



Llywodraeth Cymru
Welsh Government



Guidance for landowners





Contents

Introduction	1
Different models of allotments and community growing	2
Allotments and the Law	3
Animals on allotments	7
Planning Guidance	9
Advice for working with community growing groups	16
The environment and biodiversity on allotments	20
Additional information and resources	26



Introduction

This is the second edition of this guidance, following its successful introduction in 2015. Since that time, the contribution that allotments and community gardens can make to tackling some of today's most urgent priorities, from health and wellbeing to the climate and nature emergencies, has become even more apparent.

Wales has always been a nation of growers. Our love of good food and our desire to provide high quality produce for our families has shaped the way we use our land from the countryside to our back gardens. From our urban centres to rural villages across Wales, this desire to grow our own fruit and vegetables is stronger than ever and more and more people are enjoying the benefits of growing on allotments or at community gardens.



The benefits of gardening on individuals and the environment are clear. Increased physical activity and mental wellbeing, access to fresh fruit and vegetables and well used and cared for public spaces, are natural by-products of growing your own. When gardening on an allotment plot or community garden, the added bonuses of closer community relationships, reduced social isolation and the chance to work together and celebrate with your neighbours are recognised as making a dramatic improvement to quality of life. For many, allotments and community gardens are seen as essential elements of living happier, healthier and more sustainable lives and as we work towards creating a healthier, happier and more sustainable Wales they have never been more important.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 sets out a clear obligation for public bodies to enable positive change that leads to a more resilient, secure and healthy Wales. By protecting and managing the current provision of allotments and growing spaces and supporting the demand-led development of new allotments and community growing projects, all public bodies in Wales can enable us to create a healthier and happier population and a more sustainable and secure food supply.

The purpose of this guidance is to share and increase good practice and enable more people to get their hands dirty and grow their own.



Different models of allotments and community growing

There are lots of ways that people can get involved in growing. For people who want to work with their neighbours to improve the local environment and make their community a better place to be for people and wildlife, then maybe a community garden or orchard is the best option. For people with plenty of time and a desire to grow lots of fresh produce, traditional allotments may be more suitable.

There is a wide range of opportunities for growing and lots of different types of projects. This chapter explains the most popular types of growing spaces.

Allotments

Allotments are probably the most well-known and understood model of growing in the community. Allotments are usually large areas of land divided up into smaller plots. The site is usually owned by the local authority, managed by an allotment association and the individual plots are cultivated by one person or family. The plots are usually of a standard size and have a yearly charge for rent and services such as water provision.

For more information about allotments see www.nsalg.org.uk

- **Statutory allotments** – are covered by Allotment Law and have been acquired or appropriated by a local authority (of any type, from parish, community to county council) for the specific purpose of being used as allotments. They cannot be sold or used for other purposes without the consent of Welsh Ministers. Where management has been devolved or leased to an allotments association it is often known as a 'self-managed' site.

- **Community allotments** – Where there is a lack of statutory allotments available, some communities start groups that find land and create their own allotment site. Community allotment sites are not subject to the same laws as statutory (council) sites, nor the same protections.

For more information about community allotments see

www.farmgarden.org.uk

- **Temporary allotments** – If land has been acquired or held by a local authority for another purpose, but in the meantime is used as allotments.

See chapter 'Allotments and the law'.

Community farms

Community farms involve both growing plants and keeping animals. They are often larger and more extensive than community gardens or other community growing spaces. Community farms are often working farms, producing meat, eggs etc. but also offer a wide range of volunteering and educational opportunities.

For more information about community farms see www.farmgarden.org.uk

Community gardens

Community gardens are usually started by local people who would like to grow food for their own use but also to benefit the wider community. Normally, all growing on community gardens is done collaboratively by the volunteers. The idea is to share the work and then the reward. Most community gardens are open to everyone to join and do not have waiting lists.

For more information about community gardens see www.farmgarden.org.uk

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)

A social enterprise scheme, based on a direct, active partnership between farmers (or a growing project) and the local community. CSA's normally produce fruit and vegetables that are shared out between its members who pay a monthly fee. CSAs are designed to share the risks and rewards of growing equally between the grower and the consumer.

For more information about community supported agriculture see www.communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk/

Community orchards

As well as providing fruit and a green haven for the local community, many community orchards are excellent wildlife habitats and carbon sinks. Community orchards are growing in popularity as they are easy to establish, low maintenance and can be used for community celebrations such as Apple Day.

For more information about community orchards see www.commonground.org.uk/projects/orchards/community-orchards

Incredible Edible Schemes

Many towns in Wales are getting involved in the Incredible Edible movement. Incredible Edible schemes plant fruit and vegetables in public places for everyone to share. The produce is often grown in places with high footfall such as bus stops, town planters and alongside foot paths.

For more information on Incredible Edible schemes see www.incredibleediblenetwork.org.uk/

Abundance/fruit harvesting schemes

This is a growing movement that aims to make better use of neglected local fruit and nut trees by organising volunteers to harvest the fruit. The fruit is normally divided between the owner

of the tree, the volunteer pickers and local charities and good causes.

For more information on abundance projects see www.growsheffield.com/abundance/

Forest gardening

Forest Gardens produce food and other useful products such as wood and herbs from a layered planting of mostly perennials which emulates a forest ecosystem. They are very good for biodiversity and soil life because of the variety of habitats and relative lack of disturbance. Once established they require relatively little maintenance to continue to provide a harvest.

For more information on forest gardening see www.permaculture.org.uk/practical-solutions/forest-gardens

Garden-share schemes

These schemes match and introduce committed, enthusiastic growers with local garden owners who want to see their gardens being used more productively. The agreement between the garden owner and grower usually stipulates when the grower can access the growing plot and the percentage of produce that will be given to the garden owner.

To see an example of garden-share see www.gardenshareconwy.org.uk

Meanwhile gardening

This is the temporary use of land for gardening and food growing. These schemes are particularly popular in areas with lots of unused land awaiting development.

They can bring waste land into productive use for a defined period.

For an example of meanwhile gardening see www.meanwhile-gardens.org.uk/



Allotments and the Law

Statutory Allotments

Only Statutory Allotments are covered by Allotment Law. If a site has been acquired or appropriated by a local authority (of any type, from parish, community to town council) for the specific purpose of being used as allotments, then this site has special protection and is known as a 'statutory allotments' site.

Statutory allotments have some legal protection. They cannot be sold or used for other purposes without the consent of Welsh Ministers. Consent for such changes should not be given unless the Welsh Ministers are satisfied that adequate provision will be made for allotment holders displaced by the action of the local authority.

The 'statutory' status does not change – even if the management of the site has been devolved, or a lease of the site granted from the local authority to an allotment's association or similar managing body. Where management has been devolved or leased to an allotments association it is often known as a 'self-managed' site.

Temporary allotments sites

If land has been acquired or held by a local authority for another purpose, but in the meantime is used as allotments, then these are known as 'temporary allotments' even though they may be in use as allotments for decades. Temporary allotments are not covered by allotment law and do not benefit from statutory protection regulating their provision and disposal, aside from the usual planning regulations.

