
ADOPTION OF ALLOTMENT POLICY

To: **Cabinet – 03 April 2014**

Main Portfolio Area: **Operational Services**

By: **Director of Operational Services**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Ward: **Thanet wide**

Summary: To propose the adoption of the Allotment Policy for 2014-19.

For Decision

1.0 Introduction and Background

- 1.1 The previous Allotment Policy was adopted in December 2006 and requires to be updated. The new allotment policy reflects the improvements made to the Thanet allotments in the intervening period and also the changes in management due to the creation of Ramsgate Town Council, and discussions with Broadstairs and Birchington Parish Council in relation to effecting the transfer to them of allotments within their administrative boundaries.

The new policy reflects the need to provide this local service at a local level and also Thanet District Council's support for this service which has wide health and social benefits. It shows support for the Parish and Town Councils to develop this service at a local level and seeks to encourage residents to use their local allotment sites.

The policy also considered the possibility of transfer of non-statutory allotments and the position with regard to designation of our allotment sites.

2.0 The Current Situation

- 2.1 The Council is still directly responsible for 5 allotment sites in Margate:
Brooke Avenue, Garlinge
Dane Valley, Margate
Lymington Road, Westgate
Nash Road, Margate
Tivoli Road, Margate

There are two further non-statutory sites that the Council owns but are managed by agreement with Ramsgate Town Council:

Margate Road, Ramsgate
Cecilia Road, Ramsgate

The following sites have been transferred to the respective Town or Parish Councils:
Quex Road, Birchington – passed to Birchington Parish Council
Norman Road, St Peters – passed to Broadstairs Town Council
Prospect Road, Broadstairs - passed to Broadstairs Town Council
Chilton Lane, Ramsgate – passed to Ramsgate Town Council

Stirling Way, Ramsgate - passed to Ramsgate Town Council

- 2.2 The current system allows any Thanet resident to apply for an allotment plot. With the break up of the management of sites to many differing bodies the new policy aims to ensure that residents look to their most local sites for a plot. This is to ensure that Parish and Town Councils are supported and encouraged in their management of allotments which traditionally have been a Parish Council responsibility.

3.0 Options

- 3.1 To adopt the allotment policy in full as presented.
- 3.2 To propose amendments to the proposed policy.

4.0 Next Steps

- 4.1 To undertake the implementation of the policy and support Parish or Town Councils through the planning process in the development of new allotment sites if demand increases.

5.0 Corporate Implications

5.1 Financial and VAT

- 5.1.1 The Policy can be implemented within the existing revenue budgets and has no VAT implications.

5.2 Legal

- 5.2.1 Thanet District Council has a statutory role in the absence of a Parish or Town Council to manage allotments.
- 5.2.2 Legal advice has been sought regarding the ability for change of non-statutory allotments to statutory. There is no way to change the status once the land has been appropriated as it becomes protected and its status depends upon the legal powers used to acquire it. On this basis all non-statutory sites will have to remain as currently designated.

5.3 Corporate

- 5.3.1 The Policy encourages residents' use of allotments, which in turn supports local food production and as a result provides healthy and regular exercise for all. The local food element helps to reduce food transport and many plot holders are keen to garden organically and so provide valuable wildlife areas.

5.4 Equity and Equalities

- 5.4.1 The allotment service is open to all residents and the introduction of more on site parking in allotments in recent years has encouraged more use. The EIA last carried out highlighted the need for toilets to offer a better service for ladies and children using the sites. These are available on all sites except Tivoli where users did not see this as a priority. Some work on raised beds has been made for a plot in Dane Valley used by a disabled plot holder and more work for disabled users is intended in the future.

5.4.2 The EIA suggested more allotment provision in Parishes to ensure those with no transport could access a local site.

5.4.3 The policy has been sent to all Parishes for their comments. A response from Cliffsend Parish Council has been received and is attached. It reflects the current lack of a site in the Parish.

6.0 Recommendation

6.1 To adopt the proposed Allotment Policy 2014-19.

7.0 Decision Making Process

7.1 This is a non-key decision subject to call in.

Contact Officer:	Paul Verrall, Parks & Coast Manager, ext7533
Reporting to:	Mark Seed, Director of Operational Services

Annex List

Annex 1	Allotment Policy
Annex 2	Cliffsend Parish Council response.

Background Papers

Title	Details of where to access copy
None	N/A

Corporate Consultation Undertaken

Finance	Sarah Martin, Financial Services Manager
Legal	Steve Boyle – Interim Legal Services Manager