional design.
- No bricks, concrete or similar bonded materials should be used in making a building.
- The building shall be erected at least one metre from each plot boundary and should conform with any established building line. A wood or metal preservative is recommended.
- Sheds and Lofts should be supported at least 6 inches off the ground, to reduce possibility of rat infestation.
- A written request and a plan showing the proposed positioning of the building on the allotment plot must be submitted for approval to the Property Management section, before construction commences. Any permission received does not constitute Planning Approval. Separate permissions may be required from Planning and/or Building Control.
- Any permission given will be subject to review at any time determined by the council, and shall be withdrawn should the building fall into disrepair or should the applicant vacate the plot.
- The applicant is responsible for the removal of the building and the restoration of the plot to its original condition, at the termination of the tenancy.
- No asbestos products should be used on allotment sites

Recommended building size limits

Building Type	Maximum Size
Shed	8ft long x 7ft high to the ridge x 6ft wide
Greenhouse	12ft long x 7ft high x 8ft wide
Chalet/Summerhouse	10ft long x 7ft high x 6ft wide
Pigeon Loft	12ft long x 7ft high x 6ft wide

Information boards

Provision of information boards providing instructions and updates at site entrances help increase awareness of upcoming events, site issues and debates.



Information notice at entrance of allotment site.

Maintenance of Vacant Plots

To prevent vacant plots from becoming overgrown, regular maintenance of these sites may be included into the general maintenance regime of the allotment garden. Clearing these areas and occasionally ploughing the land will prevent weeds from developing and allow the land to be reinstated as soon as a new tenant arrives. This practice will also help support the overall perception of a well managed and welcoming allotment.

9.0 RECOMMENDATIONS & MOVING FORWARD

This Allotment Feasibility Study describes, in detail, necessary legislative, management, design and best practice information regarding allotment garden development and operation in Scotland. In addition, particular emphasis has been afforded to the assessment of the feasibility of establishing one of three potential sites within Gowkthrapple, North Lanarkshire.

In order to progress this study, Ironside Farrar would recommend, to North Lanarkshire Council, a number of important processes which would help establish a comprehensive and inclusive community allotment garden within Gowkthrapple. The following is a summary description of these recommendations:

- **Consultation** – Demand for an allotment garden, amongst the community, has been identified, however the scale of this demand is as yet unknown. In order to establish a better understanding of the numbers of interested people, groups, schools etc. it is recommended that community consultation is undertaken. Ironside Farrar is currently involved in community consultations to gather ideas from the local community on a number of aspects regarding a new allotment garden whilst trying to stimulate interest amongst local residents. More such events are recommended.
- **Pilot Project** – The Gowkthrapple Allotment Garden could be established as a pilot project, through implementation of new policies and management tools. Providing the opportunity to integrate and focus on the successes and tackle any issues early on. A two phase approach could be taken, developing half of the chosen site in Phase 1 followed by an full expansion during Phase 2. The project would not only immediately cater for members of the public who already show a willingness to start an allotment, but also stimulate further engagement.
- **Leafleting and Advertisement** – North Lanarkshire Council may also consider posting feedback questionnaires to the entire community and/ or advertising in the local newspaper/ letter. Like consultation these methods can also help raise awareness of the project and garner both support and information on local demand.
- **Support and Guidance** – Contacting neighbouring allotment associations to request advice and guidance on setting up a new allotment garden is also recommended.
- **Planning Consents** – For the selected site, North Lanarkshire Council should determine the necessary planning permissions that would be required (i.e. for safestore buildings, connecting to mains water) and set about creating the necessary planning applications.

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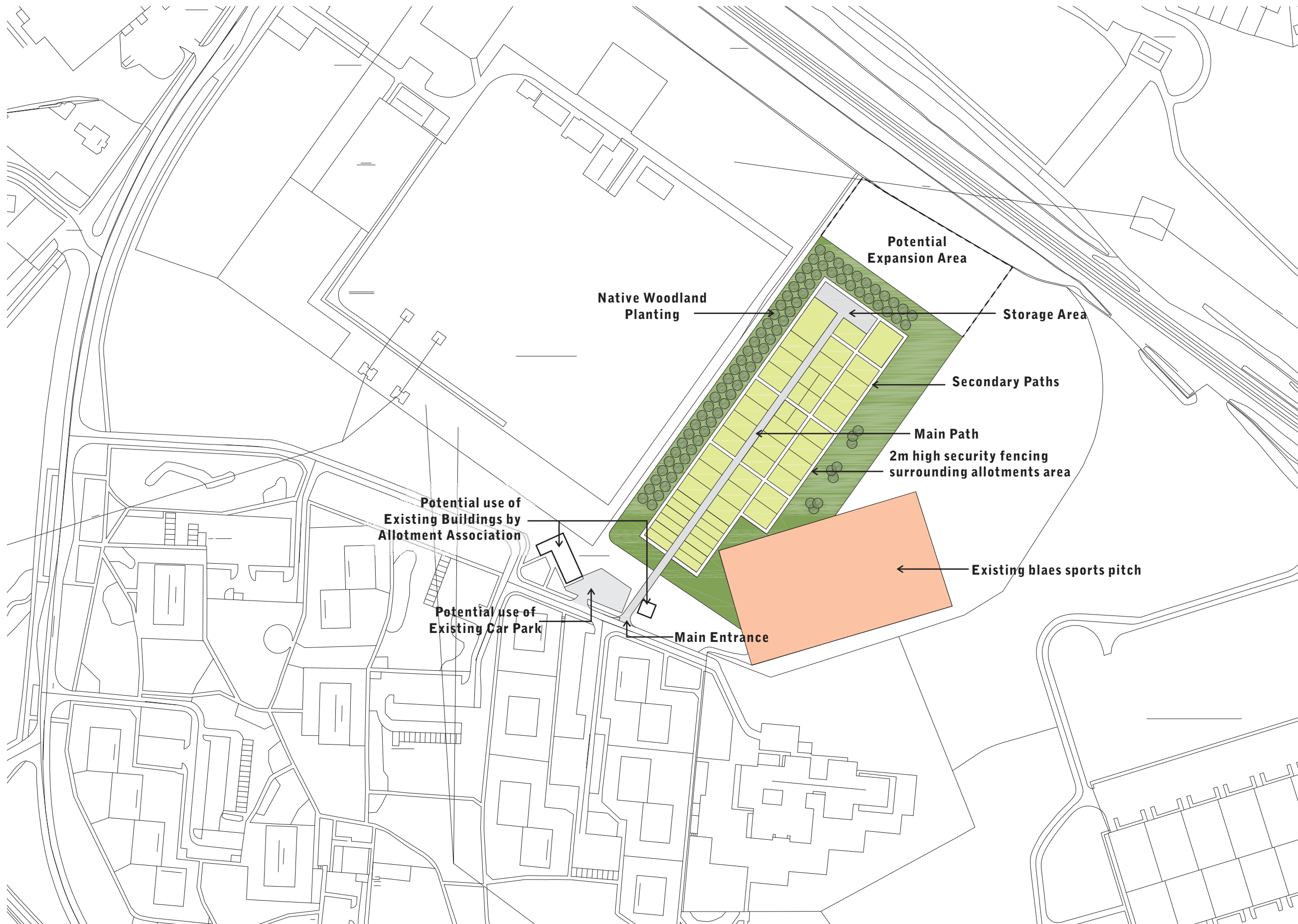
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FIGURE 1 – POTENTIAL ALLOTMENT LAYOUT

