



Flitwick Allotment Guide



WELCOME
By the Allotment Liaison Committee

Welcome to Flitwick allotments.

As an allotment holder you are in a position to grow fruit and vegetables all year round, using your own labour and love.

Here in this guide you will find some useful answers to a variety of questions about the Allotments. In addition you will find a site plan of both the Steppingley Road site and Station Road site.

Good luck planting, growing and eating the fruits and vegetables you produce.

For details of the Allotment Manager see below;

Contact details:-

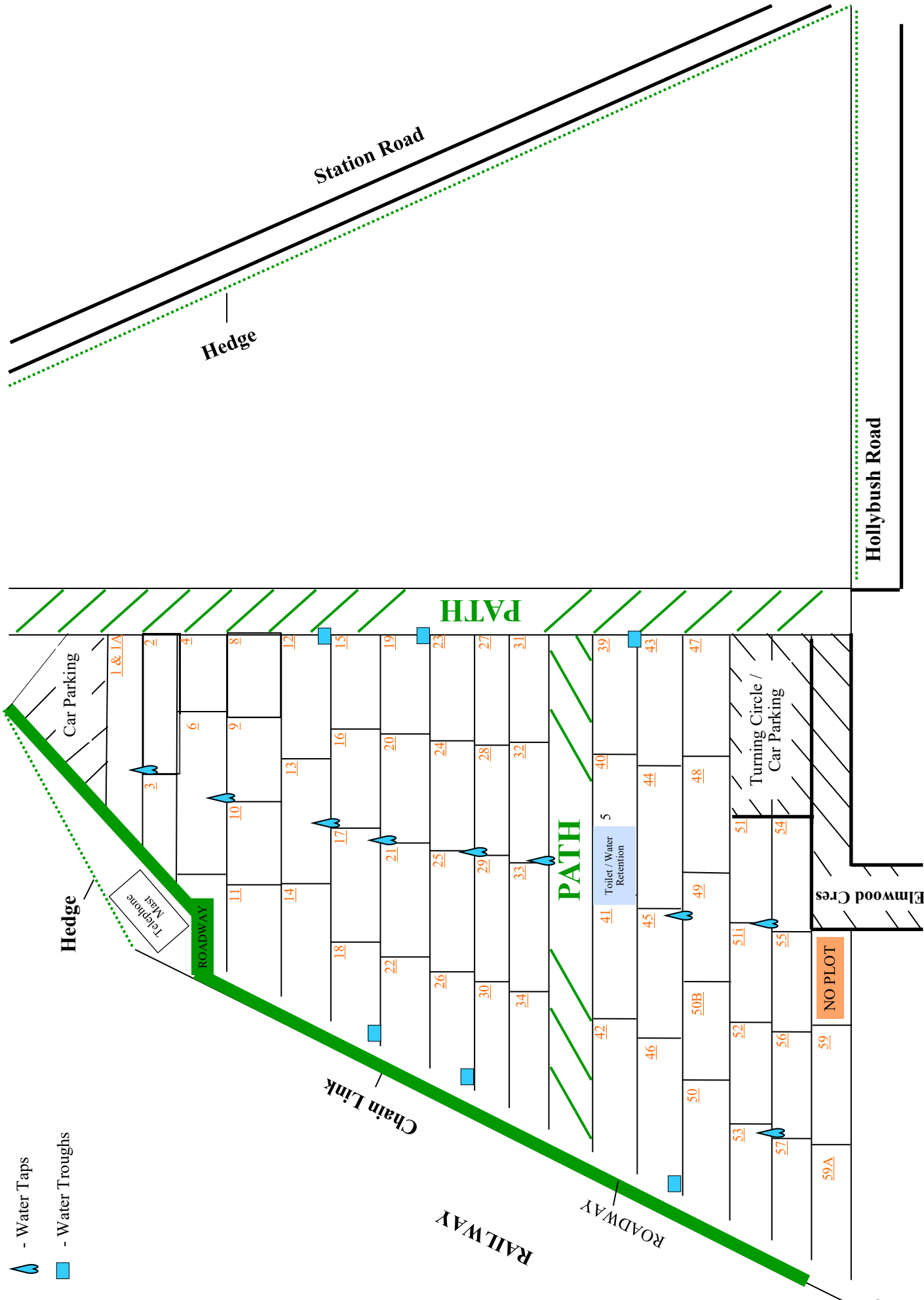
Sarah Burgess
The Allotment Manager
Flitwick Town Council
The Rufus Centre
Steppingley Road
Flitwick
MK45 1AH

