



Pretoria Road Allotments Society Handbook

www.growpretoria.org

Email: growpretoria@gmail.com

January 2011

PRETORIA ROAD ALLOTMENTS

Pretoria Road allotments were established in 1947 when Patchway was in its infancy. The site was formally agricultural land which was converted for use. At the time the soil was tested at three different sites in Patchway and the land alongside Pretoria Road was found to be the most suitable, no doubt helped by the underground water table that was recently identified in the area.

The site is owned by Patchway Town Council and is managed by the Pretoria Road Allotments Society via an elected Committee



We have a kitchen and toilet facilities on site available to all members. There is also a shop that is manned by a group of volunteers at set times.

There are a mixture of full and half plots which currently total 82 plots with plans for ten more half plots to be developed in the coming year. The tenants are a many and varied group of all ages and from all walks of life.

We would like to encourage as many people as possible to take up allotment gardening so please tell your friends about the benefits of growing your own produce; the exercise, the fresh air, meeting new friends and most of the satisfaction of eating fresh fruit and vegetables that you have grown yourself.

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INTRODUCTION

Pretoria Road Allotments Society would like to welcome you to the society and the allotments. We have prepared this booklet to explain the rules of tenancy and what can and can't be done on the site in plain English. Please read it carefully as it explains important aspects of your tenancy agreement. Many of the rules are based on the laws relating to allotments in the Allotments Acts 1908 – 1950. It also explains how the site is managed and who to contact if you have any problems.

We have also included some snippets of information throughout the booklet which we hope are useful though do not form part of your tenancy and agreement with the Society. We have some page at the end of useful organisations and their addresses.

CONTACTING THE COMMITTEE

If you have any problems or queries you can contact any member of the committee in person or by telephone. We're always happy to have a chat

Pretoria Road Allotments does not have an official postal address however letters to the Committee may be posted in the post box on the shed or handed to any member of the Committee.

Alternatively you can email us using growpretoria@gmail.com

2010-2011 Committee Members

**Chair
Chris Mills**

Plot 53

**Vice Chair
Les Brooks**



Plot 32A

**Treasurer
Larry McQuaid**



Plot 37B

**Secretary
Geraldine Leavy
0117 9691934**



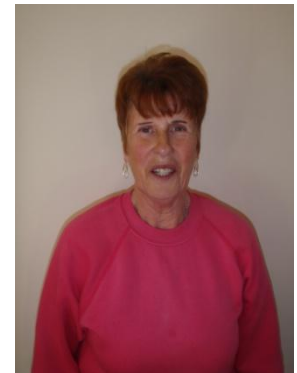
Plot 15

**Committee Member
Mike Stinchcomb**



Plot 46

**Committee Member
Amere Abdullah**



Plot 23A

**Committee Member
Laura Bowman**



Plot

**Committee Member
Ken Burgess**



Plot 7

**Committee Member
Steve Box**



Plot 14

YOUR ALLOTMENT AGREEMENT

The annual tenancy is between you and the Pretoria Road Allotments Society.. When you sign the agreement you are agreeing to pay the rent, to take on the plot, to look after it and to abide by the tenancy agreement and the conditions and rules explained in this handbook. The ownership of the plot stays with Patchway Town Council throughout the duration of the tenancy.

Your tenancy starts on 1st October or thereafter and runs to the 31st September of the following year. By signing the agreement you agree to pay the annual rent which is due by 1st October and payable in advance. Rent for plots starting after November pay Pro Rata rates.

HOW TO PAY YOUR RENT

Rent fees are made up of rent for the plot, water fees and membership fees. Rent can be paid in cash or by cheque to a committee member during the two weekend rent collecting sessions in September. The rent is reviewed every year and if there is to be a change in the rent you will be given at least two months notice. If the rent is more than 45 days late you may lose your tenancy

CHANGES IN CIRCUMSTANCES

If you change address you must notify the committee. Also if you reach 65 you will be eligible for reduced rents at the next renewal date so do let the treasurer know!

