

## Loddon Allotment Gardens Management Policy

### 1) Policy and Purpose

The aims of this Policy relate to:

- The practical management of the allotment site
- The process for the management of tenancies, disputes and waiting lists.

This Policy has been adopted so that Allotment Holders, Councillors, Staff and Members of the Public are informed about the processes. The Policy aims to be fair and consistent.

### 2) Responsibility

The Allotments belong to Loddon Town Council, and the Management will be undertaken by the Administration & Allotment Officer (AAO) delegated with that authority by Loddon Town Council.

### 3) Management Principles

Loddon Town Council aims to:

- Provide fair and consistent treatment of all Allotment Tenants
- Undertake fair enforcement where rules are not followed
- Ensure that the Allotment site is maintained to a high standard and within the budget
- Strive to ensure that all plots are utilised and / maintained

### 4) Application Process

The Loddon Allotment Gardens Waiting List & Allocation Procedure is attached as Appendix III

### 5) Allotment Termination

Should an Allotment Holder leave the Loddon/Chedgrave, they will be required to give one month's notice and their tenancy will be terminated.

A tenant who wishes to terminate their tenancy or relinquish part of an allotment should write to The Administration & Allotment Officer at Loddon Town council. No refund will be given.

A Tenant who does not comply with the Tenancy and the Plot Letting Terms can have their tenancy terminated with appropriate notice. Should this take place during the year, no refund will be issued.

### 6) Rents

The rent for an allotment is charged annually in advance and becomes payable before the 06 April each year.

Allotment Holders will be issued with an invoice at the beginning of January. Rent should not be paid in cash but by cheque made out to Loddon Town Council or by BACs payment (details of which will be given at time of renewal).

Rents are reviewed from time to time by the Council. Any decision to increase the rents will comply with the requirements of the Allotments Act 1950 and will be notified to tenants 12 months before the increase will be implemented.

## **7) Maintenance of the site**

The income derived from allotment rents goes to Loddon Town Council to be set against the costs of running the site. Allotment Holders can contact the AAO to raise issues and concerns about the site, or attend any Town Council Meeting, which are held monthly (except August).

The Plot Letting Terms for the Allotment site are designed to well managed for Loddon Town Council.

## **8) Tenancy Rules**

A copy of the Plot Letting Terms, applicable for all tenants is attached to this Policy and is issued to the tenant with their tenancy agreement.

The Tenant of an Allotment shall comply with the Plot Letting Terms.

Plot Letting Terms will be reviewed annually.

The tenants may hold social events at the Allotment site but are requested to advise LTC of the date of any such event in advance. The Council's Insurance policy does not cover private events so tenants are advised to ensure their own cover is in place.

Regular inspections of plots are undertaken by the AAO. No notice is given of this inspection.

Regular Health and Safety inspections are also undertaken.

## **9) Data Protection**

The Council has a legal right to hold the personal details of allotment holders. This will be destroyed one year following termination of the tenancy. Tenants should read the Data Protection Policy of the Council for further information about how their personal details may be used.

## **10) Complaints**

Loddon Town Council aims to carry out its functions and duties legally and with the interest of the parish and its residents as the primary objective. The Town Council aims to serve efficiently and effectively, and to continually improve services.

A copy of the policy is available on the Loddon Town Council website.

**This policy was adopted by Loddon Parish Council at its meeting held on the 13 July 2022**

**Signed:**

**Dated:**

**Date for next review: July 2025 (Reviewed every 3 Years)**

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- Appendix I Loddon Allotment Gardens Risk Assessment
  - Appendix II Loddon Allotment Gardens Plot Letting Terms
  - Appendix III Loddon Allotment Gardens Waiting List & Allocation Procedure
  - Appendix IV Loddon Allotment Gardens Breach of Tenancy Procedure
  - Appendix V Allotment Health and Safety Advice to Tenants
  - Appendix VI Rats



# Loddon Town Council

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## Appendix I Loddon Allotment Gardens Risk Assessment

### Loddon Allotment Gardens Risk Assessment

#### About the site

The Site is at Bridge Street and accessed through an open gateway. Vehicles can be brought onto site for the purposes of unloading. The Council holds a plan of the site. Tenants have allotment agreements and are issued with Plot Letting Terms.