Telephone: 01525 631900
Fax: 01525 631903
Email: sarahburgess@flitwick.gov.uk
Website: www.flitwick.gov.uk

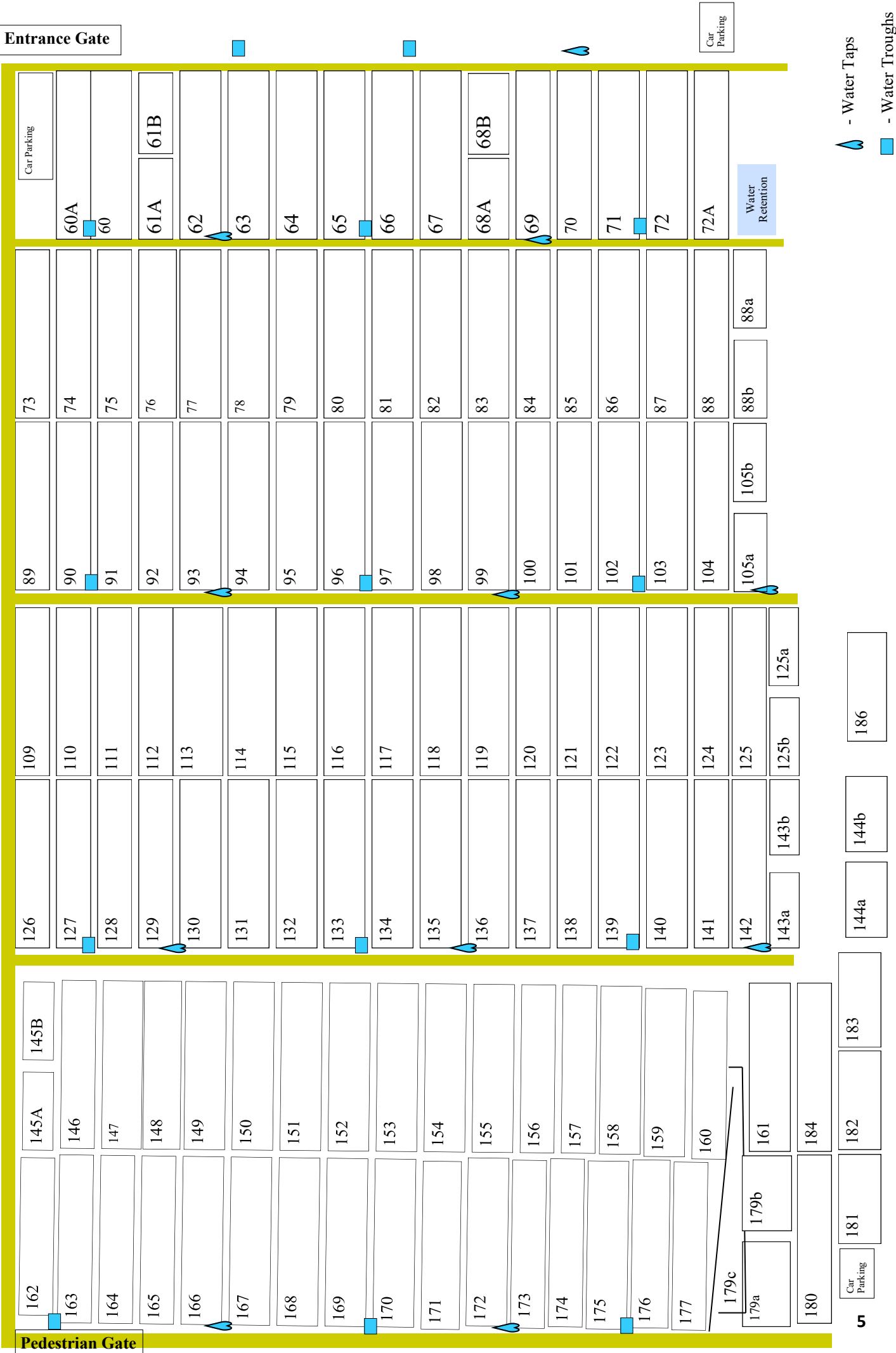
INDEX

♦	Index	Page 3
♦	Station Road Site Plan	Page 4
♦	Steppingley Road Site Plan	Page 5
♦	Frequently Asked Questions	Pages 6-11
♦	Changes of address form	Page 12
♦	Give up an allotment form	Page 12

