



ALLOTMENTS

Frequently Asked Questions

Are there allotments in Uckfield?

Yes – there are 5 allotment sites in Uckfield:

- Bell Lane
- Bird-In-Eye
- Framfield Road
- Ridgewood
- West Park

Each site is divided up into allotment plots and a plan kept of those plots.

If you wish to see a copy of the plans of any of the allotment sites, please contact the Council Offices at the address given below.

How do I find out if there are any plots available?

From time to time the Council will post notices setting out particulars of any allotment plots available for hire at each allotment site. The notice will specify:

1. The allotment gardens available
2. The rent to be paid
3. How to register your interest, and the name and address of the person to whom applications should be sent.
4. Any special conditions that are to apply to the allotment gardens
5. Where copies of the letting agreement may be seen

If you have not seen any notices posted and would still like information about renting an allotment plot, please contact the Council Offices.

How do I apply for an allotment plot?

If you are interested in renting an allotment plot, write to or telephone the Council Offices, Uckfield Civic Centre, Uckfield Town Council, Uckfield, East Sussex, TN22 1AE.

If there are allotments immediately available for rent, you will be contacted, either by telephone or letter, to confirm which allotment plot you are interested in renting. You will then be sent a map indicating the vacant plot for your consideration and then you confirm that the plot is suitable. Following your confirmation a copy of the allotment agreement and details of the rent required will be forwarded to you to sign and return with payment. Once your signed allotment agreement and rent are received confirming your tenancy you can begin gardening!

If there are no allotment plots immediately available, or there are more applicants than available plots, you will be put on a waiting list.

Where there are two or more eligible applicants for an allotment plot the following rules apply:

1. Preference may be given to the applicant appearing most likely to keep the allotment garden in a proper state of cultivation
2. Preference may be given to an applicant who does not already hold an allotment garden or agricultural land, other than a garden of 505.86 square metres.
3. If all other factors are equal, preference must be given to the applicant whose name appears first on the list in the Council's register.
Preference will be given to residents of Uckfield.

How much does an allotment cost per year?

The rent of an allotment plot must be paid annually on the 1st October in each year, unless otherwise agreed in writing.

Rent currently stands at £30.00 per annum for a whole plot, as agreed by Full Council. This is subject to further future reviews.

What facilities are there at the allotment sites?

Water taps are provided at each site and are marked on the site maps. Taps are switched off between November and March to prevent freeze damage and burst pipes.

Is there an allotment association in Uckfield?

Yes. The Uckfield and District Allotment and Cottage Gardeners Association (UDACGA) meets regularly for talks and lectures, has a monthly newsletter and operates a trading shed from the Framfield Road allotment site every Sunday morning 10.00am – 12 noon.

The plot is much bigger than I first thought; can I share it with a friend?

You must not sublet, assign, or part with possession of the allotment plot or any part of it, without the written consent of the Council.

If you are finding that the plot is too big for you to cultivate alone, contact the Council Offices. It may be possible to split your plot in half, if someone else is waiting and would prefer a smaller plot to cultivate.

Similarly, if you have been cultivating a smaller plot and feel that a larger plot would be preferable, contact the Council Offices. However at the present time as long as there is a waiting list all larger plots are being divided as they become available.

Everything is getting a bit overgrown but that's okay, isn't it?

You must keep your allotment plot clean, tidy, free from weeds and in a good state of cultivation and fertility. It was agreed in 2007 by Uckfield Town Council that for environmental reasons carpet and black plastic sheeting must not be used for the control of weeds on allotments as they are non bio-degradable.

You should also keep any pathway included in it or abutting onto it, reasonably free of weeds. If a pathway runs between your plot and another plot, you should keep half the pathway reasonably free of weeds.

If you are finding it difficult to cultivate your plot, contact the Council Offices. We may be able to help with rotovating your plot for a fee, or help you move to a smaller plot (see above). If you don't tell us there is a problem and your plot becomes overgrown we will write to you and ask you to clear your plot before it becomes a nuisance to other allotment holders. If your plot remains uncultivated after 28 days, you will be advised in writing that your tenancy agreement has been terminated.

If you are not able, for any reason, to clear or cultivate your plot please contact the Council Offices.

There's a bonfire on the allotment plot next to mine every weekend, and the smoke is a real nuisance. What should I do?

Allotment holders must not cause any nuisance or annoyance to the occupier of any other allotment plot, or obstruct the paths set out by the Council on the allotments.

Where the Council is advised of a nuisance or annoyance caused to the occupier of another allotment plot, the "offending" allotment holder will be advised accordingly, either by telephone or letter, and asked to remove or desist from further nuisance or annoyance.

If you feel that someone else is causing you nuisance or annoyance, contact the Council Offices immediately.

There is a tree at the edge of my allotment plot and nothing grows underneath it. Can I cut it down?

You must not cut or prune any timber or other trees.

If you feel that any trees or shrubs on or close to your allotment plot need pruning or cutting back, you should contact the Council Offices immediately. DO NOT cut or prune any trees or shrubs yourself. Your request will be considered and you will be advised of the outcome and any action to be taken by telephone or letter.