The site is bordered on its western edge by the river Chet and has a boundary ditch around the rest of its perimeter.

Bridge Street runs along its eastern boundary.

#### Who is at risk?

Plot holders, Visitors including children and Members of the Public, LTC Councillors & Staff

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is action needed by?	Done
<b>Drowning</b>	<b>All:</b> 1. Water storage: Drowning in large volumes of stored water e.g waterbutts	1. Historical water butts, installed at ground level have been filled in to remove risk. Site surveyed to verify no other water storage exists.	1. Use of/ Installation of under ground water butts to be precluded in Allotment rules	AAO	To be included in revised Plot Letting Terms	Completed Jan 2023
	2. Slip/ Fall and drowning whilst	2. Request for staging to encourage use of river		AAO	ASAP	

	<p>accessing river to draw water</p> <p>3. Falling into ditch around perimeter of site when water level is high</p>	<p>refused. Water pump provided to allow water abstraction from safe distance. Advice included in H&amp;S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms</p> <p>3. Advice included in H&amp;S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms</p>	<p>2. Consider fence or barrier between pump and river's edge. -Add signs to draw attention to presence of water hazard -Install lifesaving throwing device</p> <p>3. Refresh H&amp;S advice annually and sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms Add sign to draw attention to presence of water hazard</p> <p>Institute formal quarterly inspection with check sheet.</p>	<p>AAO</p> <p>AAO</p>	<p>ASAP</p> <p>ASAP</p>	<p>Orientation of pump changed so now sited between river &amp; user, danger signs fitted. Throw bag under consideration. Completed Jan 2023 Throwbags installed December 2023</p> <p>Completed by PW</p> <p>Began Aug 2022</p>
<b>Use of Hand Tools</b>	<b>Plot Holders:</b> incorrect or careless use of hand tools	Advice included in H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms		AAO	To be included in revised Plot	Completed

	leading to cut/ crush/ or penetration injury				Letting Terms	
<b>Use of Power Tools</b>	<b>Plot Holders:</b> Incorrect operation of powered tools for cutting (grass or bushes) and rotavating	Advice included in H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms	Enhance guidance to limit amount of fuel brought on site, no storage allowed, all fuels to be removed on leaving site	AAO	To be included in revised Plot Letting Terms	Completed Jan 2023
<b>Chemicals</b>	<b>All:</b> Illness/ poisoning from use of; Pesticides (weedkillers, fungicides, rodenticides, soil treatments, wood preservers)	Advice pertaining to safe use, and on-site storage is precluded via. H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms	Add no on-site storage restriction to Plot Letting Terms	AAO	To be included in revised Plot Letting Terms	Completed Jan 2023
<b>Vehicles</b>	1. Allotment holders		1. Add advise on use of vehicles to H&S guidance.	AAO	ASAP	Completed Jan 2023
	2. Contractors	2. Contractors' vehicles are covered under activity specific risk assessments	2. Institute formal quarterly inspection with check sheet.	AAO		Began Aug 2022
<b>Cuts and abrasions</b>	<b>All:</b> Glass Greenhouses Rubbish	Advice included in H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms Glass structures prohibited via Plot Letting Terms	Institute formal quarterly inspection with check sheet.	AAO	ASAP	Began Aug 2022

		Clearance of waste is covered in existing Plot Letting Terms				
<b>Burns</b>	<b>All:</b> 1. Burns from using Bonfires	1. Use of bonfires is restricted through letting terms. Advice given in H&S guidance.	1. Enhance guidance to limit amount of fuel brought on site, no storage allowed, all fuels to be removed on leaving site	AAO	To be included in revised Plot Letting Terms	Completed Jan 2023
	2. Burns from Fuelling power tools or using fuel as an accelerant		2. Enhance guidance to limit amount of fuel brought on site, banning use of accelerants, no storage allowed, all fuels to be removed on leaving site	AAO	To be included in revised Plot Letting Terms	Completed Jan 2023
<b>Slips trips &amp; falls</b>	<b>All:</b> 1. Unkept pathways presenting trip hazard		1. Add notes in Plot Letting Terms to require tenants to maintain adjacent pathways e.g grass cutting around plots	AAO	To be included in revised Plot Letting Terms ASAP	Completed Jan 2023
	2. Fruit netting encroachment cause trip hazard	2/3. Advice included in H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms	Institute formal quarterly inspection with check sheet.	AAO		Began Aug 2022
	3. Tools left on pathways causing trip hazard			AAO	ASAP	Began Aug 2022