SUBLETTING/SHARING YOUR PLOT

The plot is let to one or two named tenants. If you then choose to share your plot this will be a private arrangement and will not affect your tenancy. However if you decide to give up your plot you can not just hand over your plot to someone else. You must tell the Committee and hand the plot back. The person who has worked the plot with you may be eligible to take on a tenancy themselves if there is no one on the waiting list.

CARING FOR YOUR PLOT

Your most important responsibility as a tenant is to look after and maintain your plot. This means you must keep your plot free from weeds and you must keep the plot safe and tidy and free of rubbish. The plot must be free of hazards e.g. glass and scrap metal. As a tenant you have a duty of care to make sure that your plot does not present health and safety hazards to any other people accessing the allotment site e.g. other tenants including curious children, visitors, council workers and even unauthorised intruders

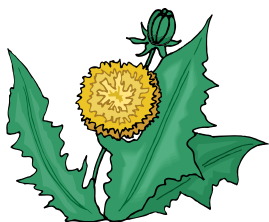
If you are not cultivating any of your plot you may cover it with Tarpaulin, Canvas or weed control fabric

We DO NOT allow thin polythene plastic and carpet to be used as plastic becomes brittle due to the weather and carpet becomes wet and will start to break down both ending up in the soil. Carpet is particularly problematic as it clogs up and seriously damages rotavators.

We appreciate that initially it may take a few months to bring your plot to proper cultivation. If your personal circumstances mean that you cannot cultivate your plot please tell the committee so this can be taken into account when inspections are carried out.

GIVING UP YOUR PLOT

If you decide you no longer want your plot you can end your tenancy by telling the Committee in writing. You can end with immediate effect or at a given time this is up to you. Of course we prefer some notice so we can then make every effort to have the plot taken over as possible so that it does not become overgrown. The Committee is unable to refund any rent which has already been paid.



CLEARANCE OF PLOTS

It is your responsibility to clear your plot when you give up your tenancy and leave the land ready for the next tenant.

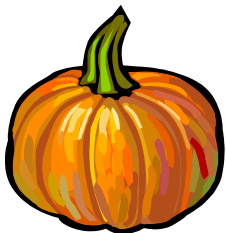
NOTICE TO QUIT

The site is regularly inspected and if your plot is not cultivated or is not tidy and free from weeds you may receive a warning letter. After this if you do not keep your plot tidy and free from weeds or if you break the terms of the tenancy agreement in some other way you may be given notice to quit. A notice to quit is issued at least 14 days before an open meeting and a decision is then voted on at that meeting. If a tenant is served with notice to quit the Committee is unable to refund any rent which has already been paid.. The Committee does not want to serve notice to quit on any tenant and will always try to negotiate to resolve problems before taking this drastic step.

We can also serve notice if the rent is unpaid for 45 days or we are reasonably satisfied that there has been any breach of these rules.

When we need to give formal notice to you about your tenancy we must do so in writing. We will do this by handing it to you in person or posting or delivering it to your address on the register.

As Landlords, Patchway Town Council may also serve notice on tenants with appropriate notice, as defined in law.



WHAT CAN I GROW?

You can grow any vegetables, fruit and flowers including fruit bushes for domestic consumption. You may grow fruit trees providing that they are of dwarf stock and grow no more than two metres (six foot) tall. Trees should be centrally planted and shouldn't encroach on neighbours plots and paths. Large trees are not permitted because they will cast shade over a wide area and take nutrients and water from neighbouring plots. Not more than a quarter of the plot may be used for growing flowers. Plants grown to produce or extract illegal substances are strictly prohibited.

LIMITS ON THE USE OF YOUR PLOT

Your allotment must only be used for growing vegetables, fruit and flowers. You may not camp\or stay overnight on it.

SHEDS, GREENHOUSES AND POLYTUNNELS

We do not allow structures over 1.5m high (Just under five foot) because they would invalidate the Town Council Insurance. All other structures must be safe and sound and are erected at your own risk.

SALE OF PRODUCE

You can sell surplus produce from your allotment provided that you can show that the allotment is mainly used to cultivate produce for your own personal consumption. However, running a business or trading from an allotment garden is prohibited by law.