Privately owned or community led allotment sites

If allotments are offered on a private or community owned site, then like temporary allotments, they are not covered or protected by allotment law.

Which Acts of Law are most relevant?

The main Acts of Parliament that govern allotments are:

- Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908
- Allotments Act 1922
- Allotments Act 1925
- Allotments Act 1950

Legislation under the 1950 Act makes provision in relation to:

1. the use of individual plots, and
2. the provision and disposal of sites by local authorities.

In this chapter, the term 'plot' means an individual allotment. 'Site' means a larger area on which a number of individual allotment plots are located. None of the Acts have been repealed in their entirety but sections of each have been superseded by more recent Acts. All the relevant Acts, original and reviewed can be found at www.legislation.gov.uk/

Responsibility for allotments

The legislation provides that allotment authorities are responsible for providing and administering council owned allotments. Community, Town and County Councils (including county boroughs) are defined as allotment authorities in law.

Use of individual allotment plots

When an individual rents an allotment plot under an allotment tenancy agreement, occupation of the plot is governed by the Allotments Act 1922 and the content of the agreement itself.

The Allotments Act 1922 includes the following restrictions:

1. the notice period that has to be given to leave the plot

2. what can be grown on the plot and restrictions of keeping animals on the plot
3. the size of an individual plot
4. what can be done with the produce grown on the plot
5. limits on sharing and transferring the plot.

Ending a tenancy on an allotment plot

For an allotment authority to end an allotment tenancy, a notice to quit in writing needs to be served of twelve months' or longer, expiring on or before 6 April or on or after 29 September in any year. This means that the tenancy ends in the winter months, so that there are minimal crops growing and that a new tenant can take over the plot in time for the new season.

However, if the tenant fails to pay rent for 40 days or breaks the terms of the tenancy agreement then they can be given a months' notice to quit.

There is no legal requirement for the tenant to end the tenancy by giving a certain amount of notice.

What can be grown on a plot?

An "allotment garden" plot is to be cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable and fruit crops.

The growing of fruit trees is not prohibited by law but it is quite usual for tenancy agreements to restrict this.

Animals on allotments

Under the 1950 Allotments Act, the prohibition on the keeping of rabbits and hens was removed, as long as they are for the tenant's own use and not for business or profit (1950 s12 (1)). It is important to note that the law excludes cockerels.

The animals must not be kept in a way that is harmful to health, or a nuisance. The

keeping of bees, pigs, goats and other livestock is not prohibited by law. However – permission to keep any animal or livestock on allotments is always subject to the landlord's permission – details should be included in the tenancy agreement.

See Chapter 5.

The size of the plot

The 1922 Act states that an allotment garden is 40 poles which is $\frac{1}{4}$ acre or 1012 square metres. It is quite usual for half and quarter plots to be offered, as they are more suitable for modern lifestyles. There are no limits in law on how many plots an individual can have, but many sites will restrict the number to one or two.

What can be done with the produce from the plot?

The 1922 Act states that the produce grown has to be wholly or mainly for the consumption of the plot holder and his family.

It's the use of the word mainly that gives the freedom to sell the surplus produce as well as the ability to grow a few flowers and the like. However, specific allotment tenancy agreements might have further restrictions in them about trading.

Sharing and transferring the plot

An allotment cannot be sublet without the permission of the allotment authority. Each allotment authority will have specific rules on who can take over a plot, or if you are allowed to share it or divide it. Most allotment agreements do not allow subletting, sharing or parting with possession without the consent of the allotments authority and to do so would be at risk of having notice served to end the tenancy.

The provision of allotments

There is a statutory duty on Local Authorities to provide allotments if there is demand. If six residents of the authority want an allotment, and there are none available, then they can request that the relevant allotment authority provide them. See the Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908 section 23 – revised.

Allotment authorities have compulsory purchase & leasing powers to obtain land for allotments, although this is not often used. Although the legislation gives no timeframes for meeting the demand, the Welsh Government would expect to see some progression made within a year.



Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 (Revised) Duty of Certain Councils to Provide Allotments

- (1) If the council of any borough, urban district, or parish are of opinion that there is a demand for allotments ... in the borough, urban district, or parish, ... the council shall provide a sufficient number of allotments, and shall let such allotments to persons ... resident in the borough, district, or parish, and desiring to take the same.*
- (2) On a representation in writing to the council of any borough, urban district, or parish, by any six registered parliamentary electors or [persons who are liable to pay an amount in respect of council tax] resident in the borough, urban district, or parish, that the circumstances of the borough, urban district, or parish are such that it is the duty of the council to take proceedings under this Part of this Act therein, the council shall take such representation into consideration.*

For further information

- All the Acts relating to allotments are available online at www.legislation.gov.uk/
- ‘The Law of Allotments’ by Paul Clayden, published by Shaw & Sons (currently in its 5th edition).
- Advice is also available from the National Allotments Society www.nsalg.org.uk
- Allotments Act 1925 section 8 & 24 (4)
- Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908 section 23 (revised), 25, 29 & 39
- Local Government Wales Act 1994
- Allotments Act 1922 section 1 (1) (a), section 22 (1) & (4)(b)
- Small Holdings & Allotments Act 1908 section 27 (4).
- Allotments Act 1950 section 1
- Land settlements & facilities Act 1919
- Allotments and Cottage Gardens Compensation for Crops Act 1887
- Poor Allotments Management Act 1873



Animals on allotments

The Law

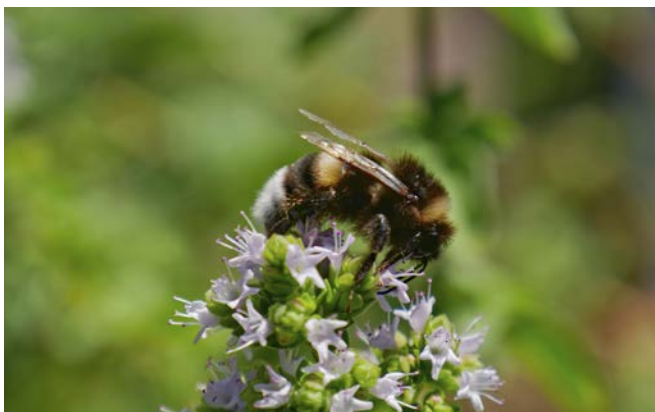
Prior to the 1950 Allotments Act, the keeping of hens and rabbits on allotments was prohibited by law. The Act abolished this restriction:

'Abolition of contractual restrictions on keeping hens and rabbits.'

(1) Notwithstanding any provision to the contrary in any lease or tenancy or in any covenant, contract or undertaking relating to the use to be made of any land, it shall be lawful for the occupier of any land to keep, otherwise than by way of trade or business, hens or rabbits in any place on the land and to erect or place and maintain such buildings or structures on the land as reasonably necessary for that purpose:

Provided that nothing in this subsection shall authorise any hens or rabbits to be kept in such a place or in such a manner as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance or affect the operation of any enactment.'

