

NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL



Normanton Town Hall, High Street, Normanton, West Yorkshire, WF6 2DZ
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To Members of the Allotments
Committee

Date: 1st October 2024

Dear Councillor,

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the **Allotments Committee** to be held on **Wednesday 9th October 2024** at **1.00pm** at Normanton Town Hall, High Street, Normanton, WF6 2DZ.

If you are unable to attend, please submit your apologies, with reasons, to the Town Clerk before the meeting.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Donna Johnston', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Mrs Donna Johnston FdA
Town Clerk & RFO.

ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE

Wednesday 9th October 2024 at 1.00pm at Normanton Town Hall

AGENDA

Item	Description	Enclosure
040.	To receive apologies for absence.	
041.	To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct.	
042.	To receive and sign the minutes of a meeting of the Allotments Committee. Held on Wednesday 28 th August 2024 (Minute Numbers 029-039; Pages 14-18).	A
043.	To receive an update on vacancies and waiting lists.	B
044.	To consider requests for skips, structures, livestock, and any other general matters.	C
045.	To receive the Allotments Committee Budget for the 2024/25 financial year.	D
046.	To receive an update on the recent Allotment Inspections.	E
047.	To review some minor queries relating to bonfires on allotments.	F
048.	To review the Allotment Appeals Policy.	G
049.	To receive an update on the various allotment issues that have been dealt with in the last month.	Verbal
050.	To consider any complaints from tenants or neighbours about the allotments. Where appropriate, this item will be taken in private in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.	Verbal
051.	To consider any tenancy issues including breach of tenancy, warnings and evictions. Where appropriate, this item will be taken in private in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.	Verbal

NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL**MINUTES OF THE ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE**

Held on Wednesday 28th August 2024 at 1.00pm at Normanton Town Hall

Present: Councillor M Jennings
Councillor B Mayne
Councillor P Mayne – Chairman
Councillor C Parsons
Councillor M Rowley
Councillor R Seal

Donna Johnston – Town Clerk & RFO
Jonathan Wilkinson – Property Officer

Absent: Councillor C Appleyard
Councillor T Morgan
Councillor A Samuels
Councillor P Marchant

030. To receive apologies for absence.

RESOLVED that apologies for their inability to attend be received on behalf of Councillors C Appleyard, P Marchant and T Morgan.

031. To receive Declarations of Interest in accordance with the Code of Conduct.

RESOLVED that the following declaration of interest be received:

Councillor M Jennings
Non-Pecuniary Interest

Relating to all matters at Wentworth Terrace Allotments due to his allotment tenancy.

032. To receive and sign the minutes of a meeting of the Allotments Committee.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Allotments Committee meeting held on Tuesday 16th July 2024 (Minute Numbers 017-029; Pages 9-13) be received as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

033. To receive an update on vacancies and waiting lists.

RESOLVED that the report on waiting lists and vacancies be received.

<u>Site</u>	<u>Waiting List</u>	<u>Vacancies</u>
Cypress Road	27	1
Edward Street	0	0
Ellins Terrace 1	13	10
Ellins Terrace 2	16	4
Gilcar Street	10	0
Gladstone Street	26	0
Heys Buildings	8	0
Newland Lane	23	1
Norwood Street	16	0
Station Road	0	0
The Grove	11	0
Wentworth Terrace	12	1
TOTAL	162*	17

*Some applicants have applied for more than one site.

034. To consider requests for skips, structures, livestock, and any other general matters.

Members considered a series of applications from tenants:

HB014

Skip request to dispose of waste from a greenhouse which is to be demolished.

APPROVED

NL016

Request for livestock

DECLINED – Livestock is not permitted at Newland Lane and the tenant does not have twelve months in good standing.

WT016

Request for a replacement shed and relocation of existing structures.
Replacement wooden shed - size 6' x 8'

APPROVED

WT011a

Request for a polytunnel

New polytunnel size 8' x 15'

APPROVED

ET1-a and ET1-b

Asbestos sheets to be removed following recent storms.