Gowkthrapple Allotment Feasibility Study

Potential Allotment Layout



Plots in varied sizes

2 Larger Plots 15 x 20m (300m²)

30 Large plots 10 x 15m (150m²)

18 small plots 5 x 15m (75m²)

Figure 1

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FIGURE 2 – PHASED ALLOTMENT LAYOUT

Gowkthrapple Allotment Feasibility Study

Potential Allotment Layout



Plots in varied sizes in Phase 1

15 Large plots 10 x 15m (150m²)

16 small plots 5 x 15m (75m²)

Plots in varied sizes in Phase 2

11 Large plots 10 x 15m (150m²)

2 Larger plots 15 x 20 (300m²)

6 small plots 5 x 15m (75m²)

Figure 2

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APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLE ALLOTMENT CONSTITUTION

APPENDIX 1 – EXAMPLE ALLOTMENT CONSTITUTION

Kelvinside Allotments CONSTITUTION (October 2001) (November 1997 with further revisions November 2001 j

1. NAME

The Association shall be known as Kelvinside Allotments Association (hereinafter "the Association").

2. OBJECTS

The objects of the Association shall be:

a) to manage and supervise Allotments (within the Glasgow West area) for the benefit of the Members of the Association, in accordance with Glasgow City Council Rules and Regulations and in accordance with the Association's General Rules and Conditions of Let.

b) to promote by whatever means agreed by the Membership, the suitable provision of Allotments in the Glasgow West area.

c) to provide, by whatever means agreed by the Membership, support for the ploholders and opportunities for the public to learn about Allotments and their cultivation. In pursuit of these Objects, the Association shall be non-political, non-sectarian and non-racial.

3. MEMBERSHIP & FEES

a) Membership shall be confined to persons who are resident in the City of Glasgow and whose fees are fully paid by the due date, and who undertake to cultivate their Allotment in accordance with the City Council's Rules and Regulations

b) The due date for the payment of fees is normally the Annual General Meeting (AGM) or within 4 weeks of the AGM, at the Committee's discretion.

c) The Annual Association Membership Fee shall be determined at the previous year's AGM. Members will be notified of any proposed changes in Fee, at least four weeks prior to the AGM. In addition to the Association Membership Fee, members pay an Annual Rent to Glasgow City Council. Changes in the Annual Rent will be notified to members in advance of the AGM, but are not open to alteration by the AGM.

d) It is permissible for an Allotment lease to be in the names of two eligible persons. Where a lease is in the names of two persons, the registered addressee must be a member of the Association, but it is permissible for the second person also to be a member. When the second person has paid a membership fee, he/she will be sent Association communications, have full voting rights at the AGM and be eligible for election to the Committee. It is not permissible for two of the Association's office bearers to be joint lessees of a plot.

e) If a ploholder wishes to introduce a second eligible person to the lease, they shall inform the Secretary. After a period of three years, or at the discretion of the Secretary, the second person would assume continuity rights as in 3d.

f) The Association's Waiting List will be maintained in a strict, consecutive manner, by the Secretary. In adding names to the Waiting List, the Secretary will employ an equal opportunities policy. The Secretary may refuse to add to the Waiting List any person known to have been expelled from an Allotment Association elsewhere.

4. MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

a) Association members shall appoint a Committee consisting of: President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and up to eight other members.

b) Office bearers shall be appointed for a period of three years and may stand for re-election. Committee members shall be elected annually and may also stand for re-election.

c) The Committee shall have the powers to manage the affairs of the Association between AGMs. The Committee shall carry out any instructions given to them by a majority of Members at an AGM.

5. ADDITIONAL MEMBERS AND SUB-COMMITTEES

The Committee shall have the power to co-opt up to two additional members, as determined by the Committee. Co-optees shall have no voting rights on the Committee. The Committee shall have the power to appoint such sub-Committees as it may from time to time decide, and shall determine their powers and terms of reference.