This doesn't mean allotment holders have a right to keep animals, just that it's not restricted by law. The keeping of any livestock is subject to the landlord's permission and should be included in the tenancy agreement.



Hens and bees

Hens and bees are beneficial livestock to keep on allotments or community growing sites. Hens are fantastic gardeners, it's part of their nature to scratch for insects and grubs in the soil. This tendency can be put to good use as they can clear areas of land or be put on beds after a crop has been harvested. They will clear crop residues and fertilise the soil with one of the best manures available. A hive of bees on site will increase biodiversity and ensure that all produce and tree blossom is pollinated.

As with all livestock, both hens and bees require proper husbandry to ensure they stay in good health.

- For hens, it's important to offer them; protection from predators, a good supply of feed and grit for egg production and a well-designed chicken coop. You should also consider Welsh Government regulations, animal welfare, storing the feed, rodents, site security and the effect your animals will have on other plot holders.
- With bees you need to consider; the number of hives to keep, when to do maintenance, checking for pests, and the position of the hives from a safety point of view. You must check whether any plot holders have a severe allergy. You should become part of your local bee keeping association either directly or through the British Beekeepers Association (BBKA) the national organisation for beekeepers. Your local association will be able to provide advice, give bee keeping demonstrations, and advise on/sell you equipment, bees and insurance.

Welfare

It is important to note that animals must not be kept on allotments unless they can be provided with appropriate levels of care and a suitable environment. Under the Animal Welfare Act 2006, it is an offence to cause unnecessary suffering to any animal and details the duty of care towards animals. This means that anyone responsible for an animal, whether on a permanent or temporary basis, must take reasonable steps to make sure the animal's needs are met. This includes providing:

- a suitable diet
- a suitable environment
- the chance to exhibit normal behaviour patterns
- a place to be housed with or apart from other animals
- protection from pain, suffering, injury and disease.

It is recommended that plot holders who keep animals should make a plan to prevent/deal with:

- fire
- flood
- outbreak of disease
- end of tenancy

Contact details should also be displayed permanently in a prominent position in case of emergency.

Welsh Government:

www.gov.wales/animal-welfare

Further reading

- NSALG leaflet – Keeping hens and rabbits on allotments
www.nsalg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/A5_Hens_rabbits_220213_HiRes.pdf
- The Welsh Beekeepers Association and the National Bee Unit provide a wide range of beekeeping information
www.wbka.com/ and www.nationalbeeunit.com/
- British Hen Welfare Trust
www.bhwt.org.uk/
- Animal Welfare Act 2006
www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/45/contents
- Laying Hen Welfare (code of practice)
www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-01/laying-hen-welfare-code-of-practice.pdf

Planning guidance


Growing food on land – does this need planning permission?

Growing fruit and vegetables on land is classed as agriculture (even on an allotment site¹). As agriculture is not included within the meaning of development in Section 55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (TCPA 1990), it may be acceptable to use any piece of land as an allotment or community growing project without the need to apply for planning permission.

However, this does not apply to land being used for leisure purposes, for example, the laying out and keeping of a lawn.

Is planning permission required?

There can be uncertainties concerning allotment structures and planning permission. Where there is doubt it is advisable to consult with your Local Planning Authority.

 **Development is:** “The carrying out of building, engineering, mining or other operations in, on, over or under land, or the making of any material change in the use of any buildings or other land”

It is often assumed that some structures, if they are moveable or not attached to the ground, do not amount to ‘buildings’ as defined in the TCPA 1990, and do not therefore require planning permission. This is not necessarily correct. Each case must be determined on its merits. There are three primary factors to consider:

- Size – Is the building large enough that it needs to be built on site rather than brought onto the site ready-made?

- Degree of attachment to the ground - Does the construction suggest a degree of permanence (physically attached to the ground /can only be removed by taking it to pieces)?
- Permanence - Is the intention to keep the structure there permanently?

If the answer to any of these questions is yes then it is likely that it is ‘development’ and planning permission is required. A good starting point is to assume that most buildings, however small and seemingly insignificant, will require planning permission and to seek advice from the LPA.

Plot holders should also check their tenancy agreements to see what structures might be allowed. It is important to note that permission from the allotment officer or committee who govern the allotments is separate to planning permission. Both sets of permissions should be obtained.

Storage sheds and greenhouses – permitted development

The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (the “GPDO”), as amended, allows some minor development to be undertaken, within certain parameters, without the need to apply to the LPA for planning permission. This is known as “permitted development”.

The GPDO has recently been amended² to provide permitted development rights (PDRs) for development consisting of the erection, extension, alteration or replacement of storage sheds and greenhouses on community growing spaces. Some limitations apply to manage the visual and environmental impact of the development permitted. This means, in some

1. See *Crowborough Parish Council v Secretary of State for the Environment* November 1980

2. The Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (Amendment) (No.3) (Wales) Order 2020

circumstances, not everyone can benefit from these rights and will need to apply to the LPA for planning permission if the structure constitutes development.

The extent that you can benefit from the PDRs depends on the size of the growing space and the size of the storage shed and greenhouse.

Site area and number of storage sheds and greenhouses permitted:

- For sites measuring 125 square metres or more, one storage shed **and** one greenhouse is permitted. However, the PDRs do not allow the erection of two storage sheds or two greenhouses on a plot of this size.
- For sites measuring between 62 square meters and less than 125 square metres, one storage shed **or** one greenhouse is permitted.
- Sites measuring less than 62 square metres in area do not benefit from permitted development rights, which means you will need to apply for planning permission for any structure that is development for the purposes of planning legislation.

Size of storage sheds and greenhouses permitted:

- Each storage shed or greenhouse must not exceed a ground area of 6 square metres when measured externally.
- Each storage shed or greenhouse must not exceed a maximum of 2.2 metres in height.

Extension of existing storage sheds and greenhouses

- If you have an existing storage shed or greenhouse that is smaller than the maximum allowed by the PDRs, you are also permitted to extend your structure subject to compliance with the criteria set out above.

Notwithstanding the above, the PDRs do not apply and planning permission will be required, if:

- the development would be within a protected area, known as article 1(5) land. This is land within National Parks, areas of outstanding natural beauty and conservation areas.
- the development would be on land within a World Heritage Site;
- the development would be within the curtilage of a listed building; or
- the development would be within:
 - 8 metres of a non-tidal main river (or within 8 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on that river); or
 - within 16 metres of a tidal main river (or within 16 metres of any flood defence structure or culvert on that river).

The permitted development rights apply to community growing spaces, which for purposes of the legislation are defined as:

- (a) an allotment including an allotment garden within the meaning of the Allotments Act 1922; or
- (b) any other land used or intended for use –
 - i. by one or more communities,
 - ii. wholly or mainly for the cultivation of vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers, and
 - iii. otherwise than with a view to making a profit.