RESOLVED that the Clerk is delegated authority to have the asbestos removed by an approved contractor at their earliest convenience.

035. To receive the Allotments Committee Budget for the 2024/25 financial year.

RESOLVED that the Allotments Committee budget showing income of £1,749.20 and committed expenditure of £6,109.59 be received.

036. To review the Allotments Policy.

Members reviewed the existing Allotments Policy and made several recommendations for changes to wording for the purpose of clarity.

A series of major changes were implemented as follows:

- One allotment per household – this will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis in the case of adult offspring living at the parental home.
- Community groups and schools will no longer be permitted to hold an allotment.
- Refusal of two plots will result in the applicant being removed from the list.
- A new policy would be introduced in relation to the readmittance of previously evicted tenants which would include a case-by-case review, a waiting period of at least two years, a conduct evaluation, and a probationary period.
- In extreme cases the Town Council reserves the right to move to immediate eviction where it is clear that the plot has been abandoned.
- Hedging, shrubs and non-fruiting trees will not be permitted.
- Bonfires will no longer be permitted.
- All poultry and captive birds must be registered with DEFRA / APHA with effect from 1st October 2024 and evidence provided to the Town Council.
- A new policy on the use of weedkiller would be implemented.

- Rent would be charged on a pro-rata basis depending on when the plot is accepted.

RESOLVED that the suggested changes be adopted, and the policy updated and circulated to all tenants.

037. To receive an update on the various allotment issues that have been dealt with in the last month.

It was reported that inspections had been carried out at most sites and that had taken up a large proportion of the Property Officer's time over recent weeks.

It was reported that there were significant issues in identifying plots due to the lack of numbering. It was agreed that tenants would be asked to clearly number their plots as it is a condition of tenancy.

A new dedicated allotments email address had been set up to deal with allotment queries more efficiently within the office.

RESOLVED that the report be received.

038. To consider any complaints from tenants or neighbours about the allotments.

The following complaints had been received:

Wentworth Terrace – Fallen tree branch which has been reported to WDH for removal.

Newland Lane – A letter was received from the Site Secretary at Newland Lane which indicated that they were seeking legal advice. The letter was noted.

Ellins Terrace 2 – Complaint about a bonfire with thick smoke affecting nearby residents. The new policy on bonfires would be circulated to the tenant.

RESOLVED that the complaints be received and actioned.

039. To consider any tenancy issues including breach of tenancy, warnings and evictions.

A number of responses to written warnings had been received as a result of the recent inspections.

Several tenants raised health issues as a reason for non-cultivation.

The committee accepted that in the case of ill health, cultivation expectations could be lowered on a short-term basis, however the weeds must still be kept under control so that they don't impact on neighbouring plots. If the tenant was unable to address the weeds themselves then the Town Council would offer to strim the plot for a fee of £50 on each occasion. Payment would be required in advance. Consideration would be given to raking the plots after strimming and disposing of the weeds, but the cost implications would need to be taken into account.

A number of tenants had given up their plots after realising they didn't really have time, and some had asked if their plots could be halved.

The halving of plots would be considered on a case-by-case basis subject to access being available to both halves. This would be dealt with by the Property Officer and Town Clerk.

RESOLVED that the reports be received and actioned where appropriate.

In the absence of any further business, the Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

**NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL
ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE
Wednesday 9th October 2024**

WAITING LISTS AND VACANCIES

WAITING LISTS

SITE	
Cypress Road	28
Ellins Terrace 1	13
Ellins Terrace 2	16
Gilcar Street	7
Gladstone Street	15
Heys Buildings	11
Newland Lane	22
Norwood Street	10
The Grove	10
Wentworth Terrace	13
TOTAL	145

There are 70 individual applicants on the list, however some have applied for more than one site. There are 12 applicants who already have at least one plot leaving 58 new applicants.