STATION ROAD ALLOTMENTS



STEPPINGLEY ROAD ALLOTMENTS



1. Where are the allotments in Flitwick?

There are two sites;

Station Road - This site is accessed by pedestrians and vehicles through the road way between the Royal British Legion Headquarters and the Scout Headquarters in Station Road. Pedestrian only access is also available from the Elmwood Crescent end of the allotment site.

Steppingley Road - This site can be accessed by pedestrians and vehicles from Steppingley Road. Pedestrian access is also available through the pedestrian gate at the Millwright Way end of the site.

2. How do I apply for an allotment plot?

You can contact the Allotment Manager at Flitwick Town Council, The Rufus Centre Steppingley Road, Flitwick, Bedfordshire, MK45 1AH, telephone 01525 631900 or email stacielockey@flitwick.gov.uk.

If there are allotments immediately available for rent, you will be contacted, either by telephone or letter. You will then be met at the site and shown the available plot and the site generally. 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.

Tenants must be resident in Flitwick.

3. How much does an allotment cost per year?

The rent of an allotment plot is £26.39 (standard 5 pole plot) for 2022/23. This must be paid annually on the 6th January each year, unless otherwise agreed in writing. A key deposit of £20 is also required for gate and tap keys.

4. How many allotment plots can I rent?

Only one 5 pole plot can be allocated per household. At the present time some allotment holders have more than one 5 pole plot. As these allotment holders terminate their plots these will be re-let to people on the waiting list.

5. What facilities are there on the allotment sites?

Water troughs are provided at both the Steppingley Road Site, together with water taps. Taps are switched off and water troughs emptied between November and March to prevent frost damage and burst pipes. There is also a portable toilet on both sites.

6. Is the allotment site secure?

Each allotment holder, on completing their allotment agreement will be issued with a water tap key and a key for the entrance gate(s) padlock. The gate key will also open the pedestrian gates.

Allotment Holders are asked to ensure that the gates to the site are padlocked both on entry and exit to the site, preventing unauthorised access.

7. What happens if I need something delivered to my allotment?

When you arrange a delivery you, or someone nominated by you, must be at the allotment site to meet the delivery driver. You must not give the key to the delivery company. Please ensure that the vehicles making the delivery does no damage to any area of the allotment site. All damage must be rectified by the Tenant who ordered the delivery.

8. Can I drive right up to my allotment?

You can drive up to your allotment to unload any equipment/materials however please ensure you do not leave vehicles along the roadways as it can block other Allotment Holders from accessing their plot.

Allotment Holders should be aware that spine roads can be very muddy and it is their responsibility to take this into account when using the spine roads. It is suggested that the spine roads are not used during the months of November, December, January and February.

Outside these months, should the tracks be obviously wet and the ground soft, we ask you to use common sense and not drive on them as this leads to problems with cars getting stuck in the mud and makes the tracks difficult to negotiate on foot.

9. Car Parking

Car Parking areas are available on both sites, please refer to site plans.

10. Can I take as much water from the water troughs/taps as I like?

At present the water supply to the allotments is unlimited. Allotment holders are requested to show respect for other Tenants when using this resource. The practise of direct siphoning of water from the tanks onto allotment plots is strictly forbidden. Tenants are asked not to completely drain troughs when they go to collect water from them as this leaves other Tenants without water until the troughs refill.

Hosepipes must not be used.

Tenants are asked when mixing chemicals, i.e. weed killer, that they fill their watering cans from a water tap rather than using the water troughs preventing contamination of the water in the troughs.

Water butts will not be permitted where filled directly from taps.

11. Is there an allotment association?

At the present time there is no allotment association, but if a number of allotment holders wished to set up such an organisation the Town Council would support this venture.