The legislation also provides clarity on what is a greenhouse for the purpose of these permitted development rights. A greenhouse means a structure such as a glasshouse or polytunnel in which vegetables, fruit, herbs or flowers are cultivated under cover in an enclosed space, but does not include a structure in which livestock are kept.

Relationships between existing storage sheds/greenhouses and the PDRs

When considering the number of structures permitted, you must take into account any existing storage sheds or greenhouses on your plot, whether permitted by the legislation or not. For example, if your plot measures 62 squares and you already have a storage shed or greenhouse that constitutes development, you will have already used your permitted development allowance and any additional structure will require planning permission. You may however replace your existing structure with a new storage shed or greenhouse in accordance with the limitations set out above.

If your plot measures 125 square metres or more and you already have a greenhouse that constitutes development, but no other structures, you are permitted to erect a storage shed in accordance with the limitations set out above without requiring planning permission.

The erection of a second greenhouse is not permitted. Equally, the same applies if you already have a storage shed that constitutes development but no other structures, i.e. you are permitted to erect a greenhouse without requiring planning permission. The erection of a second storage shed is not however permitted.

If you wish to undertake development that goes beyond what is permitted by the PDRs, you can apply to the LPA for planning permission which allows all local circumstances and any material considerations to be taken into account.

Where there is any doubt whether a proposal would be permitted development, advice should be sought from the LPA.

The PDRs set out in this chapter provide for storage sheds and greenhouses of a scale, and in locations where, the planning impacts are minimal and therefore detailed consideration through a planning application is not necessary.



Inevitably there is a fine balance between the interests of stakeholders and it is not possible to satisfy the demands of every interested party when creating PDRs. These PDRs attempt to balance the need to provide growers with more freedom to utilise their growing space against the need to ensure that the interests of the wider environment are protected.

Fencing

Any means of enclosure including a fence, wall or gate can be built without planning permission provided it is less than 1 metre high adjacent to a highway (road) or 2 metres high anywhere else except within the boundaries of a listed building³. Don't forget to also check your tenancy agreement to see if fences are allowed.

Hard standing areas and access paths

Your growing project may need to have a hard-standing area for car parking or meeting space purposes. It may also be desirable to have access paths put in or vehicle access. All these works are development and do require planning permission. Very small areas may be regarded as 'de minimus' which means it is so small it does not warrant intervention by the LPA. You should speak to your planning authority about this before starting works. Don't forget to also check your tenancy agreement to see if hardstanding is allowed.

Raised beds

A raised bed could be classed as a structure or an engineering operation requiring permission. In very many cases they are be classed as 'de minimus' meaning they are so small they do not warrant intervention by the LPA. The larger the bed the more it is likely to require planning permission. You should speak to your LPA about this before starting work. Don't forget to also check your tenancy agreement to see if raised beds are allowed.

Finding out if planning permission is required

If you ask your LPA if planning permission is required for a certain structure or type of development, they may suggest you submit a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development. This is an application to test whether an existing or proposed use or development is lawful. There are benefits to taking this route as it provides you with certainty and provides immunity from future enforcement action. If the structure or use has not already begun the fee for the application is half that of a normal planning application fee.

You can apply via the Planning Applications Wales online application service - <https://gov.wales/apply-planning-permission>

Planning permission is required – what should I do?

Pre application advice

All LPAs provide a statutory pre-application advice service for those who request it. LPAs will provide a written response to an applicant, containing the following information as a minimum:

- relevant planning history of the site relevant development plan policies against which the development proposal will be assessed
- relevant supplementary planning guidance
- any other material planning considerations
- an initial assessment of the proposed development, based on the information above.

A fee⁴ is payable to the LPA for this service based on the size and scale of the proposed development.

LPAs can offer additional written responses, meetings etc. should an applicant request further pre-application advice beyond the

³ General Permitted Development Order 1995, Schedule 2, Part 2, Class A

⁴ As set out in The Town and Country Planning (Fees for Applications, Deemed Applications and Site Visits) (Wales) (Amendment) Regulations 2016 <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/wsi/2016/62/contents/made>

statutory minimum requirements. LPAs will charge discretionary fees for these services.

Applicants will be required to complete a pre-application enquiry form in order to access the pre-application service, which is available on the LPA website. Applicants must provide the following information within the pre-application enquiry form:

- Contact details (name, address, telephone number and email address)
- A description of development
- Site address
- Location plan (on an Ordnance Survey base)
- Plans, or additional supporting information that will assist the LPA to provide a helpful, focussed response.

This is only the minimum amount of information required, you may provide information in addition to the requirements above to help an LPA provide an informed response based on all available information.

LPAs have 21 days to provide a written response to the applicant. Extensions of time are permitted, subject to both the LPA and the applicant agreeing in writing a revised date for a written response to be returned to the applicant.

Pre application advice will provide an applicant with a better indication of the likelihood of their proposal receiving planning permission or not, although this is informal advice and not a guarantee of the final decision.

It is useful to consider the time frame for determining planning applications if you want to fit your project in with the growing seasons. For example to start growing in March you may well need to submit your planning application in the November beforehand in order to get your planning permission in place and get the works completed in time.

Sustainable Drainage Systems (SUDS)

All new developments of more than 1 dwelling house or where the construction area is **100 square meters or more**, will require sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) for surface water. The SuDS must be designed and built in accordance with Statutory SuDS Standards published by the Welsh Ministers and SuDS Schemes must be approved by the local authority acting in its SuDS Approving Body (SAB) role, before construction work begins.

If your development is likely to be more than 100 square metres you should speak to your local authority SAB who will offer you a chargeable pre application advice service. You should speak to the SAB **before submitting your planning application** so that your drainage systems can be included in your planning application for approval.

The planning system in Wales and settlement boundaries

Each local authority is required to prepare a local development plan (LDP) for its area. The planning system in Wales manages the development and use of land in the public interest. The basis for the development plan is to give the developer and the public certainty about the type of development that will be permitted at a given location. Applications for planning permission should be made in accordance with the LDP unless material considerations indicate otherwise.

For many years, planning has sought to conserve the countryside and enhance the urban environment. Most permissible development is confined to within settlement boundaries. A settlement boundary is a line drawn on a map around a city, town or village which denotes where development will be acceptable in principle.

When choosing your site it is recommended to try to pick one that is within settlement boundaries or in the urban area. If you want to

build structures on the site it will be easier to gain planning permission as this is where most development is directed to. Anything beyond the settlement boundary line is countryside and stricter policies apply.

Minimising the impact – a good practice guide

There are things that you can do to help minimise the impact of development on your allotment or growing site.

