

## Allotments in Great Chesterford

There are currently thirteen Great Chesterford residents who have asked to be included on a waiting list for allotments within the village. There are a further two residents who have expressed an interest if water can be provided on site.

The standard size for plots in England and Wales is 10 poles (300 sq. yds. – 30 ft. x 10 ft.) this equates to 12-13 plots per acre. To accommodate our current waiting list we would require one to one and a half acres of land depending on the site facilities (sheds, toilets, water tanks etc.) we intend to provide.

Possible landowners who may be in a position to either sell or lease land are as follows:

- Local Authorities
- Colleges
- Private individuals
- Farmers
- The Church (Glebe land)
- Trusts
- Charities

### **Benefits of Allotments**

*Promotion of Health and well being:* providing opportunities to people of all ages for informal recreation allotments may provide physical exercise and other health benefits.

*As a haven for flora and fauna:* sites may also have a potential to be corridors or stepping stones from one habitat to another and may contribute towards achieving objectives set out in local biodiversity plans.

*As a community resource:* as a place for congregating and holding community events or periodic activities (open days, allotment forestry beanpole fests).

**By leasing agricultural land for allotments landowners could diversify their interests and improve their local communities, whilst still making a profit.**

Planning permission would not be required for any such allotments, as there is no change of land use. (Section 55 subsection (2) paragraph (e) Town and Country Planning Act 1990).

When entering into an agreement to lease land, the National Society of Allotment & Leisure Gardeners recommends a **14 year lease with a 12 month notice period on either side.**

When leasing land for allotments the landowner can stipulate if plot holders will be allowed individual sheds or if a communal shed with lockers is required.

Once a site has been secured an Allotment Association should be formed.

### **Tenancy Rates**

The average rent for a 10 pole plot in England and Wales is from £23-£35 up to £125 p.a. for some new modern sites. There are some plots which are of non standard size because of the shape of the site and this becomes easy to charge by the pole (£2.50 - £12.5 per pole).

### **Insurance**

A Municipal authority should take out PL insurance for sites. Health and safety come into the equation and 'a duty of care' is relevant in the maintenance of a safe environment on land provided by the PC. PL Insurance for the site may possibly be included in the PC 'open spaces' insurance. Tenants however must be responsible for their own property (sheds, tools etc.)

### **Waiting Lists**

Waiting lists should be held by the PC in order of receipt. If plots become available and cannot be filled by PC residents they may be offered to persons outside the village boundary. However they must be made aware that it is a one year tenancy and that should a resident require a plot their tenancy will not be renewed.

*WAITING LISTS MAY NOT BE CLOSED* – This would falsify the demand for allotments in an area.

### **Waste Disposal**

- Most vegetable waste can and should be composted.
- Non compostable items must be removed by the tenants (this should be written into the agreement).

No asbestos or chemicals should be allowed on the site. Good practice guidelines on bonfires and restrictions on times when bonfires are allowed can be written into the tenancy.

### **Maintenance**

- Almost certainly the Municipal authority is responsible for the infrastructure of the site – security (fencing, hedging, gates, shed if supplied by the authority) water supply.
- Some minor maintenance may be undertaken by the tenants or allotment association if incorporated into the tenancy.