6. MEETINGS

a) The Committee shall meet Monthly during the growing season, or at the discretion of the President or Secretary.

b) The Annual General Meeting shall be held in November of each year. An Extraordinary General Meeting may be summoned on the request, in writing, of 25 members.

c) Notice, in writing, shall be given of motions or business to be brought forward at an AGM, at least 4 weeks prior to the AGM.

d) At the discretion of the chair, relevant business may be discussed at the AGM, without prior notice.

e) To ensure that AGM business is fully completed, any guest speaker invited to address the meeting will do so after the business of the AGM has been completed.

7. RULES AND PROCEDURES AT MEETINGS

a) **Chair:** All meetings will be chaired by the President, or by another Association Member, as agreed by those present.

b) **Voting:** All votes will be decided by a simple majority of the Members present. In the event of a tied vote, the Chair has a casting vote.

c) **Quorum:** The quorum for Committee Meetings is 4 elected members, for other Meetings, 15 members.

d) **Disputes:** In the event of any dispute over the conduct of a meeting, the Chair's decision shall be final.

e) **Resolutions:** Any member may propose a resolution for discussion at a General Meeting. To ensure that a resolution is discussed, it should be submitted, in writing to the Secretary, along with the names of the Proposer and a Seconder, in time for it to be circulated to the Members 4 weeks in advance of the relevant meeting. Any member may propose a resolution at a General Meeting, but in this case, it will be the Chair's decision whether or not it will be put to the Meeting. Resolutions proposing alterations to the Constitution may only be put to an Annual General Meeting.

8. FINANCE

a) All monies raised by the Committee shall be applied to further the objects of the Association (see Clause 2: a;b;c) and for no other purpose.

b) No member of the Committee shall normally be paid fees or receive any remuneration other than out-of pocket expenses.

c) The Treasurer shall keep proper accounts of the finances of the Association and shall pay all monies not immediately required into a bank account in the name of the Association. The funds of the Association shall be held in a bank account operated by two office bearers.

d) The accounts shall be passed to an independent examiner who shall be appointed at the AGM, The accounts shall be passed to the independent examiner two months before the AGM, so that they can be circulated to the Members with the AGM papers.

9. DISSOLUTION

If the Committee, by a majority, decide at any time that it is necessary or advisable to dissolve the Association, it shall call a meeting of all members of the Association. Notice shall be not less than four weeks, and shall state the terms of the resolution to be proposed.

10. ALTERATIONS

Proposals to alter this Constitution can only be made as Resolutions at an Annual General Meeting of the Association. Alterations will be made as a result of resolutions passed by a simple majority of members present.

ADOPTED AS THE CONSTITUTION OF KELVINSIDE ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION AT AN ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING DULY CONVENED AT HILLHEAD LIBRARY ON THE DAY OF NOVEMBER 1997, AND FURTHER REVISED ON THE 29TH DAY OF NOVEMBER 2001

Appendix 2 - CASE STUDIES

APPENDIX 2 - CASE STUDIES

The following case studies provide examples of successful allotment provision and management, including best practice, within a number of local authorities throughout Scotland.

New allotments at Bridgend, Edinburgh

This project was established in 2006 through NHS Lothian and the South Edinburgh Healthy Living Initiative, with Fresh Futures Lottery Funding. Based at the organic Bridgend Allotments, project staff who are trained horticulturists set out to work with residents of Craigmillar and south Edinburgh, where health inequalities are a huge challenge.

The staff quickly built strong links with health practitioners in the area. The four plots the project occupies have been a venue for participants referred with problems including severe depression, alcoholism and homelessness. From participant feedback, the project has proved to be an important means of transition for people to “move on”, whether from medication or emotional difficulties.

One of BACHIP's (Bridgend Allotment Community Health Inclusion Projects) aims is to give people the skills and confidence to use the greenspaces around them productively, using the project as the community hub and resource for support, education and information. Encouraging wildlife to the site is also one of the project's objectives, by growing plants that attract insects as part of natural pest control to avoid the use of chemicals. Links have also been made with the biodiversity officers and countryside rangers.

Since the project's inception, there has been a rapid increase in demand for its services, with staff involved in outreach work in local schools to promote gardening and healthy eating with seasonal produce. The project is so successful that it now attracts participants from all over the city, including groups of women from the Asian communities. Some of the participants are now using skills they have gained to assist plotholders on the main allotment site.

Richmond Allotments, Rutherglen

The Richmond Allotments are in Rutherglen, South Lanarkshire and they run alongside the Railway line Glasgow to the South, they are situated in Richmond Court. There are 17 in total and each one measures 30yds x 10yds. South Lanarkshire Council own the land and re allocate them when they become vacant. The allotments have been there over 50 years, and the ground has changed ownership, under the various control of British Rail, Burgh of Rutherglen, Glasgow City Council and most recently, South Lanarkshire.

Until coming under the control of South Lanarkshire the site had become derelict and an eyesore. The plotholders were not organized and there was no constitution, no committee and little funding.

At the end of 1999 the local individuals approached South Lanarkshire Council and, with their support, a Constitution was raised, the plotholders formed a Committee which initiated a move forward. The council also assisted in physical improvements including removal of rubbish which had accumulated on site over 50 years. In 2001 a second application for a grant was made to South Lanarkshire. This was accepted and provided funding to the committee to make further improvements to the site including the laying of a water supply and paths. The committee makes full use of further grants that are available on an annual basis. South Lanarkshire Council inspects the site regularly to monitor the regeneration progress of the site from a visual eyesore to a thriving and visually attractive allotment.



Richmond Court, Rutherglen

Julian Avenue Allotment, Glasgow

A Glasgow plotholder who has recorded wildlife sightings and changes at the Julian Avenue site since the early 1970s reports:

'Allotments and gardens form corridors for associated wildlife, most significantly for pollinating insects. One third of the food we eat depends upon the activities of pollinators. Fragmentation of their habitats by land development for non-agricultural purposes leads to isolation and then extinction of these invaluable insects. On my urban allotment in Glasgow at least ten bee and hoverfly species – both important pollinators - are regularly found.' 27

The same plotholder provided a list of 44 species of birds visiting the site, including the more unusual such as redpoll, tawny owl, tree creeper, goldcrest, and waxwing.

