

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT BEFORE TAKING ON AN ALLOTMENT

Why do you want an Allotment? What do you want it for?

Remember that an allotment is a place for growing things, principally vegetables, fruit and flowers. Is this your primary purpose for wanting an allotment? Whilst it can also have recreational, social and therapeutic benefits these are not its primary purpose and for the most part only come to you as a byproduct of working to grow things.

Have you got the time?

Many new plot holders underestimate the amount of time that they will need to commit to their allotment to keep it under control let alone make it fruitful. Most plot holders would say that they need at least half a day a week, less in the winter more in spring and summer to keep on top of their plot.

Have you got patience and staying power?

Allotments are not for those who need instant results. Plants grow in their own time. That is true for the plants you want to grow and the weeds you don't want. The plants you want will need caring for whether or not it is convenient, and the weeds you don't want will need attention whether or not you feel like it! It will probably take you some years to get the plot into basic shape.

Have you got tools and storage?

You don't need many tools to keep an allotment in good shape. But if you have grass on the plot, you will need something to cut it with (mower or strimmer). You will need a spade, a fork, rake, etc and somewhere to put them all. If you are lucky, you might inherit a shed on your plot, but maybe not. It's just the luck of the draw as to whether you do.

Are you able and willing to take on a plot which is in a terrible state?

Sadly it is sometimes the case that plots become available because the previous tenant was unable to care for it and it has become overgrown and gone to rack and ruin. If that is the case it will take a lot of hard work over the first year to clear it. Have you the energy, patience and commitment to undertake such a project?

Are you prepared and willing to contribute to the life of the Allotment Association?

Being a member of the Allotment Association involves more than just looking after your own plot. It also involves sharing in responsibility for the organization and maintenance of the estate. Members are expected to help care for those common and shared areas of the allotments in close proximity to their plot, assist in regular working parties and be available to serve on the committee or assist with projects at the request of the Committee.

In summary: What we do

We grow stuff; mainly vegetables, fruit and flowers

We share in the running of the Eynsham Allotment Association

We help each other

We care for the soil on our plots

We care for the natural world with which we share the allotments

We enjoy it

We complain about the weather

We complain about rabbits

In summary: What we don't do

Allow our plots to become weedy, overgrown, unsightly or a mess

Use our plots primarily as a recreational area

Use unnecessary and dangerous chemicals

Rewilding our plots

Use hosepipes

Imagine that we will save loads of money by growing our own veg