NOTICES

All tenants should prominently display on their plot their plot number. Only Notices and advertisements relating to the allotment and the society may be erected on the site.

RIGHT OF ENTRY

Councillors, Officers of the Town Council and others employed by the council have the right to enter the allotment site to inspect and carry out work without notice.

MAINTENANCE OF PATHS

Patchway Town Council is responsible for the maintenance of the main tracks on the site. There should be a small path of at least thirty centimetres (twelve inches) between each allotment plot and each tenant is responsible for keeping their half of the paths clear and reasonably free from weeds and obstructions.

MAINTENANCE OF FENCES

Patchway Town Council is responsible for maintenance of the metal fencing that runs around the outer perimeter of the site. If your plot edges such fencing please do not grow plants close to or up the fence so as to allow the council access if required.

We do not allow fencing and hedges around individual plots. Barbed Wire may not be used within the site

REPAIRS AND MAINTENANCE

If you see a broken padlock, damaged fence, leaking tap or any other problem on the site please report it to any member of the Committee.

COMPLAINTS

If you are unhappy about any aspect of the way the site is being managed or if you have a complaint about the way you have been treated you should put your complaint in writing to any member of the Committee. The complaint will be raised at the next committee meeting unless of an urgent nature and an emergency meeting may be called

WAITING LIST



The committee holds a waiting list of people who live within the Patchway Parish Boundary who would like a plot. Existing tenants who would like a further plot have to go on the waiting list in turn. Vacant plots will be given out in strict waiting list order.

WATER

Water is provided at various intervals around the site. Water will be available from 1st March to End of September. Water is supplied for allotment use only. As part of our ongoing efforts to cut water usage the taps are compression taps and will turn themselves off after a given time. The use of hosepipes, sprinklers and irrigation



systems is strictly prohibited. Water is a precious and expensive commodity and must be used sparingly. If the water rates and/or usage increases the Committee reserves the right to pass on the additional cost through the rent. All plot holders are strongly recommended and encouraged to install collecting points for rainwater on their plots. These should be of stout material, covered where possible and positioned out of reach of small children. Stagnant water should be discarded as it poses a health risk and is not beneficial to plants.

BONFIRES AND RUBBISH DISPOSAL

Bonfires are not permitted on site

There are various rubbish and recycling areas on site for waste generated on site. There are green waste collection points alongside each of the Town Council storage areas. Please keep this area tidy and do not put plastic bags and general rubbish in with green waste. There is also a skip for rubbish and a collecting point for metal at the Newnham Place end of the site. Fly Tipping is strictly prohibited.



Many allotment gardeners make use of recycled materials for gardening purposes e.g. railway sleepers, wooden pallets, old containers etc. The society encourages tenants to be inventive and to re use old materials but reminds tenants that all structures must be safe and secure. The use of tyres and rusting metal is discouraged, the use of concrete is not allowed **and ASBESTOS MUST NOT BE BROUGHT ONTO THE ALLOTMENT SITE**

BRINGING COMPOST AND MANURE ONTO THE SITE.

Gardeners may bring green waste such as grass, cuttings and vegetable peelings onto their plot for making into compost for their own use. Manure may also be brought onto the site in quantities sufficient for your plot. Please remember that humans are at risk of infection from handling animal manure, e-coli bacteria is

especially prevalent in fresh manure, so good hand hygiene is necessary. If taking delivery of manure please ensure that you are onsite to oversee the delivery to ensure that vehicles do not drive onto neighbouring plots causing damage or soil compaction and that manure is not left on main tracks.

Composting is a cheap and easy way of providing your plot with an environmental friendly garden conditioner. Rich in plant nutrients, compost is a crumbly brown, soil like material, which forms from the decomposition of organic matter. The addition of compost to your soil will improve its structure and increase the level of biological activity both of which are vital for successful plant growth



DO COMPOST the following organic matter

Fruit and vegetable peelings

Grass cuttings, autumn leaves and annual weeds

Teabags / leaves and coffee grounds

Soft prunings and clippings, finely cut hedge clippings

Hair and pet fur, pure wool jumpers

Washed egg shells

DON'T COMPOST

Fat, bones and meat

Cooked vegetables

Any other foodstuffs

Woody material

Coal and ash

Cat or dog litter

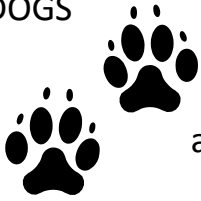


Compost bins are available at discounted prices from South Gloucestershire County Council. Alternatively you can build your own, again it should be safe and of sound construction and is built at your own risk

KEEPING OF LIVESTOCK (INCLUDING BEES)

The keeping of livestock including Bees is prohibited on the site.