<b>Contact with animals</b>	<b>All:</b> Contracting Weil's Disease from Vermin infesting Compost bins or living under structures	Advice included in H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms.	Institute formal quarterly inspection with check sheet.	AAO	ASAP	Began Aug 2022
		Tenants required to report any vermin sightings to facilitate Council contracting pest control as and when required		AAO	ASAP	Completed Jan 2023
<b>Unsafe structures</b>	<b>All:</b> Sheds, Tunnels, Gates and fences	Restrictions on, use, size and material make up of structures contained in Plot Letting Terms.	Institute formal quarterly inspection with check sheet.	AAO	ASAP	Began Aug 2022
		Communal shed: unsafe old shed removed. New shed ordered and professional contractor engaged to install		AAO	Work due for completion July 2022	Completed Aug 2022
<b>Stakes, canes and poles</b>	<b>All:</b> Eye injury from unprotected end of cane or pole stuck in ground		Add guidance to H&S re. using caps on poles	AAO	To be included in revised H&S guidance	Completed Jan 2023

- Each allotment holder is responsible for their actions and use of the Allotment Gardens
- Each allotment holder is responsible for their health and safety and the health and safety of others
- All children must be supervised at all times by parents and / or carers

Continued misuse of allotment gardens or careless actions towards others may result in eviction from the site if deemed necessary by Loddon Town Council.

This Risk Assessment was updated: January 2024 by Jo Leonard

## Loddon Allotment Gardens Risk Assessment

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Plot holders, Visitors including children and Members of the Public, LTC Councillors & Staff

What are the hazards?	Who might be harmed and how?	What are you already doing to control the risks?	What further action do you need to take to control the risks?	Who needs to carry out the action?	When is action needed by?	Done
<b>Drowning</b>	<b>All:</b> 4. Water storage: Drowning in large volumes of stored water e.g waterbutts	4. Historical water butts, installed at ground level have been filled in to remove risk. Site surveyed to verify no other water storage exists.	4. Use of/ Installation of under ground water butts to be precluded in Allotment rules	AAO	To be included in revised Plot Letting Terms	Completed Jan 2023
	5. Slip/ Fall and drowning whilst accessing river to draw water	5. Request for staging to encourage use of river refused. Water pump provided to allow water abstraction from safe	5. Consider fence or barrier between pump and river's edge. -Add signs to draw attention to presence of water hazard	AAO	ASAP	Orientation of pump changed so now sited



	6. Falling into ditch around perimeter of site when water level is high	distance. Advice included in H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms  6. Advice included in H&S advice sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms	-Install lifesaving throwing device  6. Refresh H&S advice annually and sent to all tenants along with Plot Letting Terms Add sign to draw attention to presence of water hazard  Institute formal quarterly inspection with check sheet.	AAO  AAO  AAO	ASAP  ASAP  ASAP	between river & user, danger signs fitted. Throw bag under consideration Completed Jan 2023  Completed by PW  Began Aug 2022
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**This Risk Assessment was updated: January 2024 by the AAO - Jo Leonard**

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## Appendix II Loddon Allotment Gardens Plot Letting Terms

### Loddon Allotment Gardens Plot Letting Terms 2024-25

#### The legal definition of an allotment:

An Allotment Garden must, by definition, be wholly or mainly cultivated for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by the tenant or his family, but if a particular allotment were used for trade or business purposes, it might then fall within the definition of an “agricultural holding”. (Allotments Act 1922, s22(1))

#### What you can expect from Loddon Town Council (LTC)

- LTC will maintain the grass in the public areas of the Loddon Allotment Gardens. If Tenants wish to, they can maintain the paths around their own plots. Holders are covered by LTC insurance whilst carrying out work on the paths.
- LTC takes responsibility for vermin control on the site. Please notify the Allotment Officer if vermin are causing a problem.
- LTC has provided a shed and grass cutter is provided for communal use. It is requested that Tenants do not store expensive items in the shed that are at risk from theft as LTC cannot accept liability for items stored within.
- LTC maintains the ditches around the perimeter of the site.
- LTC has provided and maintains a water pump. The pump is to discourage Tenants from putting themselves at risk if they choose to access water from the river.
- LTC has provided a noticeboard for the Tenants, and both LTC and the Loddon Community Allotment Society hold a key.