- Minimise the impact of sheds and other structures in the landscape by locating them adjacent to a boundary hedge or on lower lying land. Or have one tool storage area instead of on individual plots throughout the development site. Buildings in the countryside need to look agricultural in appearance so a domestic garden shed might not be acceptable. Speak to your LPA about the type of structure that might be considered.
- It is part of the basics on a community growing project but, always make sure you engage the local community in your project. Be mindful of the impact structures and growing activity will have on the enjoyment of neighbouring properties. Speak to the neighbours and ask them the type of design they would like to see and a preferred location for any structures.
- The design of your growing space should not just be functional to your purposes. Think about how it will look from near to the site and further away in the landscape. Have visually pleasing boundaries such as natural hedgerows and wildflower planting.
- Can the structures you place on the site be made to look more attractive with planting around them or use of different materials
- It may be necessary to put in pathways and even a road to your growing space. Always use materials that are appropriate to the surroundings and think about mitigating surface water run-off. Use permeable surfaces rather than Tarmac.
- Think of innovative ways to harvest water from the structures. The obvious use for the water is to irrigate your crops but this will also help prevent run off and flooding to adjacent properties.
- Locate your site close to the community who is going to be using it. If users are able to walk or cycle to the site you will be able to demonstrate the site is in a sustainable location and will be well used. Nearby public transport links are also a bonus.
- To back up policies in the local development plan, local authorities have to carry out an open space assessment which shows how much open space they are making available in their local authority. Open space largely needs to be open and accessible to all. If your growing project fits these criteria then your project will be more acceptable so try not to put fences up and allow all members of the public to access it. In many areas vandalism isn't a big issue.
- Tell your local ward Member (Councillor) and other people in the community what you are doing. Offer to involve them in your plans and ask for their support.

Planning application fees

Submitting a planning application will involve a fee. The current planning fees are available on your LPA website.

Documents to submit with your planning application

Guidance on the information required for a valid planning application and other consents, including a Certificate of Lawful Use or Development, is contained within the Development Management Manual, specifically Section 7 annex: planning applications – lists of validation requirements, which is available on the Welsh Government website: <https://gov.wales/development-management-manual>. Check with your LPA if you remain unsure about the documents that need to be submitted.

Failure to provide the minimum amount of information required upon submission will result in delays validating your application.

Upon submission

Most planning applications are submitted online via the Planning Applications Wales online application service –

<https://gov.wales/apply-planning-permission>

Once an application has been submitted, it will be considered by the LPA. If registered, various people and consultees will be notified of the planning application and will be given 21 days to provide comments. The planning officer may carry out a site visit and assess the impact of the proposal on the surrounding area.

If objections are received and they are considered ‘material’⁵ to the planning application the officer must consider them.

Some planning applications can be dealt with under delegated powers and others need to be considered by the local authority’s planning committee. If the application is considered by the planning committee, it may take a little longer to determine.

We have our planning decision – what next?

Gaining planning permission for your development does not always mean you can go ahead with it straight away. Check the wording of the description of development on the decision notice. Does it cover all the works you want to carry out? Check the conditions on the planning decision notice. It is very important that you comply with these conditions. Failure to comply with planning conditions may result in the LPA taking enforcement action.

Our application has been refused – what now?

In the decision notice the planning authority must clearly set out their reasons for refusal. Take time to consider them. If you still do not understand them you should speak to the planning officer.

If you think you can overcome these concerns, you may wish to submit another planning application for consideration.

If, following discussions with the planning officer, you still feel you have a good case based on the information provided with the planning application submission you can appeal the decision to the Welsh Ministers, via the Planning Inspectorate.

If you do not want to appeal or resubmit an application, you can see if you can carry on without the development (structure or works) on your site. You could choose to find a different, more appropriate site, where you may be able to get planning permission for the development.

⁵ relevant, pertinent to the development



Advice for working with community growing groups

In recent years, many people have recognised the benefits of growing their own food and establishing community gardens or associated green spaces. The result has been a surge in demand for suitable plots of land in both urban and rural areas. In turn, this has led to a shortage of land, such as allotments, and a growing need for alternative solutions.

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 introduced new obligations on different public bodies to make sure that they are acting in a sustainable manner, not just considering the here and now, but also future generations. Food growing in an environmentally friendly way, meets this agenda and even more so when done by the community. This means that for both the public and private sector, the benefits delivered through community growing are being recognised and developed.

There are many different forms of community gardens, including allotments/allotment-type plots, community growing areas, therapeutic gardens, school gardens and orchards. New projects are evolving all the time. These different types of growing can take place on any land, not just council land. A growing range of landowners have successfully offered their land for community gardening including; farmers, developers, the NHS, estate owners, housing associations, universities, retailers and public bodies such as Network Rail.

There are understandable apprehensions from some landowners about turning over land for community food growing and other community led uses. There may be concerns about how this can be made to happen in an efficient and cost effective way. If done properly and openly, it can be beneficial to all parties.



Suitable land

You may not think that the surplus land you have available would be suitable. However, there are many innovative ways of growing on a small scale, utilising volunteer labour. Each case will present its own challenges due to different land ownership and tenure, the different characteristics of the site and surroundings, as well as the proposed use of the land. However, most issues can be overcome through detailed discussion and having the correct legal agreement in place.

The amount of land required will differ depending on what the proposed growing use is. Community growing can take place on anything from a tiny 2m x 2m plot, through to 10 acres for a community supported agriculture (CSA) project, growing vegetables for a box scheme feeding 40 families.

If you have long term plans for your land, that doesn't mean that the land can't be used for growing in the meantime. Some really great projects have happened on development land, on a short term basis, moving on when planning permission is granted and development is about to start. So long as everyone involved knows from the start that it is a "meanwhile" use and everyone is kept well informed of the progress of the development. The advantage is that land that would otherwise lay empty and unused, can be put to good use by community groups in a way that brings benefits and opportunities for local people and the landowner. There are many examples of good practice across the United Kingdom.

Rent

This depends on what you want to achieve. Some landowners:

- let their land for free (for example disused or neglected land in urban areas)
- let their land for a nominal/at cost sum (such as the National Trust)
- rent the land out at a market rate (for example normal farm-land rental charge).

Finding growers and other community projects

- contact your local council who may be able to help you find growers, especially if it has an allotment waiting list
- contact your local Transition group who may be a good source of people who are looking for land
- contact nearby growing projects who might want extra land
- use social media
- try advertising or putting an article in the local press
- contact your community or town council
- put up posters locally and if you get sufficient interest, you could hold an informal public meeting on the site or nearby
- form a local growing network bringing together landowners and community groups.

When you allow a third party to use your land, it's essential to check that the group/individuals using your land have public liability insurance: you should insist on this in any formal rental agreement. You should also check your own insurance is adequate to cover potential liabilities such as access, or damages to services if the land is rented to a third party.

Negotiating and dealing with a community group may take longer than with an individual, whether it is negotiating a lease or selling or transferring land to the group. It is important to factor this in to the timescales. Try to get one person as the nominated representative and has the authority to deal with you. Make sure you understand how often they meet and how quickly they can make decisions. In the longer term because it is a community group it is likely that more people will benefit than if you are dealing with a sole individual.

Information you may wish to request from a group:

- group constitution or information about the group
- aims and objectives of the community growing project
- funding information or business plan if appropriate.