DOGS



Gardeners may bring their dogs onto the allotment site but must keep them on a lead or strictly on their own plot. Please clean up after your dog.

VERMIN

Vermin infestation is a very serious threat to health because of the numerous diseases which rats carry and we are very keen to keep the site free of vermin. Please be careful to avoid any practices which might encourage vermin. Overgrown plots and piles of rubbish will attract rats so it is important to keep your plot tidy. If you see any signs of burrows, tracks or droppings please inform the committee immediately so that the Pest Control Officer can be called.

FOXES

There has been a family of foxes living on or near the allotment site for many years. Apart from the occasional flattened plant and freshly dug hole in the morning their presence is rarely noticed however they do carry disease so we ask you do not encourage over population by feeding.



USE AND STORAGE OF CHEMICALS

You are free to use sprays and fertilizers on your plot in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. You need to take account of weather conditions, and take care that you do not affect any adjoining plots, hedges, trees etc. You should use chemicals that will cause the least harm to members of the public, birds and other wildlife (other than vermin or pests). When applying chemicals they **MUST NOT** be used in any way that will contaminate any water supplies. You **MUST** comply with the law about the use of pesticides and chemicals. They must be on the approved list for use in the UK and it is illegal to store and use out of date

chemicals. For safety reasons we would rather you do not store large quantities of chemicals but if you do store chemicals at the site please make sure they are stored safely and securely and do not present a hazard to anyone.

KEYS AND SECURITY



You have been issued with a refundable key. The key is for your own use but remains the property of the Society and must be returned if you give up your allotment. Your deposit will be refunded when the key is surrendered. You must lock the allotment gate every time you enter and leave the site.

Patchway Town Council and the Committee endeavour to keep the site as safe as possible but we rely on tenants to keep us informed if there are any problems. If you are worried about any aspect of site security please contact any member of the Committee. The committee or the council takes no responsibility for the loss of tenants belongings through criminal activity. You are advised to have your own insurance and to take reasonable precautions to keep your belongings safe especially tools.

Please report any such incidents both to the Committee and most importantly the police. For crimes in progress ring 999, or for less urgent matters ring Avon and Somerset Police on 0845 4567000.



Generally the allotment is a safe and secure place and we strive to maintain this however it is not possible to make the allotment a risk free zone. It is useful to bear in mind the following health and safety tips:

Ensure that you keep your tetanus injections up to date

Observe basic hygiene rules when handling manure, soil and chemicals

Lots of gardeners often spend long periods of time on their own on site, make sure that you tell someone where you are and how long you expect to be

Report any hazards on the site to the Committee as soon as possible

Always store sharp tools and chemicals securely

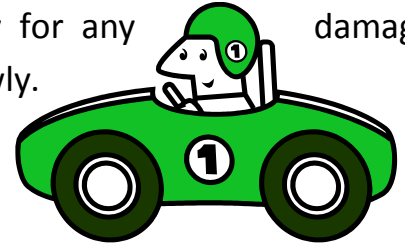
Report any crime or suspicious behaviour to the police and to the Committee.

LARGE EQUIPMENT STORAGE

We discourage the storage of expensive tools on individual plots. The allotment has two storage containers where plot holders may store equipment such as rotavators and mowers.

VEHICLES ON SITE

You may drive your vehicle on site but you must lock the gates behind you each time and stick to the tracks. The tracks will be closed off during very wet weather to prevent damage. The Town Council or Society takes no responsibility for any damage caused to your vehicle on site. Please exercise care and drive slowly. Please park in designated parking areas and not on main tracks. Whether you park your vehicle on site or outside you are advised to keep your vehicle locked at all times.