The BIG (Biodiversity in Glasgow) Project began in spring 2007, giving volunteers an opportunity to get involved in surveying Glasgow's greenspaces for birds and butterflies. A partnership between BTO (British Trust for Ornithology) Scotland and Butterfly Conservation Scotland, the project also provides free training. Surveys will be taking place on at least two of Glasgow's allotment sites.

Dundee City Council

Some sites in Dundee City Council are self managed and have to generate their own income to pay for rent, utilities, improvements and so on. However assistance has been provided by the council through help with applications for funding and free supply of industrial skips from the council to remove large rubbish. In addition, Dundee Council promotes gardening by sitting in with the various horticultural societies plus allotment associations to help with the organisation of Scotland's biggest annual flower show.

Other Best Practice Ideas

Other councils have provided support to allotments in a variety of ways:

- Stirling Council provided support with constitutional issues during the drafting of site and lease agreements for a refurbished site.
- Angus Council worked with plot holders in Arbroath on a scheme which sacrificed some plots but allowed the redevelopment of others.
- East Lothian Council saves on landfill costs and provides useful compost material by delivering all leaves collected in the area to Musselburgh allotments.
- Falkirk Council are developing Lottery Funded Allotments to provide a mix of individual , shared and community plots to maximise the levels of engagement and link to wider community health and well-being programmes.

APPENDIX 3 – EXAMPLE TENANCY AGREEMENT

APPENDIX 3 – EXAMPLE TENANCY AGREEMENT

ALLOTMENT TENANCY AGREEMENT

AN AGREEMENT made the _____ day of _____ two thousand and seven and between BISHOP'S CASTLE TOWN COUNCIL (hereinafter called "the Council") by the hand of Janet Ince its Clerk and duly authorised Agent of the one part and

Name:- _____

Address:- _____

(hereinafter called "the Tenant") of the other part.

WHEREBY:-

1. The Council agrees to let and the tenant agrees to take on a yearly tenancy from the first day of April two thousand and seven the allotment garden numbered _____ on the Council allotment site at the Crowgate Business park off Love lane, Bishop's Castle at the yearly rent of Thirty five pounds (£35) to be reviewed annually and subject to the provisos and conditions hereinafter contained.

Note:

2. The tenant hereby agrees with the Council as follows:-

(a) To pay the rent hereby reserved on or before the first day of April in every year during the continuance of this tenancy without any deductions whatsoever:

(b) to use the allotment garden as an allotment garden and for no other purpose without the prior consent in writing of the Council:

(c) to keep the allotment garden clean, free from weeds and well manured and otherwise maintain it in a good state of cultivation and fertility and good condition and to keep any pathway or cart track included therein or abutting thereon reasonably free from weeds.

(d) not to cause or permit any nuisance or annoyance to the occupier of any other allotment garden or obstruct or encroach on any path or roadway set out by the Council for the use of the occupiers of the allotment garden within the said allotment site.

(e) not to underlet assign or part with the possession of the allotment garden or of any part thereof without the prior consent in writing of the Council:

(f) not without prior consent in writing of the Council to cut or prune any timber of other trees or take, sell or carry away any mineral, gravel, sand, earth or clay.

(g) not without prior consent in writing from the Council to erect any building on the allotment garden AND in regard to any building for which consent has been granted to erect the same in accordance with Council specification. (Sheds must be made of wood and no bigger than 2m x 1.5m (6ft x 4ft.) (Permission required for sheds and greenhouses but not poly tunnels or fruit frames.)

(h) not to erect any fence or barbed wire adjoining any path set out for use of occupancy of the allotment gardens:

(i) not to allow the roots and canopy of any trees planted to infringe on any other plot.

(j) not to deposit or allow any person to deposit on the allotment garden any refuse or decaying matter except manure and compost in such quantities as may reasonably be required to use in cultivation) or place any matter in any hedges ditches or dykes situate in the said allotment site or on any adjoining land.

- (k) that they are responsible for the safety and good behaviour of any children brought onto the site.
- (l) to ensure that any dog brought into the said allotment site is securely held on a leash and that all dog excrement is removed from the site.
- (m) not to keep any animals or livestock of any kind upon the allotment garden without the prior consent in writing of the Council such consent not to be unreasonably allowed.
- (n) not to erect any notice or advertisement on the allotment garden.
- (o) to notify forthwith the Council of any change of address of the Tenant.
- (p) to yield up the allotment garden at the determination of the tenancy hereby created in such condition as shall be in compliance with the agreements herein contained:
- (q) to permit any officer or other agent or representative of the Council to enter on the allotment garden and inspect the condition thereof and of any building erected or being erected thereon:
- (r) to observe and perform any other special conditions which the Council consider necessary to preserve the allotment garden from deterioration and of which notice shall be given to the Tenant.
- (s) at all times during the tenancy to observe and comply fully with all enactments, statutory instruments, local, parochial or other bylaws, orders or regulations affecting the allotment garden.
- (t). to access to the site via the bike track entrance. There are no public rights of way across the site Cars should only be taken through the bike track for the purpose of loading and unloading. All cars should be parked on the lane by the entrance to the bike track. Please close all gates as you enter and leave the site.
- (u) that stand pipes on the site may be used to water plots. The use of hose pipes is allowed but these must be hand held. Use of sprinklers is not allowed. In hot summers use water sparingly. The water supply may be turned off in a harsh winter.
- (v) that they will not light bonfires. All green waste to be composted or recycled.