For more information about renting out your land, the Community Land Advisory Service (CLAS), part of the Social Farms and Gardens website has lots of documents to help you; work out what legal agreement is appropriate, enter into a tenancy, deal with the legal aspects of letting your land and insurance. There are also CLAS Cymru officers in Wales that can support you with your land and planning queries. www.farmgarden.org.uk



Allotments issues

If you decide that you would like allotments on your land, but are worried about the complexity of allotments legislation impacting your ability to change the use of that piece of land in the future, you do not need to worry. Allotments legislation provides important regulation to protect food growing spaces but it only relates to sites owned by councils created to meet the demand from their residents. It does not affect privately owned sites or council owned sites earmarked for an alternative future use such as an extension to a cemetery.

Allotments leases are appropriate to use on private sites and council sites and can be issued to groups as well as individuals. They can be created to suit the particular requirements of the land owner and the allotment association. The Community Land Advisory Service Cymru can help both parties to create a mutually beneficial agreement.

Benefits of community food growing

1. If you are a landowner whose business includes a catering element then having food produced on site or close by can provide fresh, tasty and reasonably priced supplies. A number of companies have set up **work place allotments** for staff, providing opportunities for gardening at lunchtime and after office hours, which helps improve employee wellbeing.
2. Land which appears to be underused or abandoned may be more prone to anti-social behaviour and vandalism. Having a community growing project on a piece of land can lead to **more respect for a space**. Not only will you have more people on site, keeping an eye on things, which is a deterrent for anti-social behaviour, studies have shown that cared for spaces attract less vandalism (for more information see “the broken window theory”).

3. Enabling community growing on your land may **enable investment** which would otherwise not be achievable, for example restoring a historic walled garden. A community group may be able to provide the resources and access the funding for investment that would otherwise be difficult to achieve. Major investment usually comes with the requirement that the asset is available for a longer time frame such as 10 or more years.

Larger landowners or landowners with a large workforce may consider having a policy and process in place to direct enquires. Using an existing website is a simple means to direct people to information on what is available or who to contact.

Proactively mapping land which is suitable would allow community groups to consider what is available before making an approach to a specific person.



Case study: Hanley landshare

An allotment site was set up on Lyndon Edwards' organic dairy farm in Chepstow. The garden had its origins in a chance meeting at an event held back in October 2011. Transition Chepstow had been searching for allotment land in the town and had failed to find any suitable sites. At the event a member of Transition Chepstow was seated next to dairy farmer Lyndon Edwards and the two got into conversation.

Lyndon was able to offer the group a site of 70m x 70m. From the initial contact, it took about four months to negotiate a formal agreement for use of the site.

To keep things simple, the individual plot holders formed themselves into a community group, with a single person to represent the plot holders and be a single point of contact with the farmer.

The core Transition group found other willing plot-holders through word-of-mouth, emailing their members and with help from Monmouthshire County Council. Uptake has been good. The council contacted people on their allotment waiting lists about the site and also kept information at their one-stop-shop in Chepstow.

The farm shop now sells the land-share produce.



The environment and biodiversity on allotments

Biodiversity is the variety of life, from a song thrush in an orchard to fungi in ancient woodland. Nature provides us with the essentials for life and inspire us, providing ecosystems services such as clean water and air, as well as bringing pleasure and peace in a busy world. We are just as dependant on a healthy ecological system as the insects, plants and animals we share the planet with. The rapid decline in biodiversity is being caused by loss of habitat, pollution, introduction of invasive species, climate change and the overexploitation of resources. These losses make ecosystems less resilient to shocks and change. An example of this might be – if the range of a species is changing due to climate change – but there are gaps in the habitat available. While the Welsh Government is acting to reverse the loss of biodiversity we can also make daily choices that support biodiversity and the environment – not least on the allotment.

Features on the allotment that support biodiversity

While allotment gardens are typically used for growing crops, flowers or as a place for recreation, they can also include habitats such as meadow, woodland edge (hedge) and ponds, and support a number of nationally declining species such as song birds, bats, hedgehogs, amphibians and pollinators.

With this in mind, if your group is considering creating allotments or a community garden on a new site the biodiversity and ecological interest of the site should be considered. It is important to think about the impact that cultivating the land will have on existing ecological features and contemplate whether it's possible to retain some of these features or design spaces to include them.



Hedges and edges

A single hedge can support up to 2000 species, supporting a complex ecological food web. Hedges create wildlife corridors through the landscape linking woodlands and habitats. Growing a hedge around the entire site is a great way to increase the number of species supported by your project and encourage beneficial wildlife onto your land.

Hedges not only create significant habitat on site, but help support up to 135 'priority species'. Section 7 of the Environment Act Wales 2016 details Priority Species and Habitats www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Environment-Wales-Act

When planting a hedge it is best to use a mix of native species including hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn, holly and dog rose. To ensure your hedge is providing the best possible habitat and increase biodiversity you should:

- Keep it thick and dense.
- Cut at the right time preferably in late winter.
- Don't cut too often or too tight and consider traditional hedge laying.
- Encourage flowers and grasses at the base and margins.
- Look after trees and plant new ones to fill any gaps.
- Rejuvenate old hedges.
- Take care to plant suitable species when planting new hedges.
- Link the hedge with other wildlife habitats and plug gaps.
- Observe and explore your hedge.

www.hedgeline.org.uk provides further information about planting and maintaining hedges.

Ponds

Ponds support two thirds of all freshwater species. Creating new ponds is one of the simplest and most effective ways to create freshwater habitat.

Installing a pond will not only encourage beneficial predators into the growing space including a variety of amphibians and invertebrates but they can have an impact on wider environmental issues. Ponds help to reduce flooding and photosynthesising aquatic plants help to decrease atmospheric pollution.

The Freshwater Habitats Trust www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk ensures that the benefits of small water bodies are recognised in policy, in the UK and Europe. They work with other bodies to highlight the importance of small waterbodies in the water agenda and have a plethora of information available on their website.

Ponds also create a lovely space to relax and watch wildlife. Why not download a pond life fact sheet and see how many species are living in and around your pond. Try to resist the urge to bring a bucket of pond water from another pond to get yours started. You might accidentally spread disease like amphibian Red Leg or bring invasive plants like Duckweed. You'll find a magical process happens all by itself and pond life will find your pond and move in.

If you'd like to create a pond on your allotment or community garden it's advisable to check the terms of your tenancy first. Some allotment tenancies and other land agreements place restrictions on ponds or may require express permission prior to work starting. Be sure to have a risk assessment in place – even shallow water can be dangerous to young children.

Long grass and meadow areas

Species-rich grasslands and meadows are a highly threatened habitat in the UK. The majority of grassland in Wales is improved by the addition of fertilisers, which has reduced the number of wild flowers and pollinators. The number of pollinators is plummeting, largely due to this habitat loss and it's vital that we stop this decline. Hay meadows are also a rare sight. Arable weeds including Corn Marigolds, Speedwells, Field Woundwort and Corn Spurrey are rare due to intensive agriculture, the use of herbicides and seed cleaning.