Similarly, you must not take, sell, or carry away any mineral, gravel, sand or clay on your allotment plot without the written consent of the Council

The hedge near my allotment is very overgrown. Who is supposed to cut it?

You must keep any hedge forming part of or adjacent to your plot properly cut and trimmed.

If you are not able, for any reason, to cut or trim the hedge forming part of or adjacent to your plot, please contact the Council Offices.

Is there anything I shouldn't plant?

You must not plant any trees or fruit bushes or any crops, which require more than 12 months to mature without written consent from the Council. Before you plant any

tree, bush or other crop requiring more than 12 months to mature you must write to the Council and outline your reasons for wishing to proceed with planting. Each case will be judged on its own merits, and may have to be considered by Full Council before permission to plant is given. If you plant such a tree, bush or crop and permission is not given, you will be asked to remove it.

Can I have a shed on my allotment?

You must not erect any building on it without the **written** consent of the Council, but consent to the erection of any building reasonably necessary for keeping hens or rabbits may not be refused under this rule.

Where sheds are erected, they must be no larger than 6 x 4 and be within your plot, kept in good repair and kept locked when you are not working on your plot.

Can I put a fence around my allotment to keep rabbits and other animals out?

You can erect a fence but you must not use barbed wire or razor wire for a fence adjoining any path set out by the Council on the allotments. If you decide not to continue renting your allotment you should take the fence down at the end of your tenancy.

Someone has dumped rubbish just inside the gate to the allotments, who will clear it away?

Allotment holders must not deposit or allow other persons to deposit or dump any rubbish on the allotment, or place any matter in the hedges, ditches or dykes situated on the allotments or adjoining land.

If you see rubbish dumped at the allotment site, please contact the Council Offices immediately

Can I take my dog with me to the allotments?

You must not bring any dog, or cause any dog to be brought, into the allotments *unless* the dog is held on a leash, does not cause a nuisance and is not allowed to foul the site.

I've got a problem with pests on my crops, can I use a spray?

When using any sprays or fertilisers, you must:

1. Take all reasonable care to ensure that adjoining hedges, trees and crops are not adversely affected, and must make good or replant as necessary should any damage occur; and
2. So far as possible select and use chemicals, whether for spraying, seed dressing or for any other purpose whatsoever, that will cause the least harm to members of the public, game birds and other wildlife, other than vermin or pests, and
3. Comply at all times with current regulations.

The Council recommends and suggests that Organic alternatives should be used in preference to other chemicals.

Are there any legal obligations I should know about?

Yes. You must at all times observe and comply fully with all enactments, statutory instruments, local, parochial or other bylaws, orders or regulations affecting the allotment site.

Lease Covenants

The Tenant of an allotment plot must observe and perform all conditions and covenants contained in the lease under which the Council hold the land that apply to the allotment garden.

Special Conditions

The Tenant of an allotment plot must observe and perform any other special condition the Council considers necessary to preserve it from deterioration of which notice is given to applicants for the allotment plot in accordance with these rules. Special conditions made under this rule may not prohibit or restrict the keeping of hens or rabbits.

Pollution

The tenant of an allotment plot must not contravene the Water Resources Act 1991 or any statutory re-enactment of it.

I saw someone walking about the allotments, making notes. Who can come onto the allotment sites?

Any Member or Officer of the Council may enter and inspect any allotment plot at any time.

I don't want to continue renting my allotment, what do I do?

If you wish to terminate your tenancy agreement, write to the Council Offices stating plot number and site and confirming that you wish to terminate your agreement.

If the allotment was rented by a member of your family who has died since taking on the allotment, the tenancy of an allotment will terminate on the rent day next after the death of the tenant. If you wish to terminate the agreement sooner, please contact the Council Offices.

Tenancy agreements will also terminate whenever the tenancy or right of occupation of the Council terminates.

Can the Council terminate my allotment agreement for any reason?

The tenancy of an allotment plot may be terminated by the Council by re-entry after one month's notice if:

1. The rent is in arrears for not less than 40 days or
2. The tenant is not duly observing the rules affecting the allotment plot or allotment site, or any other term or condition of the tenancy, or
3. If the tenant becomes bankrupt or compounds with their creditors

The tenancy of an allotment plot may be terminated by the Council or tenant by 12 months' notice in writing expiring on or after 29 September in any year.

The Council may terminate the tenancy of an allotment plot by re-entry after 3 months' notice in writing on account of the allotment plot being required:

1. For any purpose, other than use for agriculture, for which it was acquired by the Council or has been appropriated under any statutory provision, or
2. For building, mining or other industrial purpose or for roads or sewers necessary in connection with any of these purposes.

Service of Notices

Any notice may be served on a tenant either personally or by leaving it at his last known address, or by registered letter or by recorded delivery addressed to their last known address, or by fixing the notice in a conspicuous manner on the allotment plot.

If you have an enquiry or would like further information about Allotments in Uckfield, please contact:

Uckfield Town Council
Council Offices
Civic Centre
Uckfield
TN22 1AE

Tel: 01825 762774

Fax: 01825 765757

Email: angela@uckfieldtc.gov.uk