VACANCIES

SITE	
Cypress Road	0
Ellins Terrace 1	12 (all overgrown)
Ellins Terrace 2	8 (all overgrown)
Gilcar Street	0
Gladstone Street	0
Heys Buildings	1 (half plot)
Newland Lane	2 (1 overgrown)
Norwood Street	3 (1 overgrown)
The Grove	0
Wentworth Terrace	3 (1 untenable)
TOTAL	29

NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL
ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE
 Wednesday 9th October 2024


REQUESTS FROM TENANTS



Structure Standard Sizes:




<i>Shed</i>	<i>6ft x 8ft</i>	<i>1.8m x 2.4m</i>
<i>Greenhouse</i>	<i>6ft x 8ft</i>	<i>1.8m x 2.4m</i>
<i>Polytunnel</i>	<i>15ft x 8ft</i>	<i>4.6m x 2.5m</i>
<i>Height</i>	<i>7ft</i>	<i>2.1m</i>
<i>Fence</i>	<i>6' maximum</i>	<i>4' on more open plan sites</i>

Livestock accommodation should be approx.:

<i>2-3 square foot inside the coop</i>	<i>6' x 8'</i>
<i>5-7 square foot in the run</i>	<i>8'x10' to 10'x12'</i>

SITE	Wentworth Terrace
PLOT	62
NOTES	<p>Support to remove an unsafe shed which has been on the plot for 20+ years. Possible asbestos roof.</p> 

SITE	Heys Buildings
PLOT	14
NOTES	<p data-bbox="300 264 1382 342">Request for a second skip following clearance of greenhouse and other associated waste.</p>  

SITE	Heys Buildings
PLOT	45 & 46b
NOTES	<p data-bbox="300 264 1369 342">Request for a skip following inspection where waste was identified for removal.</p>   

SITE	Ellins Terrace (1)
PLOT	A
Structure	Shed – Remove and replace with a slightly smaller structure
Height	Same as existing 2.1. – 2.5m
Width	Same as existing 2.5m
Length	Same as existing 6m
Materials	Pre-fabricated concrete sections with galvanised box profile roof.
Base	Same as existing

NOTES

General View of Shed to be replaced

**PROPOSED**

Committed Spend

D

Cost Centre 1 (Between 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025)

ALLOTMENTS CTTEE

Code	Title	Receipts			Payments				Net Position	
		Budget	Actual	Variance	Budget	Actual	Committed	Total	Variance	Net Position
1	Income - Allotment Rent	8,765.65	2,334.53	-6,431.12		42.00		42.00	-42.00	-6,473.12 (-73%)
7	Income - Key Deposit (A		30.00	30.00		20.00		20.00	-20.00	10.00 (N/A)
48	Key Deposit									(N/A)
90	Newland Lane Allotment				1,275.00	469.07		469.07	805.93	805.93 (63%)
91	Cypress Road Allotment				867.00	877.88		877.88	-10.88	-10.88 (-1%)
92	Ellins Terrace 1 Allotmer				1,734.00	211.61		211.61	1,522.39	1,522.39 (87%)
93	Ellins Terrace 2 Allotmer				1,581.00	-5.05		-5.05	1,586.05	1,586.05 (100%)
94	Allotments General				131.00	40.85		40.85	90.15	90.15 (68%)
95	Gladstone Street Allotm				2,040.00	1,215.77	216.67	1,432.44	607.56	824.23 (40%)
96	Heys Buildings Allotmen				1,487.50	3,190.00	650.01	3,840.01	-2,352.51	-1,702.50 (-114%)
97	Norwood Street Allotmer				952.00	43.57		43.57	908.43	908.43 (95%)
98	Wentworth Terrace Allot				2,728.50	72.04	200.00	272.04	2,456.46	2,656.46 (97%)
102	The Grove				85.00				85.00	85.00 (100%)
103	Gilcar Street				51.00				51.00	51.00 (100%)
104	Edward Street				68.00				68.00	68.00 (100%)
109	Garage Plot Rent		-576.80	-576.80						-576.80 (N/A)
SUB TOTAL		8,765.65	1,787.73	-6,977.92	13,000.00	6,177.74	1,066.68	7,244.42	5,755.58	-155.66 (-0%)