To help reverse this trend, setting aside a border around your site or “wild” areas for wild flowers and grasses can increase the amount of plant and insect diversity on your site. These will also encourage small mammals such as hedgehogs and bats to visit and feed, helping reduce pests such as slugs and snails.

Top tips:

- allow grass and wild flowers to grow long from April until August then cut (in rotation) and remove cuttings, this will help create a species rich ‘sward’;
- locate your meadow next to a hedge;
- different grass heights support a wider range of insects and invertebrates;
- don’t cut all of your meadow area all at once. Come up with a cutting rotation and vary the height. This variation will benefit invertebrates and provide shelter;
- try to leave a section of your grassy area standing over winter. This will provide much needed habitat for overwintering insects in the form of leaf litter, standing dead twigs or stems;
- if you have wet areas, they should be valued as a biodiversity asset. These areas will become seasonally inundated by important invertebrates such as ground beetles;
- add yellow rattle seed to existing grass areas. This will help to reduce the dominance of grass and encourage more wildlife flower species. Yellow rattle should be sown in autumn after the grass has been raked or scarified and the seeds require a frost to germinate;
- are you are planning to sow a new meadow area rather than cutting, raking and seeing what emerges? Be aware of the difference between pictorial flower seed mixes full of colourful non-natives, and conservation seed mixes which contain our threatened species and support native wildlife.

For more information see:

www.buglife.org.uk

www.plantlife.org.uk/uk

Encouraging hedgehogs and other garden helpers

Wildlife like hedgehogs, toads and song thrushes should be encouraged into the garden as they eat pests including slugs and snails. Unfortunately due to a loss of habitat many of these species are in decline.

There are a variety of ways that you can attract hedgehogs and other garden helpers into your growing area including:

- make sure there are access points into your garden including gaps in hedges and fences
- leave areas for wildlife
- build a hedgehog house
- provide access to freshwater
- avoid using slug pellets and chemicals

- make ponds hedgehog friendly by providing a way for them to climb out
- check long grass before cutting it
- check before turning your compost heap
- create a bug hotel
- install bat and bird boxes
- plant fruit and nut trees in your growing area.

Plants for pollinators

It's well known that our pollinators are in crisis. The reasons for this include a lack of food sources due to changes in agriculture, the use of pesticides and climate change. The Welsh Government launched the Action Plan for Pollinators in 2013 (revised 2018) to try and halt this decline.

www.gov.wales/action-plan-pollinators-infographic

We can help by making our gardens and allotments a haven for our pollinators, without which we would have serious problems with our food supply, and an impoverished ecosystem. Many plants on the allotment are great food sources for pollinators; flowering herbs, fruit trees and bushes, beans, courgettes and asparagus. But why not interplant with other great pollinator plants to extend the season, or have an ornamental border to increase the amount of bees, butterflies, moths and hoverflies in the allotment? The RHS have created lists of plants that support pollinators from early spring to late autumn.

www.rhs.org.uk/science/conservation-biodiversity/wildlife/plants-for-pollinators

Building a home for nature

It's a really fun activity for adults and children alike to build bug hotels, bird and bat boxes. Bird boxes need to be placed somewhere you can get them down and clean them in the winter. Insect hotels for solitary bees and other insects

can be made of recycled materials like pallets, cardboard and broken bamboo canes.

Stone and log piles are an easy way to encourage biodiversity on the allotment. Rotting wood will provide ideal habitat for insects, frogs, toads and newts and will host a variety of fungi. Likewise damp cool stone piles will be popular with frogs, toads and newts. Try not to disturb them once you've made them. If you have children who enjoy moving stones and logs to find creatures just place individual stones or logs in a partially shaded spot for them to explore.

www.wildaboutgardens.org.uk/



Compost

Healthy soil contains thousands of different bacteria and fungi. You can support a healthy ecosystem beneath your feet by enriching your soil with compost, seaweed and well-rotted manure rather than relying on artificial fertilisers. Your soil will be even healthier and more diverse if you avoid digging more than is necessary and use your compost as a mulch. It will be broken down and taken into the soil by insects and worms, and will prevent the growth of weeds by shading the soil.

Not only is compost good for your soil but the compost heap itself can provide a cosy home for grass snakes who often lay eggs in them. If you are lucky enough to have grass snakes living in your compost heap, don't disturb them, start another heap.

Your heap will also be home to worms, beetles and other insects, and possibly frogs and newts.

Composting perennial weeds such as dock, ground elder, couch grass or bindweed is a headache. They will all survive a cold compost heap. Some perennial weeds or weeds with persistent seeds can be denatured by drying them out or 'drowning' in a barrel for a few weeks. You can also create a hot compost heap or buy a commercial 'hot composter'.

www.charlesdowding.co.uk/advice-on-making-compost/

Permaculture

"Permaculture is a sustainable design system stressing the harmonious interrelationship of humans, plants, animals and the Earth. The core of permaculture is design and the working relationships and connections between all things."

(Bill Mollison)

In practical terms in the allotment the twelve permaculture principles can be applied to your design and growing to make it more sustainable. It might look slightly messier than the traditional 'bare earth and shorn grass paths' allotment – but working with nature means less work for you and a harmonious relationship with the earth.

Find out more at www.permaculture.org.uk/

Invasive non-native species

Invasive non-native plant species can cause substantial environmental damage; cost millions of pounds to tackle annually and reduce biodiversity. *Rhododendron ponticum* releases toxins into the soil that prevents the growth of any other plant and so our native flora lose habitat. Some of these plants are so problematic they have been covered by legislation to control their spread, the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. You're not obliged to control them on your own land but you are obliged to prevent

them spreading onto other people's land or into the wild.

The best way to avoid spreading invasive non-native plants is to be competent at identifying them and to know how to dispose of them. NEVER compost these species.

There is lots of information available to help you manage problem plants from the invasive non-native species pages of the Welsh Government website

www.gov.wales/weeds-invasive-non-native-species

Through the website you can find factsheets to help you identify and manage invasive species you may find on allotment sites and community gardens such as:

- Japanese Knotweed
- Giant Hogweed
- Himalayan Balsam

Information sheets about non-native invasive species are also available at

www.nonnativespecies.org/index.cfm?sectionid=47

Field Guide to Invasive Plants and Animals in Britain – Bloomsbury ISBN: 9781408123188

Fertiliser, weed and pest control

Fertilisers contain high levels of nitrogen, potassium and phosphate which results in dense growth. When used on growing areas fertilisers not only effect the plants they are intended for but promote intense growth of rank grasses and weeds and cause polluted run-off into watercourses. Alternatives include using compost, well-rotted manure, comfrey tea and seaweed. You could also try green manures – Phacelia is a good one and is absolutely humming with bees when in flower.

