

Summer Street Allotment Association

Cultivation Standards

1. It is essential for the pleasure of all allotment gardeners that plots are maintained to a minimum standard of cultivation. This procedure states how and why non-cultivated plots will be managed by the Summer Street Allotment Association committee.

Why do we need to manage non-cultivation ?

2. **Waiting list:** The length of the waiting list is directly related to the standard of cultivation expected of existing tenants, and the measures taken to enforce those standards. It is unfair on people on the waiting list if existing plots fall behind minimum standards set by the association.
3. **Existing members:** Poor cultivation of plots results in the spread of weeds and diseases to members who work hard to keep their plots well cultivated. Poorly cultivated plots reduces the enjoyment resulting from the natural beauty of the site.
4. **Council:** It is a requirement of the agreement between the council and Summer Street Allotment association that reasonable standards of cultivation are to be maintained. It is also a requirement of the tenancy agreement and local rules. Poorly cultivated plots can make the site appear to be not fully occupied to the council . This may distort their view as to the necessity of current or new allotments in the Stroud district.
5. **Funding for improvements:** If the committee are to seek funds for site improvements it is essential that the site is well maintained and that members are committed to having a well run and well cultivated site, without this funding is likely to be denied.

Minimum standards of cultivation

6. In order to be fair to other tenants, all plots must be cultivated in a way that does not interfere with the enjoyment of neighbouring tenants throughout the growing season. In order to achieve this the following minimum standards apply, the timeframe and area of plot these apply to are identified in the next section:
 - a. Removal of weed seed-heads before the seed has set
 - b. Control of pernicious weeds, such as those that spread through the extension of roots, (eg. Couch grass and ground elder) or by generating new plants from growing tips in contact with the soil (eg. Brambles);
 - c. Removal of long grass or detritus that is likely to harbour slugs and snails (which may forage next door)
 - d. Keeping paths free of hazards to allow free and unimpeded access and to ensure grass paths are trimmed.
 - e. Removal of waste, noxious or hazardous materials
 - f. Maintain fertility of soil
 - g. Edible produce is being grown on the plot during the growing season
7. Plot holders are expected to maintain the above standards over 25% of the plot within three months of the start of the tenancy and 75% by the end of the first year and on all subsequent years unless the committee agrees otherwise when you take on your plot. If there are personal issues preventing you from maintaining these standards please inform the committee as soon as you are aware of the problem so that help and advice is given.
8. As a rough guide, the amount of time that might be needed to cultivate a plot depends on many factors but members may expect to spend 5 hours per week in the growing season for each half plot in order to maintain cultivation.

Enforcement

9. Plots will be checked by the committee to assess whether sufficient progress is being made to reach and maintain the cultivation standards in this document. If the cultivation standards are not met then a warning letter will be sent to the plot holder. In the event of no special circumstances being identified to the committee and if the member fails to remedy the situation following the warning letter then a termination letter will be sent ending the tenancy with one months notice .
10. In order for the committee to act consistently, fairly and reasonably it will follow the standard procedure for managing non-cultivated plots for all issues of enforcement.