1. The Council shall let to the Tenant for him/her to hold as Tenant to the Council from year to year the Allotment numbered in the Plot Letting Invoice.

2. The rent is payable by 6 April each year upon receipt of an invoice from the Town Council and entitles the Allotment Holder to use the plot until 5 April of the following year. Failure to pay the annual rent by 6 April will be considered to be a termination of the Agreement and the plot will be let to some other person.

3. The Council may not later than two months prior to the date on which the rent hereunder falls due give written notice to the Tenant that a revised rent shall be payable after that date, the amount to be stated in the notice and thereupon the revised rent shall be payable for all subsequent years subject to any further revision.

4. The said tenancy may be terminated by either party to this agreement by serving on the other not less than one months' notice.

5. The Tenant shall reside within the boundaries of the Parishes of Loddon/Chedgrave during the continuance of the tenancy and inform the Council if they have moved, at which point one months' notice of termination will be given.

6. Loddon Town Councils insurance covers only the public areas of the site, such as the paths. The named Tenant(s) must hold appropriate public liability insurance for their own allotment plots. This may be obtained through their membership to the Allotment Association, through their own personal home contents insurance or other such insurance which covers public liability. It is the full responsibility of the named Tenant(s) to

ensure that the appropriate public liability insurance is in place for the entire duration, and without interruption, of the tenancy agreement.

7. Tenants taking on a plot are responsible for clearing the plot and bringing it to a good standard of cultivation in a timely manner, unless otherwise agreed by the Council.

8. The Tenant shall observe the following conditions during the tenancy, failure to do so will ultimately result in the Council terminating your Tenancy:

- a) The Tenant shall keep the Allotment in a clean, decent and good condition and properly cultivated;
- b) No nuisance or annoyance shall be caused by the Tenant to any Tenant of any other part of the Allotments nor obstruct any path set out by the Town Council for the use of Allotment Holders
- c) The Tenant shall not sub-let or assign the said tenancy nor part with the possession of the land hereby agreed to be let to him/her
- d) The Tenant shall not erect any building, shed or greenhouse, on the said land without the written consent of the Town Council having first been obtained. Polytunnels/covered structures are acceptable if they meet the following conditions:
  - 1. Structure must not exceed 6' 6" X 6'6" X 10' (feet)
  - 2. Structure must be entirely temporary
  - 3. No glass is permitted
  - 4. Coverings may remain over the winter months on condition that they are not damaged. Regular inspections will be carried out, and tenants will be required to remove the covers if damaged.
  - 5. Only one structure per plot
- e) Tenants may not store fuel or accelerants in the communal shed.
- f) The Tenant shall permit at all reasonable times any member or officer of the Council charged by the Council with such duty to enter upon and inspect the said land;
- g) The Tenant shall not cut any timber growing on the communal area of said land;
- h) The Tenant shall only use pesticides and fertilisers available through retail outlets at the recommended dose. Glyphosate type fertilizers are recommended eg Roundup.
- i) The Tenant is not permitted to dump any household or garden rubbish of any description at the Allotment. No chemical or other waste should be discarded on the Allotment land or in the river. Organic waste may be deposited in the Tenant's compost bins.
- j) No bonfires are permitted on the Allotments except between 1st and 31st October, and only after dusk and when any wind is blowing away from the road and local housing.
- k) The Allotment holder shall be liable for and indemnify Loddon Town Council against any expense liability loss claim or proceedings arising under any statute or common law in respect of death of or personal injury to the property of any person arising out of the occupancy of the Allotment by the Allotment holder unless and only to the extent that such death or injury is due to the negligence of Loddon Town Council.
- l) The Tenant shall not erect any fencing or glass structure on Allotment land.
- m) The Tenant shall not plant any trees (dwarf or otherwise) on their allotment plot or the communal areas without the written consent of the Town Council having first been obtained.

n) If the Tenant has existing trees on their plot, the Council reserves the right to ask the Tenant to cut back any branches that have breached the plot, and to remove the tree/s when they vacate the plot.

o) The Tenant shall not plant within one metre of the boundary ditch.

p) Below ground level water butts are not permitted

9. You may not carry on a trade or business from your allotment. But you can sell small amounts of surplus produce if you wish.

