

Salisbury City Council Draft Allotment Strategy (2026–2031)

Strategy / Guidelines Number	Version	Owner	Date published	Review date	Review Committee / Team
ENV/PG/002	1	ESM	09/12/2025	08/12/2031	Environment

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Allotments are a vital community asset that support sustainable food production, enhance biodiversity, improve physical and mental wellbeing, and strengthen community relationships. Salisbury City Council manages approximately 700 allotments across multiple sites and has a statutory duty to provide allotments under the Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908.
- 1.2 Demand for allotments continues to rise. Waiting lists remain high and plots are close to full capacity across Salisbury. This five-year strategy sets out a clear approach to managing current provision, improving quality and accessibility, and preparing for future demand.
- 1.3 This strategy aims to:
 - Ensure transparent, fair, and efficient management of allotments.
 - Improve site quality, accessibility, and sustainability.
 - Support tenants and community participation.
 - Promote environmentally responsible practices.
 - Maintain financial resilience.

2. Benefits of Allotments

- 2.1 **Health & Wellbeing** - Allotment gardening supports active lifestyles, reduces stress, and provides therapeutic benefits.
- 2.2 **Food Security** - Plots provide affordable access to fresh produce, helping households reduce food costs.
- 2.3 **Community Cohesion** - Allotments offer opportunities for social interaction, shared learning, and intergenerational collaboration.
- 2.4 **Environmental Impact** - Allotments reduce food miles, improve soil health, support pollinators, and encourage sustainable lifestyles.

3. Vision

- 3.1 To provide high-quality, inclusive, and sustainable allotment sites that meet current and future demand, foster community engagement, and contribute to Salisbury's environmental and health objectives.

4. Strategic Objectives

- 4.1 **Tenancy & Administration** - Provide efficient, transparent, and fair management of allotment tenancies through modernised systems, clear communication, and consistent enforcement.

- 4.2 **Site Capacity & Allocation** - Maximise plot availability and ensure equitable access by improving plot turnover, reviewing plot sizes, and matching demand through flexible allocation policies.
- 4.3 **Cultivation & Plot Quality** - Maintain high standards of cultivation by supporting tenants, ensuring plots remain in productive use, and providing clear guidance and proportionate enforcement when needed.
- 4.4 **Community Engagement & Education** - Strengthen community involvement, support warden networks, and promote educational opportunities that encourage sustainable gardening and community cohesion.
- 4.5 **Sustainability & Biodiversity** - Promote environmentally responsible allotment management, including reduced chemical use, water conservation, composting, and habitat enhancement.
- 4.6 **Accessibility & Inclusion** - Ensure allotments are welcoming, safe, and accessible to all by improving site infrastructure and offering plot options that meet diverse needs.
- 4.7 **Financial Sustainability** - Maintain affordable allotments while ensuring financial viability through responsible budgeting, external fundraising, and transparent reporting.

5. Delivering the Objectives

5.1 Tenancy & Administration

- Maintain clear and current tenancy agreements.
- Provide transparent rules online and in print.
- Develop a digital management system for applications, renewals, and waiting lists.
- Apply a fair and consistent approach to communication and enforcement.

5.2 Site Capacity & Allocation

- Conduct regular plot audits to ensure active cultivation.
- Ensure plots are safe and ready for new tenants before allocation.
- Trial splitting large plots into half or micro-plots.
- Maintain regular communication with waiting list applicants.

5.3 Cultivation & Plot Quality

- Provide starter packs and optional mentoring support.
- Encourage shared plots and smaller plot options.
- Apply a graduated warning system for non-cultivation.

5.4 Community Engagement & Education

- Support and develop the role of allotment wardens.
- Hold twice-yearly meetings with wardens, AGAS, and council officers.

- Promote allotment activities through council communications.
- Explore opportunities for school and community plots.

5.5 Sustainability & Biodiversity

- Promote composting and organic gardening practices.
- Expand water-saving infrastructure.
- Develop and implement a biodiversity enhancement plan.
- Encourage pollinator-friendly habitats and wildlife corridors.

5.6 Accessibility & Inclusion

- Improve pathways, entrances, and internal roads.
- Provide accessible raised-bed plots where appropriate.
- Offer diverse plot sizes to meet varied needs.
- Promote allotments to underrepresented groups.

5.7 Financial Sustainability

- Review rents annually while keeping plots affordable.
- Seek external grants and partnerships.
- Publish annual financial summaries.

6. Implementation & Governance

- **Lead Officer** - Head of Environmental Services
- **Lead Cllr** – Nominated Allotment Representative
- **Oversight** - Environment Committee
- **Partnerships** - AGAS, local schools, community groups, and voluntary organisations.

7. Risk Management

- **Climate Change:** Increased drought risk – mitigation through water harvesting and drought-resistant crops.
- **Funding Shortfalls:** Seek external grants and partnerships where appropriate.
- **Vandalism/Theft:** Review site security and consider community watch schemes.
- **Demand Pressure:** Consider the introduction of smaller plots and community plots.

8. Monitoring & Reporting

- Annual report to Environment Committee
- Annual tenant survey
- Monitoring of Key Performance Indicators:
 - Waiting list length
 - Percentage of actively cultivated plots
 - Tenant satisfaction
- Mid-term review in 2028.