12. The plot is 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.

If you are finding that the plot is too big for you to cultivate alone, contact the Allotment Manager at the Town 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 Allotment Manager at the Town Council Offices. If a larger plot is available you will be informed.

13. 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. For environmental reasons carpet must not be used for the control of weeds on allotments as they are non bio-degradable and chemicals, particularly from foam carpets may leach into the soil. If black plastic is used to suppress weeds then it must be firmly pinned down in the earth to prevent it blowing away (the allotment sites can be quite windy) and becoming a nuisance.

You should also keep any pathway in good condition.

If you are finding it difficult to cultivate your plot, contact the Allotment Manager at the Town Council Offices. 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 following receipt of an untidy plot letter your plot remains uncultivated after 28 days, you will be issued with a Notice to Quit with immediate effect (this will also be advised in the untidy plot letter).

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

14. Are you allowed bonfires on an allotment. What should I do if a bonfire is causing a nuisance?

The allotment agreement states that bonfires are only permitted Mondays to Saturdays and two hours prior to sunset. The allotment holder must ensure that the bonfire is out and safe before they leave the site, even if a specialised bin is being used.

Allotments holders should also be aware of the households adjacent to the site, and where possible prevent smoke from travelling in that direction.

A bonfire should only be used to dispose of dry garden waste if composting or recycling is not an option, such as diseased plant material or tough woody waste. Useful information about bonfires can be found on the National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection website.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 it is an offence to cause a statutory nuisance. A statutory offence involves a persistent problem which includes smoke, fumes or gases emitted from premises so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance. This would need to be a persistent problem, interfering substantially with your well being, comfort or enjoyment of your property.

It is an offence under the Clean Air Act 1993 if a bonfire of industrial/commercial waste is emitting dark smoke.

To report a nuisance bonfire, please contact the Allotment Manager at the Rufus Centre, Steppingley Road, Flitwick or telephone 01525 631900 or e mail info@flitwick.gov.uk

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

No, you must not cut or prune any timber or any 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 Allotment Manager at the Town 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.

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

It is the responsibility of the Grounds Maintenance staff to maintain any hedges or trees outside individual plots. You must not plant any hedging on your allotment.

17. Are there any things I shouldn't plant?

You must not without written consent of the Town Council plant or permit or allow to be planted any trees or bushes (not being soft fruit bushes). Additionally, you must not plant or cultivate any crop whose cultivation is against the law.

18. Can I have a shed or a greenhouse on my allotment plot?

You must not erect any building on your plot without the written consent of the Town Council.

Where a shed or greenhouse is erected these must be of a suitable material not exceeding a total of 64 square feet per tenant. Sheds and Greenhouses to be maintained to a safe condition and any broken glass to be removed from the site by the tenant. On termination of the lease the Tenant must clear the contents of the shed/greenhouse from the allotment plot and if necessary removal of shed and or greenhouse from site.

If you store any hazardous chemicals/materials or dangerous tools/implements in your shed you must keep your shed locked when you are not working your plot.

19. 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 Town Council on the allotments. However, the Tenant must have adequate insurance in case of an accident involving another allotment holder. If you decide not to continue renting your allotment you should take the fence down at the end of your tenancy.

20. Can I put fresh manure on my plot?

Fresh manure may be stored on your plot but the heap should not be in a position where it would contaminate a neighbouring plot.

N.B. It is not recommended that fresh manure be used directly on crops but that it should be allowed to rot down for at least six months before use.

21. 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.

Vegetation should not be dumped along the fencing boundary line.

If you see rubbish dumped at the allotment site, please contact the Allotment Manager at the Town Council office immediately.

22. How do I get rid of my rubbish?

You should be able to compost all your compostable waste on your plot. The Tenant has a responsibility to remove their own un-compostable vegetation from their allotment plot.

N.B. If you discover any asbestos on your plot e.g. corrugated sheets from an old shed, you must contact the Town Council and inform them as this must be handled and disposed of separately from other non-compostable wastes in accordance with the relevant legislation.