Summary

NET TOTAL	8,765.65	1,787.73	-6,977.92	13,000.00	6,177.74	1,066.68	7,244.42	5,755.58	-155.66 (-0%)
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NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL
Summary of Income & Expenditure 2024-2025
Cost Centre 1 (Between 01/04/2024 and 31/03/2025)

ALLOTMENTS CTTEE

Code	Title	Income			Expenditure			Net Position
		Budgeted	Actual	Variance	Budgeted	Actual	Variance	+/- Under/over spend
1	Income - Allotment Rent	8,765.65	8,730.47	-35.18		42.00	-42.00	-77.18 (-0%)
7	Income - Key Deposit (Allotment)		30.00	30.00		20.00	-20.00	10.00 (N/A)
48	Key Deposit							(N/A)
90	Newland Lane Allotment				1,275.00	469.07	805.93	805.93 (63%)
91	Cypress Road Allotment				867.00	877.88	-10.88	-10.88 (-1%)
92	Ellins Terrace 1 Allotment				1,734.00	211.61	1,522.39	1,522.39 (87%)
93	Ellins Terrace 2 Allotment				1,581.00	-5.05	1,586.05	1,586.05 (100%)
94	Allotments General				131.00	40.85	90.15	90.15 (68%)
95	Gladstone Street Allotment				2,040.00	1,215.77	824.23	824.23 (40%)
96	Heys Buildings Allotment				1,487.50	3,190.00	-1,702.50	-1,702.50 (-114%)
97	Norwood Street Allotment				952.00	43.57	908.43	908.43 (95%)
98	Wentworth Terrace Allotment				2,728.50	72.04	2,656.46	2,656.46 (97%)
102	The Grove				85.00		85.00	85.00 (100%)
103	Gilcar Street				51.00		51.00	51.00 (100%)
104	Edward Street				68.00		68.00	68.00 (100%)
109	Garage Plot Rent							(N/A)
	SUB TOTAL	8,765.65	8,760.47	-5.18	13,000.00	6,177.74	6,822.26	6,817.08 (N/A)
	Restated							(N/A)
	NET TOTAL	8,765.65	8,760.47	-5.18	13,000.00	6,177.74	6,822.26	6,817.08 (31%)
	V.A.T.					887.43		
	GROSS TOTAL		8,760.47			7,065.17		

NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL
ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE
 Wednesday 9th October 2024

ALLOTMENT INSPECTIONS

CYPRESS ROAD - COMPLETE	
Number of plots to be inspected	29
Inaccessible	0
Vacant Plots	1
Occupied Plots	28
Occupied plots that PASSED	22
% Occupied plots that PASSED	79%
Occupied plots that FAILED	6
% Occupied plots that FAILED	21%
Written Warnings Issued	2
Advisory Notes Issued	4
Subsequent Evictions	2

ELLINS TERRACE (1)	
Number of plots to be inspected	53
Inaccessible	4
Vacant Plots	12
Occupied Plots	41
Occupied plots that PASSED	11
% Occupied plots that PASSED	27%
Occupied plots that FAILED	26
% Occupied plots that FAILED	63%
Written Warnings Issued	19
Advisory Notes Issued	7

ELLINS TERRACE (2)	
Number of plots to be inspected	46
Inaccessible	2
Vacant Plots	8
Occupied Plots	38
Occupied plots that PASSED	16
% Occupied plots that PASSED	42%
Occupied plots that FAILED	21
% Occupied plots that FAILED	55%
Written Warnings Issued	11
Advisory Notes Issued	10

GILCAR STREET - COMPLETE	
Number of plots to be inspected	3
Inaccessible	0
Vacant Plots	0
Occupied Plots	3
Occupied plots that PASSED	3
% Occupied plots that PASSED	100%
Occupied plots that FAILED	0
% Occupied plots that FAILED	0%
Written Warnings Issued	0
Advisory Notes Issued	0

