



# BTC Allotment Fees for 2023/24

## Agreed by Council at the Town Council Meeting held on 18/01/2022

The Allotment fees are reviewed annually. At this year's review held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2022, Council agreed to increase allotment fees by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) Of 5.1% for 2022/23.

The 2023/24 increase will allow the Council to further enhance allotment provision and to bring the fees in line with neighbouring towns. A cost comparison with other local allotment charges was undertaken before the new rates were set.

Please see below the increase from 2021-2023:

Allotment Rent	2021/2022	2022/2023	2023/2024
	Approved Fees 01/09/2021	Approved Fees 01/09/2022  CPI of 5.1%	Approved Fees 01/09/2023
Rent of Small Plot (approx. 10m x 5m)	£35.00	£36.00	£65.00
Rent of Large Plot (approx. 20m x 5m)	£50.00	£51.00	£115.00

### Access and navigation

The main track from the building site has had limited break up from a tractor bucket and has been levelled out and firmed down as a temporary improvement. Talks are underway to find a more permanent solution.

The main roadway that runs from the car park and through the allotments over the bridge is still being reviewed and permissions sought from Central Bedfordshire Council for works to be carried out.



## **The Release of Previously Overgrown plots/Weedkiller option instead of the Rotavator**

The Council will release overgrown plots to residents on the waiting list as soon as these are made good.

The Council will make good any overgrown plots which have been vacated prior to them being offered to residents on the waiting list. The making good will consist of ensuring that all rubbish has been removed and that all growing material has been strimmed to ground level. It is then up to the plot holder to prepare the land to make it suitable for planting and growing.

The Council has discontinued its policy of offering a rotavating service. Rotavating breaks up the pernicious weed roots which tend to multiply the problem when the fraction of weed root will inevitably re-grow. The best option is to dig the weed out and not leave fragments to re-grow.

To save plot holders time, the Council can offer an alternative service to help clear the plot quickly by using an eco-friendly weed killer – Roundup Glyphosate Pro-bioactive 450 which will kill the roots prior to cultivation and make the plot easier to prepare for planting. The cost of this service to the allotment holder is £35 per full plot and £17.50 per half plot.

## **Storage**

The Council is procuring a large lockable storage unit for allotment holders to store their belongings – this is subject to Central Bedfordshire Council approval. Talks are taking place with representatives of allotment holders to determine the most appropriate design taking into consideration security concerns as well as location.

## **Security**

The Council is looking at the option of adding another lock to the gate to solve the current security issue at the site. Unfortunately the lock is regularly vandalised and has to be replaced.

## **Water access**

Water can be accessed around the site. There are currently 4 water troughs, this will be increased to 5 in the near future.

The water levels will be topped up unless the weather becomes extreme or there is a danger of severe frosts. Water is currently part of the rent and is not invoiced separately.



## **Compost bays**

There are three compost bays which are available to all allotment holders. The compost area is maintained by the allotment plot holders as it needs regular turning but is often prone to the incorrect type of compost applied or too large items being put on the compost heap. Tenants must ensure that the bays are properly managed at all times.

## **Demand for plots**

The provision of allotments is a statutory responsibility of the Town Council and to keep the list down to an acceptable number which should be 5. There are currently 75 people on the waiting list (42 full plots and 33 half plots) We have made some of the full plots into half plots and discouraged allotment holders from having more than one plot to satisfy demand. The Council is exploring a range of opportunities to purchase or rent additional land.

## **Cost of Waste removal**

The cost of removing debris from plots is £350 per 3-yard skip. This cost is routinely absorbed by Biggleswade Town Council.

## **Corporate aspirations**

Biggleswade Town Council sets out its priorities and outcomes for the coming five years in its corporate aspirations and is committed to ensuring that Biggleswade town maintains its position as one of the great places to live and work for both residents and visitors.