3. The Council hereby agrees with the Tenant that the tenant observing and performing the conditions and obligations on his part contained in this Agreement may peaceably use and enjoy the allotment garden without any interruption by the Council or any person claiming under or in trust for the Council.

4. This tenancy shall determine on the death of the tenant and may also be determined in the following manners:

- (a) by either party giving to the other three months previous notice in writing.
- (b) by re-entry by the Council at any time after giving three months previous notice in writing to the tenant on account of the allotment garden being required (i) for any purpose (not being the use of the same for agriculture) for which it has been appropriated under a statutory provision or (ii) for building, mining or any other industrial purpose or for any roads or sewers necessary in connection with any of those purposes.
- (c) by re-entry by the Council at any time after giving one months previous notice in writing to the tenant
 - (i) if the rent or any part thereof is in arrears for not less than thirty days whether legally demanded or not; or
 - (ii) if it appears to the Council that there has been a breach of the conditions and obligations on the part of the Tenant herein contained; or
 - (iii) if the tenant shall become bankrupt or compound with his creditors.

5. Any notice required to be given by the Council to the Tenant may be signed on behalf of the Council by the Clerk for the time being and may be served on the Tenant either personally or by leaving it at his last known place of abode or by prepaid post addressed to him there or by fixing the notice in a conspicuous manner on the allotment garden and any notice required to be given by the Tenant to the Council shall be sufficiently served if signed by the Tenant and sent by prepaid post to the Clerk of the Council at the Town Hall for the time being.

EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY

Bishop's Castle Town Council allotments are available to anyone who requests a plot, irrespective of gender, age or ethnic background providing they observe the rules. Rental is conditional upon the annual rent being fully paid by the date set by the Council. No individual or group will be permitted to put the general allotment holder at a disadvantage through their views or activities on site.

HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICY

Each allotment holder is reminded that they have a duty of care towards other allotment holders and any members of the public who may be on site.

To this end, they should make sure that there are no obstructions on the paths,

that no hazardous chemicals are brought to the site,

that extreme care is taken when driving on site,

that any structures are solidly built and will not collapse

that anyone using garden machinery has read and understood the safety instructions.

AS WITNESS the hands of the parties hereto the day and year first before written

TENANT

Date_____ Signed_____

COUNCIL

Date_____ Signed_____

Clerk to the Council

APPENDIX 4 – GUIDANCE FOR NEW & EXISTING ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

APPENDIX 4 – GUIDANCE FOR NEW & EXISTING ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

This information relates to local authority guidelines and outline best practice information for allotment holders, describing and offering support regarding allotment issues and benefits.

Why Cultivate an allotment

Here are some of the great benefits of cultivating an allotment:

- Relaxation/stress relief - what better way to unwind than to spend some time gardening, away from the stresses of modern city living?
- Fresh air and exercise - gardening is recommended as an excellent form of exercise for people of all ages and abilities.
- Fresh produce - home-grown crops are always far tastier than those bought in the shops, and at a fraction of the price. Why not grow your own 5 a day?
- Organic produce - there is real concern about the possibility of chemical residues in food. Cultivating your allotment organically can ensure that your vegetables are chemical free. (Please be aware that not all allotments are organic.)
- GM-free food - be sure that the food you eat is free of genetically modified product!
- Community groups and allotments associations - allotments are a great way of meeting other like-minded people from right across the community. If you wish, you could get involved in your allotment association.
- Open spaces - along with our parks and open spaces, allotment sites form the "green lungs" of the city. By cultivating an allotment you will be helping to ensure their preservation well into the future.
- Wildlife - a working allotment can be a wildlife haven, with foxes, badgers, slow-worms, birds and a host of other wildlife living right in the middle of the city.
- Herbs, fruit and flowers - allotments are not just about straight rows of vegetables. Many tenants grow flowers, fruit, herbs and spices, to get the most out of their allotment.
- No garden? - for people without a garden at home, their allotment is their garden and many tenants fill their plot with plantings and features as if it was their own garden!
- Convenience - Bath has over 900 allotments plots on 19 sites spread all over the city and many Parish Councils also have allotment sites. So wherever you live in Bath & North East Somerset, an allotment site should not be far away.

A Beginners Guide to Allotments

Starting up

Before you start cultivating your new allotment, you will need to plan how much time and money you have to spend and, if necessary, consider what help and other resources you may need.

Taking on an allotment does take a lot of commitment to initially clear and subsequently manage. Depending on the size of the plot, you will need to put in an average of at least a couple of hours a week to effectively manage it, although this will vary between summer and winter and on the type of crops grown.

A plot may be overgrown when you take it on, so you may have to spend a lot of time gradually clearing and digging it during the first season, or maybe get some friends to help you!

Before you start, remember to check the Health and Safety hints on these pages.

- On your first visit to your plot, decide what work you need to do to bring it back to cultivation. Adapt your gardening to your abilities and the amount of time you can spend.
- Digging the soil is one of the most physically demanding activities in gardening, as it involves continual bending and straightening of the back while lifting a spadeful of soil. Do a little at a time to prevent back problems. In a new plot, or a plot neglected for several years, digging the soil over thoroughly before planting is important. If the previous gardener looked after the plot well, you can probably use a fork or spade to hand dig the soil. Digging is important as it loosens the earth, letting air and moisture in and breaking up hard compacted earth – but take it easy with the hard labour, and do a little at a time.
- If the plot is overgrown with long grass or weeds such as brambles you may need to use a strimmer or hedge clippers to cut them down.
- Remember to inform the Allotments Team if you are unable to work your plot immediately for any reason, or you could risk losing your plot!
- On weedy plots, plant large leafed crops such as potatoes, courgettes or runner beans, which will smother weeds.
- You will still need to remove weeds regularly to prevent your crops being overrun by weeds during the first months of cultivation.
- Some people prefer to use methods of cultivation that do not involve digging. Mulches of compost or thick polythene are perfectly acceptable, as are green manures on fallow ground.
- The best time for digging is autumn or early winter if you want to be ready for seed sowing in spring. If you dig in compost, manure or the remnants of last year's crop, worms and micro-organisms will break it down over the winter.
- Specific plots that are unsuitable for letting as vegetable plots may be given permission for use as orchard plots. Contact the Allotments Team about this.
- If you are not an experienced gardener, feel free to ask your site rep or plot neighbours for advice or the Allotment Team.

