
Guidelines for how an allotment plot should be cultivated.

Cultivated means the plot needs to be planted, cropped, harvested or being prepared. It is not enough to keep your plot clear of weeds, but then to leave it unplanted.

In the main growing season we would expect to see:

- Fruit, vegetables or flowers
- Lawn and grass paths mowed and trimmed
- No weeds going to seed
- No brambles or couch grass creeping around the plot

In the winter months:

- As above (but less fruit, veg and flowers)
- Beds dug over ready for the winter frost
- Green manures being grown
- Growing areas being prepared (and covered to keep weeds down)
- If 'no dig' methods are being used - a clean bed with no weeds

Cultivation area

- First 3 months on site – at least **25%** (a quarter) of the plot should be cultivated
- After 6 months - up to **50%** (half) of the plot would expected to be cultivated.
- After 1 year - **75%** (three-quarters) should be cultivated
- From year 2 onwards, **75% or more** of the plot should be cultivated.
- Areas of a plot which are covered are not considered to be cultivated.
- Around 10% of the plot can be a shed, composting area, water storage

Causes for concern for managers:

- When was the plot holder last seen on site?
- Is most of the plot being cultivated and crops grown?
- What is the level of weeds on the plot? (Everyone has a few weeds. We do not want weeds going to seed in large areas of the plot and causing problems for other plot holders).
- Are there waste materials or rubbish on the plot?

There may be times when a plot holder cannot cultivate their plot because of illness or family problems. The plot holder should tell the site manager if something is stopping them from cultivating their plot. In that case, big weeds on the plot should be cut down so that other allotment holders are not affected by weeds. A tenant who is either pregnant or nursing a child up to the age of six months will be excused the requirement to cultivate the allotment for a maximum period of two growing seasons, subject to the condition that the allotment is managed to avoid the spread of weeds (that is, the allotment is covered, sown with a green manure or any weeds are regularly cut down). Lack of time due to work, travel, children or other commitments are not valid reasons for failing to meet acceptable standards of cultivation.