10. The Council shall pay all rates, taxes, dues or other assessments which may at any time be levied or charged upon the Allotment Garden.

11. If the Tenant have been in breach of any of the foregoing provisions of this Agreement for a period of one month (or longer) the Council may re-enter upon the Allotment and the tenancy shall thereupon come to any end but without prejudice to any right of the Council to claim damages for any such breach or to recover any rent already due before the time of such re-entry but remaining unpaid.

12. In the unfortunate circumstance of the death of a Tenant or a Tenant moving away, the tenancy of the plot may pass to an immediate family member, at the discretion of the Town Council, where it can be shown that they have been regularly involved in cultivating and maintaining the plot. The tenancy can only be inherited once.

## **Appendix III Loddon Allotment Gardens Waiting List & Allocation Procedure**

### **Loddon Allotment Gardens Waiting List and Allocation Procedure**

- 1) People wishing to rent an allotment should apply to The Administration & Allotment Officer (AAO) at Loddon Town Council. The application should include their name, address, telephone number and personal email address. This data will be held securely purely for the purposes of allocating allotments.
- 2) When the application is received, the AAO will add the applicants details to bottom of the allotment waiting list.
- 3) Available plots will be initially offered to existing tenants, on a first come, first served basis. If no reply is received within 7 days, the plot will be offered to the applicant at the top of the waiting list.
- 4) Applicants may indicate if they have a preference for a particular plot and wait on the list until this plot becomes available.
- 5) Three contact attempts will be made to offer a plot to an applicant over the course of 14 days. If an applicant does not respond within 14 days of the first contact the AAO may remove the applicant from the waiting list. Applicants who cannot be contacted due to incorrect contact details will also be removed from the waiting list.
- 6) If the applicant declines a plot, the prospective tenant will remain on the waiting list until such time as an alternative plot becomes available.
- 7) If a prospective tenant refuses two plot offers, the AAO may remove from the applicant from the waiting list.
- 8) A Tenancy Agreement must be signed prior to the tenancy starting and received by the AAO within 14 days of receipt. Failure to do so, may result in the applicant losing their plot and being added to the bottom of the waiting list.
- 9) The appropriate payment must also be received. Where a tenant starts during the allotment year, they will still be required to pay the full fee. Should a tenant leave during the allotment year they will receive no reimbursement.

10) In the unfortunate circumstance of the death of a Tenant or a Tenant moving away, the tenancy of the plot may pass to an immediate family member, at the discretion of the Town Council, where it can be shown that they have been regularly involved in cultivating and maintaining the plot. The tenancy can only be inherited once.

## **Appendix IV Loddon Allotment Gardens Breach of Tenancy Procedure**

### **Allotment Breach of Tenancy Procedure**

- Plot inspections: Plots not up to standard are photographed and records kept.  
Duration: 4 Weeks
- Email/Letter 1 is sent to tenant asking if they wish to keep the plot, reply requested within 7 days  
Duration 4 Weeks.
- Email/Letter 2 is sent following 2 further inspections/one month instructing that plot must be brought back to a reasonable standard within one month.  
Duration 4 Weeks.
- Email/Letter 3 will be sent giving one month notice that their tenancy will be terminated.  
Duration: one Month
- Plot is reallocated.

## **Appendix V Allotment Health and Safety Advice to Tenants**

### **Allotment Health and Safety Advice to Tenants 2024-25**

Allotment sites and the activity of gardening is relatively risk free if people are aware of the hazards and make steps to ensure that themselves, other people and wildlife are not put at risk. The Council undertakes risk assessments each year on their allotment sites. Please read the attached safety advice and consider the following points before allotment gardening.

#### **1. Physical exercise**

1.1. Digging the soil is one of the most physically demanding tasks in gardening, as it involves continued bending and straightening of the back when lifting a spade of soil. It needs to be approached with care, particularly if you are not used to heavy work. Sensible footwear is essential to save you from a forked foot or worse.