Basic Do's and Don'ts

Allotments have their own legislation which dictates how allotments should be used and most of the do's and don'ts on this document are legal requirements. Failure to abide by these requirements means you could be breaking the law!

Do's

- You can plant herbs and flowers
- If your site has gates you **MUST** always ensure you lock them behind you
- You can bring your dog on site as long as it's kept on a lead at all times, and clear up any faeces
- You can have a small lawned area as long as it's regularly mown
- You **MUST** erect a clearly visible number board on your plot
- If you have fruit bushes/trees, etc, you **MUST** maintain the area around them and make sure they are pruned regularly
- You must cultivate at least 50% of your plot and keep the rest free from weeds and cut any long grass

- If you have a shed on your plot you must maintain it in a serviceable condition
- You MUST pay your allotment rent with 40 days of receiving an invoice
- If you vacate your plot you must pay any rent owed
- Always inform the Allotments Team if you change address
- Permit entry to sheds/structures for allotment staff at any time requested
- If you vacate your plot you MUST remove all belongings within two weeks
- Please be considerate to other plot holders

Don'ts

- You are not allowed to sublet your plot
- You are not allowed to use your plot for any trade or business
- You are not allowed to bring rubbish onto the site - you may be charged for its removal
- You are not allowed to block communal pathways/haulingways
- You are not allowed to wash crops or tools in water troughs
- You are not allowed to use a hosepipe or a sprinkler to water crops
- You are not allowed to have smoky bonfires that cause a nuisance, or leave fires unattended (see Bonfire guidelines)
- You are not allowed to cause a nuisance to other plot holders or neighbouring householders - nuisance could include bad language, getting drunk, playing loud music, racist language etc
- You are not allowed to go onto other people's plots unless they have given you permission
- If you have children or young people with you on site they are not allowed to wander around on other plots or make a mess
- You are not allowed to dig up paths between plots
- You are not allowed to use any form of violence on-site, be it physical or verbal
- You are not allowed to give your key to other people or allow them to visit your plot unsupervised
- You must obtain written permission to erect a shed
- You must obtain written permission to have poultry on a plot
- You must have written permission to plant fruit trees, trees or large shrubs
- It is advisable Not to bring old carpets onto site, as they can be difficult to get rid of and they are known to contaminate the soil.

Tools and Equipment

If you have no tools, start by buying only the essentials first - spade, fork, hoe, rake, and trowel.

- If you cannot afford brand new tools, it may be possible to buy old or reconditioned tools from auctions, market stalls, car boot sales or other gardeners.
- Both fork and spade are in constant use and should be as solid and strong as possible.
- The fork is used for raking and spreading compost, for harvesting vegetables, for digging and the removal of roots of perennial weeds.
- The spade is used for cutting edges, winter digging, making trenches and for emptying the compost heap.

- The rake is used for breaking down and levelling roughly dug earth to make a fine seedbed. It is also useful for gathering together debris such as weeds and hedge clippings.
- A wheelbarrow is essential for moving heavy or bulky material.
- Using water butts that are set-up to collect rainwater from sheds or other structures is a good way of saving on water consumption and a way to ensure you have your own supply.

Health and Safety Hints

Cultivating an allotment can be hazardous. Please bear the following hints in mind when you are on site:

- Hard physical work or lifting heavy or awkward loads requires care, practice and an understanding of your own capabilities and physical limitations, particularly if you are not used to it!
- Digging is one of the most physically demanding task in gardening, as it involves continued bending and straightening of the back when lifting a spade of soil. It needs to be approached with care. For your back's sake, do not rush your digging.
- Machinery - if you are using power mowers or strimmers, remember that you are responsible, as an allotment tenant, for the safety of other tenants and visitors.
- Bonfires are allowed on our allotment sites providing they do not cause a nuisance.
- Broken glass and other materials may be hazardous if left on your allotment.
- Ponds can encourage wildlife, but ensure that they have shallow sloping sides so that children (and wildlife) are less likely to fall in. A barrier or markers will ensure that a pond overgrown with weeds and algae will be more visible and less hazardous.
- Tetanus is an illness caused by bacteria present in soil and manure, which can enter the body through the tiniest abrasion, scratch, thorn, puncture or cut. Make sure that you have a vaccination that can protect you against the disease. Your GP may be able to help.
- Garden tools can be a hazard if they are not stored properly or are left lying around the plot when not in use.
- Chemicals must be kept securely locked in their own cupboard in your shed, in clearly marked containers. Do not keep them in lemonade bottles or other food containers or leave them lying around your plot. If you must use slug pellets and other chemicals, please keep them to your own plot and do not put them on your neighbour's plot. They may garden organically and will not thank you for it!
- Rats carry Weil's Disease via their urine. Any evidence of rats on your allotment should be reported to Allotments Team who will arrange appropriate control.
- First aid kit is always a wise addition to the tools kept in the garden shed. A small selection of adhesive plasters, antiseptic ointment, a pair of tweezers for removing thorns and splinters and a gauze or lint pad to use as a compress to stop the bleeding if you are badly cut.

Using Pesticides

Pesticides are primarily chemical substances prepared or used to destroy harmful pests. By their very nature pesticides pose a potential hazard to the user, others in

the area during and after use, and can have a bad effect on the environment if used incorrectly.