BEHAVIOUR AND DISPUTES

You, or anyone who comes onto site with you, must not cause a nuisance or annoyance to other tenants on the allotment site. You are responsible for the conduct and activities of anybody you allow on the allotment.

It is not possible to list everything that will cause nuisance and annoyance but examples include:

- Rowdy behaviour, excessive noise, shouting or swearing
- Failing to maintain boundaries
- Going onto other plots without permission of the tenant
- Harvesting from other plots without permission
- Dumping anything on the site other than at recognised recycling and rubbish areas
- Failing to comply with the rules

You must not harass, intimidate or abuse anyone on the site. Harassment includes offensive behaviour directed at people because of their age, gender, disability, racial groups, sexual orientation, religion or belief and indirects threats towards or making malicious allegations against people. The Society will not tolerate any bullying and harassment on the site . In the

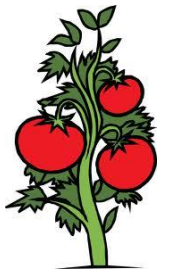
unlikely and unforeseen event of any disagreements or disputes between tenants the matter must be referred to the Committee, who decision shall be final.

INTERFERENCE OF PROPERTY

You may not damage, interfere or take any property belonging to the council from around the site including: taking organic matter, soil, trees, turf, minerals, sand, gravel, clay, or earth.

TIPS FOR NEW PLOT HOLDERS

- Plan your plot. A well planned plot is more likely to be successful. Good gardens don't just happen
- Decide what you want to grow. Find out what its requirements are with regard to conditions, positions etc
- Do not be afraid to ask. As a rule, gardeners are friendly and helpful, so ask the person who seems to have the best plot or the most successful one. It is worth remembering that the two are not always the same!
- Do not try to do too much at once. Do a little bit at a time. A little done well will likely be more successful than a lot done hurriedly. Patience is definitely a virtue in the garden.
- Be prepared to accept failure. It happens to EVERYONE
- Try to have the right tools for the job and look after them, as it makes life earlier.
- Enjoy your plot. If you enjoy it you will look after it. If you look after it, your chances of success are likely to be higher. If you allow your plot to become a chore, then you can almost guarantee to fail



GOOD LUCK AND GOOD GARDENING

USEFUL NAMES AND ADDRESSES

National Association of Allotment and Leisure gardens (NSALG)

Telephone: 01536 266576

Email: natsoc@nsalg.demon.co.uk

Website: www.nsalg.org.uk

You receive a quarterly magazine, discounted seed scheme, insurance scheme and advice and guidance

National Allotment Gardens Trust (NAGT)

Telephone:: 02 363379175

Website: www.nagtrust.org

Federation of City Farms and Community Gardens

Telephone: 0117 9231800

Email: admin@farmgarden.org.uk

WWW.farmgarden.org.uk

Garden Organic (formerly HDRA)

Telephone: 0247 630 3517

Website: gardenorganic.org.uk

www.allotments-uk.com

A directory of allotment links and information

Royal Horticultural Society

Telephone: 020 78344333

Email: info@rhs.org.uk

Recycling including composting

www.letsrecycle.com

Avon and Somerset Police

If you need to report an incident in progress 999, for non urgent problems ring 0845 4567000

Bristol Water

Leak line Telephone number: 0800 801011

Patchway Town Council

Calicroft House

Rodway Road

Patchway

Bristol

BS34

Telephone: 01454 868530

Email: clerk@patchwaytowncouncil.gov.uk

USEFUL PUBLICATIONS

- Kitchen garden magazine
- The allotment handbook by Caroline Foley
Publisher : New Holland Publishers (UK)
ISBN: 1 -84330-583-6
- Allotment gardening – an organic guide for beginners’ by Susan Berger
Publisher: Green Books
ISBN: 1-903998-54-9
- Green Essentials Organic Guides, ‘Successful allotments’ – a little full colour booklet on starting an allotment
Publisher: www.impactpublishing.co.uk
ISBN: 1-904-60121-9
- The Blue Book – a guide to approved chemicals in the UK
Available from HSE