#### **2. Hazardous rubbish**

2.1: Ensure that you do not leave broken glass and other hazardous materials on the allotment. If you discover a significant amount of rubbish underneath the soil, such as broken glass, plastics etc, then please contact the Council who can offer some assistance in removing it from the plot.

#### **3: Tetanus or Lockjaw**

3.1: This is a serious infection caused by bacterium that lives in the soil and especially manured soil. It enters the body through the tiniest abrasion, scratch, thorn, puncture or cut and a few days or



weeks later the illness hits. Please make sure that you have a vaccination that can protect you against tetanus.

#### **4. Skin irritations**

4.1. Wear gloves and a long-sleeved shirt when pruning plants that can cause skin irritations for example ivy, euphorbia or rue.

#### **5. Garden tools**

5.1. Garden tools can be a hazard if they are not stored properly or are left lying around the garden when not in use. For example, upturned spades and forks. If tools are not used sensibly, they can also cause personal injury, so ensure that you are dressed correctly, including strong footwear.

5.2. Most power tools need specific safety and handling training e.g. power chainsaws, strimmer's, lawn mowers with metal blades and rotavators. A large rotavator can be a bit of a strain to control, so take a while to get used to it. Power strimmer's, shredders, all have their dangers as well. Always follow the manufactures instructions.

5.3 Always ensure hand tools are safe to use and properly maintained, fit for purpose and suitable for the task

5.4 When canes or twigs are used to support plants, place cane toppers on the top and try to make them as tall as possible so they are above eye height to avoid injury.

#### **6. Pesticides and fertilisers**

6.1. Do not store them on your allotment, Under the Control of Pesticides Regulations (amended) (COPRA) (1997) anyone who sells, supplies, stores or uses a pesticide must take all reasonable precautions to protect the health of humans, creatures and plants, safeguard the environment and avoid the pollution of water. • Pesticides must be sold, supplied and marketed to end-users in the container supplied by the approved license holder and labelled in a manner consistent with the approved license. • Pesticides should never be decanted into any other type of container. • Pesticides should be stored well out of the reach of children and locked away. If you must use chemicals, glyphosate eg Roundup is recommended, please keep them to your own plot and do not put them on your neighbour's plot. They may garden organically and will not thank you for it!

6.2. When using pesticides or fertilisers ensure to wear suitable clothing and a mask if advised.

6.3. Please ensure that pesticides or fertilisers are disposed of responsibly. Pesticides should never be included in household rubbish, burnt, placed in skips, or poured into any kind of drainage system or watercourse. If in doubt, please contact the Council.

6.4. Please note that Garden Organic provide advice and publications on methods of pest control that do not require pesticides and gardening methods that reduce pest attack.

#### **7. First aid kit**

7.1. A small selection of adhesive plasters, antiseptic ointment, a pair of tweezers for removing thorns and splinters and a gauze or lint pad to use as a compress to stop the bleeding if you are badly cut, could be a useful addition to your gardening kit.

## **8. Legionella**

8.1. In very hot weather, it is possible, although very rare, for Legionella (Legionnaires' Disease) to multiply in warm water to potentially harmful levels. Avoid storing potting media or spraying fine mists.

## **9. River Chet Access, Ponds, and water**

9.1 An emergency throw bag has been provided for the safety of Allotment Garden users, they are sited on the posts alongside the water pumps, please familiarise yourself with the operating instructions printed on the side of the container.

9.2. People at most risk of drowning in water are children under three years of age. Risk from drowning decreases as a child's age increases and so does their understanding of the danger. Children should be always supervised on allotments, especially near the river.

9.3 The River Chet runs adjacent to the Allotment site. Please take care if you are working near to, or collecting water from the river, especially if you have young children with you. The Council has installed pumps to provide you with a water source for your safety. You enter the river at your own risk.

9.4 A ditch runs around the perimeter of the site and can be full of water depending on recent rainfall. Please ensure young children are supervised at all times and appropriate care is taken.

## **10. Hazards for wildlife on allotments**

10.1. These include litter, low-level fruit netting, use of pesticides, open drains, slug pellets, mowing, strimming, broken glass and pre-stacked bonfires. Certain wildlife e.g. badgers, slowworms, some birds of prey and reptiles have specific legal protection concerning their management. Contact English Nature for advice about protected species.