The actual risk can be reduced by the careful choice of pesticide, the time and methods of use, weather conditions and the knowledge of the person using the pesticide. Chemical pesticides should only be used as a last resort.

Pesticides include:

- weedkillers (herbicides)
- agents to kill fungal growth (fungicides)
- insect killers (insecticides),
- rodent (rat) bait (rodenticides),
- soil treatments
- wood preservatives

and a number of other preparations. It is always wise to check before buying and using.

Pesticides are used by members of the public, often in the garden, and the potential hazard can be the same as for pesticides used in agriculture and other large scale operations.

Pesticides used by the public are likely to have been obtained from the local garden centre or hardware store, and be approved, with information on the label.

Please ensure that you read all the information on the label.

You need to know how you can protect yourself, others, children and animals, and how to safeguard our environment.

Before selecting a pesticide consider the following:

- Always identify the pest before any treatment is applied.
- Do you really need a pesticide?
- Can the problem be solved by changing environmental conditions, for example cleaning up or preventing damp?
- Is there a way to deal with the pest without using a pesticide, for example using a hoe or hand fork, cultivation or catch and trap?
- Chemical pesticides may often kill beneficial organisms which help to keep pests under control.

If a pesticide is to be used take account of the following:

- Pesticide sprays based on fatty acids are effective, relatively safe and environmentally friendly.
- Pesticides based on synthetic pyrethroids are generally less toxic than many others.
- Pesticides containing organophosphorous chemicals (-pos) are potentially hazardous because of their effect on the nervous system and are to be avoided where possible.
- Water based wood preservatives are a good choice when animals occupy the adjoining area or plants are growing nearby.
- Always seek professional help with a problem with rodents (rats).

How can I be safe?

- Always read the label when selecting a pesticide.
- Always follow the instructions exactly.
- Always wear impervious gloves when using pesticides and wash your hands immediately after use.
- Always wash off splashes as soon as they occur.
- Always store pesticides in a safe place, out of reach of children, and always keep in their original container.
- Never use a pesticide in wet and windy conditions and avoid spray drifting off the target area.
- Never eat, drink or smoke when handling a pesticide.
- Never use pesticides in a confined space.
- Never use pesticides near food and food preparation.
- Never reuse an empty container.

Always take care with the disposal of pesticides, working solutions and empty.

Best of all do not use a pesticide

Manure Deliveries

Manure can be accepted onto the sites with vehicle access. Nevertheless, care must be taken not to cause damage to facilities on the site or neighbouring plots. Manure should not be left across access paths to block vehicle or pedestrian access. It will be removed by the council if it causes an obstruction.

Adding farmyard manure and garden compost can contribute small amounts of nutrients. It can, when mixed into the soil, attract worms to improve soil structure and stimulate the activity of soil micro-organisms. These break down organic matter and release a balance of nutrients for uptake by plant roots. Organic matter such as leaves or compost also helps to retain moisture and reduce the need for watering.

An alternative to compost heaps is to dig plant remains direct into a trench. Left over the winter months, worms will ensure that it has all disappeared by spring, and improved the soil in the process.

Please note that the council can provide leaves to sites with vehicle access during the autumn, as we are anxious to ensure that they are delivered locally for allotment and garden use rather than transporting them to landfill and other sites.

Please be aware that deliveries may not be possible on some sites with poor vehicle access.

Bonfire Guidelines

THINK

Before you light up

- 1) Do you really need a bonfire, all green waste can be composted, have two compost areas for fast and slower rotting waste.

2) It is an offence to create smoke which becomes a nuisance. You can be prosecuted under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 also the Highways Act 1980 if smoke drifts across a road endangering traffic.

3) Bonfires can be dangerous and care should be taken when children are around, keep a look out for wild animals and pets in a bonfire before you light it.

4) All green waste can be composted and this will effectively convert it into valuable compost and thereby eliminating the need for a bonfire.

5) If you feel that you have waste that cannot be burned or composted, it can be taken to the local Civic Amenity site to be recycled free of charge for domestic householders.

THINK

Before you light up

1) Always be considerate to other allotment holders and surrounding houses when starting a bonfire.

2) Make sure all green material has been well dried before it is burnt, this reduces the amount of smoke produced.

3) Make sure that the wind will not blow smoke onto or towards nearby plot holders and surrounding houses.

4) Do not light on windless or damp days as the smoke will linger at lower levels thereby penetrating houses and polluting the air we breathe.

5) Do not leave the fire unattended or leave it burning overnight, stay with the fire at all times.

6) Do not burn plastics household waste, tyres or anything containing foam, paint or chemicals.

Vegetable sowing guide

A planting table to help you make the most of your plot:

Name	Time to sow	When ready	Remarks
Artichoke, Globe	Plant March and April, 2-3ft apart	June to October	These do not bear well the first year; the flowerhead bracts can be eaten.
Artichoke, Jerusalem	Plant February to March in rows 3 feet apart	November to March	
Asparagus	Plant April, 15 inches apart	Three years after sowing	Care must be given during the first few years, then it will bear prolifically for many seasons
Bean, Broad	Sow November to April 2-3ft between double rows	June and July	Need well-manured soil