23. I have seen a rat on my plot, how do I get rid of it?

Unfortunately, as in any countryside situation, rats may be a problem. Compost bins provide nesting places and food sources for rats. It is advisable to make bins rat-proofed by placing wire underneath, and preferably extending wire around the sides of the bin. The Town Council recommend that you check compost bins weekly in the winter for signs of rat activity. Check under sheds and pallets for rat nests and avoid giving them places to hide.

If you see signs of rats please contact the Allotment Manager at the Town Council office who will arrange for their Pest Control officer to visit the plot and take necessary action.

24. Can I take my dog with me to the allotments?

Dogs must be kept on a lead at all times when on the allotment site, and all dog faeces must be removed from the site.

25. 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
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
3. Comply at all times with current regulations.

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

26. Are there any legal obligations I should know about?

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

Lease covenants

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

Special Conditions

The Tenant of an allotment plot must observe and perform any other special condition the Town 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 must NOT contravene the Water Resources Act 1991 or any statutory re-enactment of it.

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

If an emergency or a matter of Health and Safety arises relating to your plot Members of the Allotment Liaison Committee or any Member or Officer of the Town Council may enter and inspect any allotment plot at any time. If the matter is non-urgent then the Town Council will give the Tenant seven days written notice of the intention to inspect the plot.

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

If you wish to terminate your tenancy agreement, contact the Allotment Manager at the Town Council office stating your plot number, site and confirming that you wish to terminate your allotment agreement.

The tenancy may also be terminated by the Town Council or the Tenant by 12 months' notice in writing expiring on or after 5th January in any year.

If the allotment was rented by a member of your family who has died since taking on the allotment, the tenancy of the 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 Allotment Manager at the Town Council offices.

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

29. Can the Town Council terminate my allotment agreement for any reason?

The tenancy of an allotment plot may be terminated by the Town 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.

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

1. For any purpose, other than use for agriculture, for which it was acquired by the Town 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 their last known address, or by registered letter or by recorded deliver addressed to their last known address, or by fixing the notice in a conspicuous manner to the allotment plot.

If you have any enquiry or would like further information about Allotments in Flitwick please contact: info@flitwick.gov.uk

30. Change of Address

The Tenant shall give notice in writing to the Town Council of any change in their address within 28 days of such change.

31. Safety

All tenants are responsible for their own safety and possessions as well as that of any child or visitor to the allotment garden and the same Terms and Conditions will apply.

32. Allotment Liaison Committee

The Allotment Liaison Committee consists of 4 Councillors from the Town Council and three Allotment Representatives, 2 from the Steppingley Road site and 1 from Station Road site. The Allotment Liaison Committee meet monthly during the growing season (April - September) visiting both sites to identify untidy plots, relevant letters issued, indicating the date of the next site visit and what action is required by the tenant, together with details regarding a Notice to Quit, should it be required. They also inspect the condition of the site overall.

If any allotment holder has an illness or is unable to work their allotment for any reason, if they advise the Allotment Manager this can be reported at the respective site visit.

33. Allotment Liaison Committee AGM

Around October/November of each year the Allotment Liaison Committee hold their Annual General Meeting. Invitations are extended to all allotment holders to attend and have an input to the meetings. Copies of previous minutes can be obtained from the Allotment Manager at the Town Council offices.

One of the duties at the ALC AGM is the appointing of Allotment Site representatives for the ensuing year. If you wish to contact your allotment representative please contact the Allotment Manager at the Town Council offices.

34. Flitwick Gardeners Association

The Flitwick Gardeners' Association (FGA) operates a small discount store for compost, manures, tools and other sundries. It also runs schemes to allow members to buy seeds and potato seeds cheaply. The FGA organise trips to nationally important events and hold very successful shows.

FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Allotment Administration

I wish to report my change of address, my new address is—

.....

Signed Print Name

Site Plot No..... Date

Please return to
The Allotment Manager,
Flitwick Town Council,
The Rufus Centre,
Steppingley Road,
Flitwick
MK45 1AH.

FLITWICK TOWN COUNCIL

Allotment Administration

I wish to give up my allotment plot

.....

Signed Print Name

Site Plot No..... Date

Please return to;

The Allotment Manager,
Flitwick Town Council,
The Rufus Centre,
Steppingley Road,
Flitwick
MK45 1AH.