Clearing your plot can be really hard work and it might be tempting to spray glyphosate to clear

the grass. Glyphosate was considered safe for a long time but now there is a lot of debate about its persistence in the soil and its effects on pollinators and on human health. Alternatives include mulching your site with weed control membrane and digging a patch at a time. You could also try No Dig growing – use cardboard and then soil improver/compost to create a thick mulch layer weeds can't grow through and save your back!

It's so frustrating when pests such as slugs and snails munch their way through your crops. While the most effective way to deal with them in the short term is to use chemicals like slug pellets and sprays this has a knock on effect. Birds and hedgehogs are poisoned by Metaldehyde slug pellets, and sprays to combat pests such as aphids also poison bees and other pollinators. Alternatives exist. If you encourage pollinators on your plot you may find the natural balance keeps aphids at bay – for example ladybird larvae eat them in large numbers! If they get out of hand try fatty acid sprays – harmless to pollinators. You can also use iron based slug pellets without fear of poisoning the friendly hedgehogs.

It's worth considering banning the use of pesticides and herbicides across your allotment site. Find out more about organic growing here:

www.gardenorganic.org.uk/

www.permaculture.org.uk/knowledge-base/basics

www.charlesdowding.co.uk/



Waste

Allotment holders are well known for repurposing items that otherwise may have been discarded. From produce trays as seed trays to pallet compost bins. However sometimes a problem arises when this tendency means people collect lots of possibly useful items on their plot. Some particularly problematic items are old tyres, windows, plastic sheeting and carpet.

Using old carpet as a weed suppressant can leach toxic and persistent chemicals such as fire retardants, dyes, plastics and stain retardants into the soil. And anyone who's inherited a plot that's been laid with carpet and abandoned knows that after a season or two the grasses grow through it and it's really very difficult to remove.

Plastic sheeting such as the blue damp proof membrane is not designed to be used outside and will degrade in sunlight. After a couple of seasons you'll find when you touch it, it disintegrates into thousands of tiny pieces you can never remove from the soil.

Tyres cannot be disposed of in household waste or landfill. So while they may be useful on the allotment you may find you have to pay to dispose of them when you don't want them anymore.

It's worth having a site policy on the use of these items, the removal at the end of a tenancy – and the disposal of general waste. It's a very rare allotment site now that has a waste collection service. Some sites are instituting deposits to cover the cost of disposing of waste if people leave their plot in a poor state. Banning the use of carpet and plastic sheeting would go some way to avoiding these issues.

Water

Mains water – if available – is cheap. However it uses a lot of energy to purify water to drinking standard and plants are happier with rain water anyway! Try and encourage rainwater harvesting on site. Every shed roof is a rainwater harvesting

opportunity. You can buy recycled containers from companies that collect IBC's (intermediate bulk container) and barrels from the food transport industry – have a look online for a local supplier. Why not join several up using ball cocks and float valves to create a linked up system with a large capacity. If you do have a mains connection as well consider timed push taps to avoid wastage.

Welsh Legislation to support biodiversity

The Environment (Wales) Act became law in 2016. Central to the Act is the need to adopt a new, more integrated approach to managing our natural resources in order to achieve long-term sustainability. The Welsh Government must produce a national policy that sets out the priorities, risks and opportunities for managing our natural resources sustainably. The policy will take into account the findings of the State of Natural Resources report. The Act places a duty on Welsh Ministers to set targets for reducing greenhouse emissions and also to set carbon budgets. This will help to accelerate progress against our headline targets and will help build resilience. The Act also covers Waste, Fisheries and Flood Risk Management.

Under section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 public authorities that exercise their functions in relation to Wales have a duty to maintain and enhance biodiversity and promote the resilience of ecosystems. Whilst our protected sites and species are important the s6 duty is about taking steps to protect nature in our towns, cities, public places and wider landscape, both through practical action on the ground, and in the way all public functions are carried out.

To help achieve this, and to comply with the duty, public authorities should embed the consideration of biodiversity and ecosystems into their day to day activities, policies, plans, programmes and projects. It is about changing the way we think about acting for biodiversity. www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Section-6

The Wellbeing of Future Generations Act (2015)

has seven strands which together ensure a sustainable vibrant Wales for people and nature. It is being embedded into all public policy. One of the seven strands is;

A Resilient Wales

“A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change.”

Find out more about the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act here: www.futuregenerations.wales/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/150623-guide-to-the-fg-act-en.pdf

The Action Plan for Pollinators in Wales was launched setting the strategic vision, outcomes and areas for action to halt and reverse pollinator decline in Wales. A Pollinator Task Force comprising of key stakeholders is now active. The plan was revised in 2018. www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/Wales-Action-Plan-for-Pollinators

Bee Friendly is a Wales-wide accreditation scheme where communities, schools, universities, businesses and places of worship can achieve Bee Friendly status.

Friends of the Earth Cymru has joined with the Welsh Government to launch a world first initiative to protect bees and other pollinators in Wales.

www.foe.cymru/bee-friendly-wales

There is much more happening at a national level. For up to date information about what the Welsh Government is doing to tackle the climate emergency and the loss of biodiversity see: www.gov.wales/environment-climate-change



Additional information and resources

Welsh Government Community Grown Food Action Plan

www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2018-05/community-grown-food-action-plan.pdf

Growing in the Community

www.local.gov.uk/growing-community-second-edition

Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908

Allotments Act 1922 Allotments Act 1925

Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1926

Allotments Act 1950

Local Government Wales Act 1994 Government of Wales Act 1998

National Assembly for Wales Transfer of Functions Order 1999 Landlord and Tenant Act 1927

The National Allotments Society

www.nsalg.org.uk

Soil Association

www.soilassociation.org

Social Farms and Gardens

www.farmgarden.org.uk

Social Farms and Gardens Community Growing Resource Pack

www.farmgarden.org.uk/resources/community-growing-resource-pack-wales

Community Land Advisory Service, CLAS Cymru

www.communitylandadvice.org.uk



Biodiversity resources

The Wildlife Trusts

www.wildlifetrusts.org

Wales Biodiversity Partnership

www.biodiversitywales.org.uk

Royal Society Protection of Birds

www.rspb.org.uk/whatwedo/wales

Amphibian and Reptile Conservation Trust

www.arc-trust.org

Welsh Beekeepers Association

www.wbka.com

Buglife

www.buglife.org.uk

Plantlife

www.plantlife.org.uk/wales

Woodland Trust

www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Governance and funding resources

Wales Council for Voluntary Action

www.wcva.org.uk

Big Lottery Fund

www.biglotteryfund.org.uk

Wales Co-operative Centre

www.wales.coop

Other resources

Business Wales

www.businesswales.gov.wales

The Action Plan for Pollinators in Wales

www.gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/action-plan-for-pollinators.pdf

Invasive Non Native Species strategy

www.gov.wales/weeds-invasive-non-native-species

Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

www.futuregenerations.wales/about-us/future-generations-act/

Environment (Wales) Act 2016

www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2016/3/contents
[www.wcva.org.uk/what-we-do/the-environment-\(wales\)-act](http://www.wcva.org.uk/what-we-do/the-environment-(wales)-act)