GLADSTONE STREET - COMPLETE	
Number of plots to be inspected	60
Inaccessible	3
Vacant Plots	1
Occupied Plots	59
Occupied plots that PASSED	43
% Occupied plots that PASSED	72%
Occupied plots that FAILED	13
% Occupied plots that FAILED	22%
Written Warnings Issued	6
Advisory Notes Issued	5
Subsequent Evictions	6

HEYS BUILDINGS	
Number of plots to be inspected	51
Inaccessible	0
Vacant Plots	1
Occupied Plots	50
Occupied plots that PASSED	31
% Occupied plots that PASSED	62%
Occupied plots that FAILED	19
% Occupied plots that FAILED	38%
Written Warnings Issued	11
Advisory Notes Issued	9

NEWLAND LANE	
Number of plots to be inspected	40
Inaccessible	0
Vacant Plots	1
Occupied Plots	39
Occupied plots that PASSED	26
% Occupied plots that PASSED	67%
Occupied plots that FAILED	13
% Occupied plots that FAILED	33%
Written Warnings Issued	9
Advisory Notes Issued	4

NORWOOD STREET - COMPLETE	
Number of plots to be inspected	29
Inaccessible	0
Vacant Plots	3
Occupied Plots	26
Occupied plots that PASSED	15
% Occupied plots that PASSED	58%
Occupied plots that FAILED	11
% Occupied plots that FAILED	42%
Written Warnings Issued	7
Advisory Notes Issued	4
Subsequent Evictions	1

THE GROVE - COMPLETE	
Number of plots to be inspected	5
Inaccessible	0
Vacant Plots	0
Occupied Plots	5
Occupied plots that PASSED	3
% Occupied plots that PASSED	60%
Occupied plots that FAILED	2
% Occupied plots that FAILED	40%
Written Warnings Issued	0
Advisory Notes Issued	2

WENTWORTH TERRACE	
Number of plots to be inspected	86
Inaccessible	0
Vacant Plots	1
Occupied Plots	85
Occupied plots that PASSED	55
% Occupied plots that PASSED	65%
Occupied plots that FAILED	30
% Occupied plots that FAILED	35%
Written Warnings Issued	9
Advisory Notes Issued	21

OVERALL	
Number of plots to be inspected	402
Inspections Completed	393
Inaccessible	9
Vacant Plots	28
Occupied Plots	374
Occupied plots that PASSED	225
% Occupied plots that PASSED	60%
Occupied plots that FAILED	141
% Occupied plots that FAILED	38%
Written Warnings Issued	74
Evictions to date	9

NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL
ALLOTMENTS COMMITTEE
Wednesday 9th October 2024

BONFIRES ON ALLOTMENTS

Introduction

Following discussions regarding environmental concerns, the Allotments Committee has decided to implement a ban on bonfires across all allotment sites. This report seeks to clarify the scope of the ban, particularly in relation to Bonfire Night and surrounding weekends, and propose a timeline for implementation.

Scope of the Ban

The Committee will need to consider the scope of the ban. Will this be a total ban with no exceptions or is it permissible to include an exemption for Bonfire Night and the weekends immediately before and after this date. Many residents will be lighting fires in their gardens during this period, and it may be appropriate to allow bonfires on the allotments at the same time.

Management of Bonfires for Bonfire Night and Surrounding Weekends

If the committee agrees to allow bonfires during this period:

- Bonfires will only be permitted on Bonfire Night (5th November) and the weekends directly before and after.
- Bonfires must not be left unattended.
- Bonfires should be extinguished before leaving the site.

Implementation Date

It is proposed that the ban comes into effect on 1st April 2025. This provides sufficient time to notify all allotment holders and prepare for any necessary changes.

Recommendations

1. Approve the ban on bonfires on allotments, effective from 1st April 2025.
2. Consider permitting bonfires on Bonfire Night (5th November) and the weekends immediately before and after.
3. Communicate the details of the ban and the exceptions to allotment holders by 20th October 2024 to give them chance to dispose of waste this Bonfire Night before the ban comes into effect and once again with the annual rent invoices in February 2025.

