



Macclesfield Town Council Allotment Strategy



2022- 2025

1. Purpose of the Strategy

This allotment strategy has been developed for allotment sites provided by Macclesfield Town Council (either directly or through devolved management), not for privately owned sites.

The overall objective of this strategy is to increase the ability and opportunity for people to cultivate allotment plots in Macclesfield. The strategy seeks, through its targets and initiatives, to optimise the use of allotments for existing and potential plot holders, identify needs and meet demand.

This document provides a framework for the next 2 years to develop and manage allotments in partnership with the users and provides a focus on five main target areas.

1. Ensuring sufficient allotments
2. Promoting allotment gardening
3. Encouraging sustainability
4. Providing good administration
5. Maintaining adequate resources

Introduction

The provision of allotments by local authorities is a statutory duty. Macclesfield Town Council will continue to provide and promote allotments not only because of this statutory requirement but because allotment gardening can make a valuable contribution to the town's sustainability by providing health, social, economic and environmental benefits.

These can be summarised as

- Low cost fresh food production for the family
- Promotion of healthy affordable diets
- Healthy recreational activity
- The opportunity to maintain and develop skills
- Social contact and as a contribution to community spirit
- Better partnership working
- Reduction in food miles

Allotments are a valuable green sustainable open space within the urban environment. They contribute to the retention of traditional skills and wisdom as well as being highly beneficial to the wildlife of the area.

Current house building trends are towards smaller gardens, as pressure increases to optimise building land, and some householders have no individual garden. These circumstances disproportionately disadvantage those on lower incomes. Allotments provide an opportunity to adjust this imbalance.

Current Provisions

The Sites

Macclesfield has the following sites:

South Park Allotments managed by its own association.

Address: South Park, Macclesfield

Contact Southparkallotments@gmail.com

Birtles Road Allotments managed by its own association.

Address: Birtles Road, Macclesfield SK10 3RN

Contact bxallotments@gmail.com

Springfield Road Allotments managed by Macclesfield Town Council

Address: Springfield Road, Macclesfield, SK11 8RE

Contact admin@macclesfield-tc.gov.uk

Laburnum Road Allotments managed by its own association.

Address: Laburnum Road, Macclesfield SK11 7JT

Contact regd@btinternet.com

Brookfield Lane Allotments managed by its own association.

Address: Brookfield Lane, Macclesfield SK11 7DG

Contact: blaaplots@gmail.com

Knowsley Road Allotments managed by Macclesfield Town Council

Knowsley Rd, Macclesfield, SK11 8AP

Contact: admin@macclesfield-tc.gov.uk

Moss Lane Allotments managed by its own association.

Address: Moss Lane, Macclesfield SK11 7TQ

Contact: <http://mosslaneallotments.weebly.com/>

Park Grove managed by Macclesfield Town Council

Address: South Park, Macclesfield.

Contact: admin@macclesfield.gov.uk

Management

As listed above, allotment sites in Macclesfield are managed by the Town Council or their own Association who carry out the following duties (not exhaustive):

- Enquiries from prospective tenants.
- Maintaining and managing a waiting list.
- Letting of plots and arranging new tenancy agreements.
- Collecting and administering rents.
- Administering tenancies.
- Inspecting individual plots.
- Regular health and safety inspections and general site inspections.
- Resolving disputes and dealing with complaints.
- Managing alterations and improvement works.

Self Management

It is the policy of the Town Council to encourage allotment holders to participate in the running of the site and create Allotment Associations to run each site.

Site Maintenance

With the agreement of the Town Council the Allotment Associations carry out the day to day maintenance of the site including but not exhaustive:

- Maintaining pathways and hedges.
- Inspecting plots on behalf of the Council.
- Showing prospective tenants plots.
- Maintaining gates and padlocks.
- Removing rubbish from vacant plots.
- Repairing taps.
- Managing waiting lists and admin.

Target Areas of the Strategy

1. Ensuring sufficient allotments.
2. Promoting allotment gardening.
3. Encouraging sustainability.
4. Providing good administration.
5. Maintaining adequate resources.

1. Ensuring Sufficient Allotments

The Town Council will endeavour to meet its legal obligation to provide allotments in Macclesfield for the residents of Macclesfield. Where suitable land becomes available the Town council will explore the viability of increasing allotment sites.

The sites managed by the Town Council have suffered somewhat from neglect before being transferred to the Town Council ownership. The Town Council has worked hard to clear and improve these sites and has been able to re-let many previously unused plots. The Town Council is committed to bringing the sites it manages up to an improved standard, and re let. The Council also has a policy to let half plots where possible so more residents can have an allotment and to let to groups which can share the allotments, while abiding by the rules in the allotment policy. Priority consideration should also be given for residents who live in flats or do not have a garden.

2. Promoting Allotment Gardening

It is the Town Council policy to promote allotment gardening and its benefits. Details of the allotment sites appear on the Town Council Website and the Council endeavour to increase the amount of promotion including articles about the allotments to be included in the Town Council newsletter from time to time and on the social media channels.

The Town council also aims to offer opportunities for allotments to get involved with community activities such as Britain in Bloom.

3. Encouraging Sustainability

The Town Council encourages, and where possible supports, good environmental practice of alternatives to fertilisers and pesticides and using water butts so individual plot holders can be encouraged where practicable to capture rain water and also help promote recycling on the site and sharing of plants and equipment.

Although hose pipes can be used on allotments, they are to be used sensibly and sparingly and water sprinklers are not allowed.

4. Providing Good Administration

Where the Town Council manages allotment sites it will ensure that all allotment rents and fees continue to be collected in a timely manner and administered with this strategy and the Allotment Policy.

The Town Council will continue to work with the plot holders of sites managed by the Council to encourage the possibility of setting up an Association to take over the day to day management of the Allotment sites.

5. Maintaining Adequate Resources

The sites in Macclesfield which are managed by Associations collect and manage the rental income and use this to cover running costs.

Major capital costs can be met by external funding grants applied for by individual associations or by approaching Macclesfield Town Council in writing with evidence of need, quotes and costings. The Town Council may be able to offer some financial support and can provide support for external grant funding through CVSCE.

The Town Council needs to balance the benefits of the allotments provision against the cost to the residents of Macclesfield via the Council tax precept. It is the aim of the Town Council to make the allotment sites self-financing. The level of rents and any concessionary schemes will be considered annually bearing in mind the terms of the tenancy contract and the expenditure on the site.

The Town Council policy is to make each vacated plot sufficiently attractive for letting. It can include an offer of a rent free period to compensate the new tenants for having to clear the plot.

The Town Council aims to make its allotment sites self-financing and to review rents and control expenditure to this end.