Bean, Dwarf French	Sow May in rows 18in- 2ft apart	June and July	Very early and late crops must be sown under glass.
Bean, Runner	May and June, rows 6- 8ft apart	July to Oct	Early crops should be sown in boxes and planted out in June
Beetroot	Sow April to July, rows 4-5ft apart	Late autumn to October	Beet will grow on any soil; animal manure must be kept from the roots.
Broccoli, Autumn Broccoli, Winter Broccoli, Spring Broccoli, Summer	Sow March to May. Plant May to July, 12- 15in apart	September to June	All plants should be transplanted as soon as possible.
Brussels Sprouts	Sow March and April in rows 2-3ft apart. Plant May and June.	September to April	Should be picked after frosts. Do not cut tops until stalks have completely ripened.
Cabbage (spring sown)	Plant early August	September to February	Requires a well-manured soil in good position. Should be hoed occasionally
Cabbage (autumn sown)	March to May rows 18- 24 inches apart	May to July	Requires a well-manured soil in good position. Should be hoed occasionally
Carrot	Sow March to early August	June onwards. In October lift and store in ashes.	Requires a well-cultivated soil.
Cauliflower (spring sown / autumn sown)	Plant April to July, or September to February with 24-30 inches between rows	All year	
Celery	April, sow in rows four feet apart	August to October	Preferably grown in well watered trenches
Chicory	Sow March, plant May 12in between rows	October to February	Blanch leaves by lifting plants and standing in a cool place in fine damp soil.
Courgettes	Sow indoors April - May	July - October	Plant out late May/June
Cucumber (outdoor)	Sow May, fourfeet between rows	August to September	Requires plenty of manure and moisture.
Endive	Sow April, 12-15 inches between rows	June to October	Blanch by covering plants with flower-pots, three weeks before use.

Leek	Sow February and March Plant out May or June, 18 inches between rows	Can be left in ground until required for use in winter	Large specimens required plenty of manure. Blanch by covering with collars of brown paper
Lettuce	Sow March, with successional sowing throughout the summer	June onwards	Moisture promotes rapid growth which is necessary. Soil should be prepared some time before planting
Onion (Spring)	Sow under glass in Feb. Plant out in May, 9-12in between rows	September - finished off in dry open shed	Can be hung up and kept a winter in a dry place
Onion (Winter)	Sow in August, set out in February	June to October	Useful for supplementing spring-sown stock
Parsley	Sow March to July, 12 inches between rows	All year round	
Parsnip	Sow February and March, 18 inches between rows	November to March	
Pea (early)	Sow February and March	June	
Pea (second early)	Sow March and April	June and July	
Pea (maincrop)	Sow April to June	July September to	Deeply dug and well manured. A mulch will help to retain moisture in latest sown crops.
Potato (early)	Plant March, 18 inches between rows	June	Potatoes should be sprouted before being planted.
Potato (maincrop)	Plant April, 18-36 inches between rows	July, August and on	Soot is beneficial to the crop.
Pumpkin	Sow indoors April	September - October	
Radish	Sow March to September	All year round	
Radish (winter)	Sow June to August	All year round	
Rhubarb	Plant spring and autumn, 3-4ft between rows	April - July	
Seakale	Plant March and April, 30 inches between rows	In November lift and store in moist sand	

Shallot	February and March, 9-12 inches between rows	Lift in July when top withers and store until required	Will grow in any soil
Spinach (summer)	Sow February to August	May to January	
Spinach (winter)	July to September 12-15 inches between rows	May to January	
Spinach (perpetual)	April to July, 12 inches between rows	May to January	
Squash	Sow indoors April	September to October	
Swede	Sow April to July 15 inches between rows	October to March	
Tomato (indoor)	Sow January to March under glass	May to October	
Tomato (outdoor)	Plant out in May, 18-24in between rows	August to October	
Turnip	Sow March to August, 12-15 inches between rows	July to November	For "tops" sow in September and leave unthinned
Vegetable Marrow	Sow March , 4-5 feet between rows	July to November	Allow plenty of moisture for manure

APPENDIX 5 – COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

APPENDIX 5 – COMMUNITY CONSULTATION

GOWKTRHAPPLE PUBLIC EVENT DAY ENGAGEMENT & CONSULTATION OPPORTUNITY HELD AT GOWKTHRAPPLE COMMUNITY CENTRE –28 MARCH 2009

Julian Farrar / Ryan McMahon

Small Event / Display and opportunity to talk to wide range of residents.



QUESTION FEEDBACK

Allotments

Would you like to see allotments in Gowkthrapple?

YES	NO
9	1

General positive response

Would you be interested in having or sharing an allotment?

YES	NO
6	1

3 maybe's / unsure/ never thought about it and unsure if they could manage

Would you need help looking after your allotment?

YES	NO
1	1

Most very unsure / couldn't answer

Would you work to help run Gowthrapple's Allotment Society?

YES	NO
3	

Need more information. Would there be a society

Do you think providing a range of small, medium and large plots is a good idea?

YES	NO
6	1



Community Garden

Do you use the park?

YES	NO
11	1

What would you like to see in the Park?

More adventurous play equipment.

6

Youth shelters

2

Swings, slides, climbing frames.

7

Better security,

7

Seating areas.

6

Areas of shrubs and flowers.

2

Public art.

??

Community growing areas.

??

Locked, secure areas.

1

Open areas accessible to everyone.

??

Play equipment aimed at younger children.

6

Area for sports/ football pitches.

6

What would you like to use this space for (Community Garden)?

Relaxing, picnics and BBQs.

3

Community events/ parties.

5

Do you use the Community Park?

YES	NO
	4

No – locked up most of the time.

Are the gates and tall fences necessary?

YES	NO
	3

Does it stop you using the gardens?

YES	NO
4-6	



Would you be interested in being involved with running the community gardens?

YES	NO
3	

Would you like to see the community gardens being more open with less barriers like fences and gates?

YES	NO
3	2

A number of not sure. What would it be? How would it be better?

Community Garden Comments

- Need security or people watching it.
- Locked up most of the time.
- More smaller play areas are needed.
- Not safe, needles etc are in the park.
- In summer lots of people drink in the park, feels unsafe.
- Play area for younger children.
- Should be more open planned.
- Better security.
- Better connections with the school.
- Flatten small hills and remove shrubs (throughout Gowkthrapple) to open it up.