NORMANTON TOWN COUNCIL

ALLOTMENT APPEAL PROCEDURE

1. Aim of the Allotment Appeal Procedure

- 1.1 The Council aims to address all allotment appeals and, where they are found to be justified, to ensure that appropriate measures are taken.
- 1.2 It will:
- ensure that anyone who wishes to appeal knows how to go about it;
 - respond to an appeal efficiently and within a reasonable time;
 - ensure that service users are satisfied that the appeal has been taken seriously and, where possible, reasonable measures have been taken to improve services.
- 1.3 All appeals will be dealt with in confidence, and the name of the appellant will not be revealed by the Town Council, except where it is the wish of the appellant.

2. What is an Appeal

- 2.1 The Town Council will investigate an Allotment Appeal from a tenant, or their nominated representative, if it meets one of the following criteria:
- An expression of dissatisfaction about the failure to provide or meet the expected standard of a service.
 - Neglect or delay in responding to a contact with the Council.
 - Failure to observe the Council's policies or procedures.
 - Harassment, bias or discrimination.
 - New mitigating information has come to light.
- 2.2 The Allotment Appeal Procedure does not cover:
- Complaints about the conduct of Councillors. These should be reported to the Monitoring Officer at Wakefield Metropolitan District Council.
 - Where a person wishes to disagree with a Council decision or policy.
 - [Personal grievances or issues unrelated to allotment provision.](#)
 - Anonymous complaints.

3. How to Appeal

- 3.1 A formal written letter [or email](#) must be sent to the Town Clerk setting out the precise nature of your appeal and why you think the decision was wrong.

4. Appeal handling

- 4.1 Within three working days of receipt of the appeal, the Town Clerk will give written acknowledgement of it, provide a copy of this appeals procedure and ascertain whether the appellant wishes the matter to be treated confidentially.

- 4.2 The formal appeal will be considered at the next meeting of the Allotments Committee. This should be held within 21 calendar days.
- 4.3 At the meeting the Allotments Committee may resolve to exclude members of the public and press to ensure confidentiality. (Depending on whether the complainant wishes the matter to be dealt with in this way).
- 4.4 At the meeting, the Councillors will consider the appeal and will also include on the agenda the appointment of three members to a sub-committee with delegated power to continue handling the complaint (if necessary). The committee will have full delegated power to bring the complaint to a conclusion. The Allotment Committee will also resolve which member will be the Chairman of the Sub-Committee.
- 4.5 The Allotment Committee or Appeal Sub-Committee may appoint an independent person to the sub-committee if it resolves to do so, as an independent impartial arbitrator.
- 4.6 After the meeting, the Town Clerk will write to the complainant explaining the outcome of the Allotment Committee's consideration of the appeal and explaining how to take matters further if they believe this is necessary.
- 4.7 If the appellant wishes to pursue the matter, they must notify the Council in writing with their reasons for wanting to do so and a meeting of the sub-committee will be convened for the purpose of investigating the complaint further.
- 4.8 Notice of the sub-committee meeting will be advertised in the usual way to members of the committee, ie a summons and with three clear days' notice. A public notice will also be displayed in the usual way, ie posted in a conspicuous place in the parish and giving three clear days' notice.
- 4.9 Appellants will be asked by formal letter to attend the sub-committee meeting and will be informed that they may be accompanied by another person.
- 4.10 At the commencement of the meeting, the Sub-Committee Chairman will explain how the meeting will proceed.
- 4.11 Appellants will be asked to provide any new information or supporting evidence to the sub-committee and will be invited to make a verbal representation to the meeting.
- 4.12 Members of the sub-committee will be invited by the Chairman to ask questions of the appellant.
- 4.13 The Chairman of the Complaints Sub-Committee and then the appellant will summarise their respective positions
- 4.14 The appellant will then leave the meeting and the sub-committee will consider the further findings.
- 4.15 The appellant will be informed by formal letter of the conclusions of the process within five working days of the sub-committee meeting.

- 4.16 The sub-committee chairman will report the outcome of the process to the next meeting of the Council.
- 4.17 Minutes of the sub-committee meeting will be kept and will be available to all parties involved in the appeal.