## **11. Vermin**

11.1. Rats carry 70 diseases including Weil's Disease, which can cause human death via contaminated water. Plot holders must be vigilant and report any signs of infestation (burrows, tracks, droppings) to the Council.

## **12. Risk of infection**

12.1. Humans are at risk of infection from handling animal manure. Always wear gloves when handling any type of manure. Fresh manure should be heaped for 6 months, giving time for e-coli to break down. It is the responsibility of the plot holders for basic hygiene and to check tetanus boosters are up to date.

12.2. Stopping for a lunch break helps restore energy after lots of digging but don't forget to wash your hands first. Keep a hand-sterilising gel handy.

12.3. Always wash your fruit or vegetables thoroughly before eating them.

## **13. Personal safety**

13.1. Allotment gardeners often spend long periods of time on their own on site: take personal safety seriously and tell another person where you are going and what time you will be back. If you have a mobile telephone take it with you.

13.2. Be aware of weather conditions that can affect walking surfaces such as hardcore, grass. Use sunscreen to protect you from over exposure to the sun.

13.3 Be aware of the movement of vehicles in the entrance area to the site where tenants may be unloading tools and take all necessary caution.

## **14. Bonfires**

14.1. No bonfires are permitted on the Allotments except between 1st and 31st October, and only after dusk and when any wind is blowing away from the road and local housing. The Environmental Protection Act (1990) prohibits a statutory nuisance being caused by smoke.

14.2. Check weather conditions to ensure that there is not significant wind, do not leave a fire unattended and ensure that it is completely put out with water before you leave. Please see South Norfolk Council's Guidelines on Domestic Bonfires for more information.

14.3. Check your bonfire for wildlife before lighting it.

## **15. Trees**

15.1. Trees (dwarf or otherwise) are prohibited from being planted on the plots at Loddon Allotment gardens. Trees can prevent the Town Council from maintaining the boundary ditches and they can cause neighbouring plots to become overshadowed. If there is an existing tree on the plot, it is the tenant's responsibility to trim back the branches to prevent personal injuries (particularly eye injuries).

## **16. Insurance**

16.1 The Council's insurance covers the public areas of the Allotments, such as the paths. It is the tenant's responsibility to ensure that they have adequate insurance for their own plot. This may be obtained through the Allotment Association or through the tenant's own home contents insurance.

## **17: Boundaries**

17.1 The Town Council have the responsibility to maintain the boundaries of the Allotment Gardens, including the ditches. Please do not increase the area of your plot so that it prevents work being undertaken by a mechanical digger. The maintenance work will have to be undertaken regardless, for the benefit of the whole site, and unfortunately your planting may get damaged. The work will be undertaken whenever necessary by a contractor and the Council cannot be held responsible for any damage to planting that is within a one metre of the ditch. Should the digger be on site, please ensure that you (and minors) keep a safe distance for your own safety.

## **Appendix VI – Rats**

Discouraging rats at the allotment site is everybody's responsibility. Please follow the following advice to help prevent them making your plot their home

1. Keep your plot tidy and ensure that allotment gardens do not become overgrown or allow rubbish to build up e.g. timber, old carpet, stockpiled materials etc, as this provides cover for rats to live under (harbourage).
2. Turn the contents of your compost heap regularly (at least twice per year). This disturbs any rats that have taken up residence.
3. Plastic compost bins should be given a small gauge wire mesh lining at the base or can be placed on paving slabs to prevent rats from burrowing in underneath. Regularly kick your compost bin to ensure it is not a peaceful place for rats to sleep.
4. Never put meat, dairy, bones, cooked foods or other inappropriate items in your compost bin. This will attract rats and make your bin smell.
5. Harvest ripe fruit and vegetables promptly and take them home to enjoy. Do not leave discarded fruit and vegetables on the ground; clear them away to your compost bin, as these are a source of food for rats and other pests.
6. Remember to thoroughly wash (and peel if appropriate) any food you harvest. Vegetables with signs of rat damage should be destroyed. Rats carry risk of Weil's disease, Salmonella and Leptospirosis among other things and they urinate wherever they go.
7. Consider storing seeds, bulbs etc. in rodent proof containers.

If having followed these guidelines, you become aware that there is still a rat problem on your plot, please contact the Administration & Allotment Officer.