

Nottingham City Council Draft Allotment Action Plan oct09

NOTTINGHAM CITY COUNCIL

WORKSTRAND – ALLOTMENTS. DRAFT ACTION PLAN

October 2009

Introduction

This draft Allotment Action Plan has been produced as part of the Food Growing Framework and provides more detail on one of the nine work streams which make up the Framework as a whole.

It covers:

- Background to the NCC Allotment Service and some of the key issues it faces
- Details on the proposed actions which will deliver the six aims for allotments in Nottingham:
 1. Provide enough allotments
 2. Improve the quality and condition of sites
 3. Secure resources
 4. Support community management
 5. Promote and celebrate allotment gardening
 6. Deliver a high quality allotment service

In the overall focus of the Food Growing Framework,

Nottingham City Council will provide a range of lifelong food growing opportunities, supporting residents in healthy eating and working towards a sustainable environment.

Allotments have had a key food growing role in Nottingham since the mid 19th century, and they will continue to contribute to this wider aim while keeping their own distinctive characteristics.

Background to the Allotment Action Plan

Recent years have seen important and exciting developments in allotments, both locally and nationally. There has been an upsurge in demands for plots, with there now being a waiting list for

plots across Nottingham. Projects run by community groups are developing quickly (including the major St Ann's Allotments Restoration Project), while economic, health, and environmental concerns have focussed attention on their role to support growing more food in cities.

While there have been many positive developments, the Allotment Service also faces challenges. Low levels of demand in the 1980's and 1990's (and a degree of underfunding) meant that some plots became empty and then derelict. It was difficult to keep on top of some maintenance and administration issues, which has made it harder to respond to the new demands and provide a 21st century service.

In the late 1980's the City Council adopted an Allotment Charter (see below). While this is a good summary of intentions, it's short on detail and can't be easily checked or measured to say whether it's really being put into practice. The Allotment Action Plan will develop the themes of the Charter – and deal with new issues – to provide a document where everyone with an interest in allotments can see what the City council will be doing and how they can contribute.

The Allotment Service: Who we are and what we do

The Allotment Service of Nottingham City Council is part of the Parks & Open Spaces section the Department of Community and Culture.

The origins of allotments in Nottingham go back over two hundred years, when 'detached town gardens' were established around the city – generally for the well-to-do. Hungerhill and Gorsey Gardens (in St Ann's) date from the 1830's and are part of the oldest site in the city, (and the largest detached town garden site in the country). Parts of the Windmill site (in Radford) and the privately owned Bagthorpe gardens in Sherwood date from the mid 19th century. The majority of these old gardens have been built on, but many existing allotment sites date back to the 19th century. They form part of the popular heritage and culture of Nottingham.

The modern allotment emerged later in the 19th century, and it became the legal duty of local authorities to provide plots (initially for the 'labouring poor'). The 1922 Allotment Act defines an allotment garden as being 'wholly or mainly cultivated by the occupier for the production of vegetable or fruit crops for consumption by himself or his family'. On this basis, plots are rented out by the City Council to tenants for a small annual payment.

Nottingham City Council provides some 3,100 individual allotment plots. These are spread over more than 60 sites, ranging from the combined St Ann's allotments with 667 plots to some scattered individual plots which make up a site of their own. 20 sites are currently managed by allotment associations and other organisations, which have long term leases with the City Council. These tend to be on larger sites, and all together these 'association' or 'leasehold' sites make up over 70% of the allotments plots. The remaining plots are managed by the Allotment Service as 'direct let'. In addition to the sites provided by the City Council, there are a number of privately owned allotment sites, with approximately 300 plots.

While many of Nottingham's allotments date back to the 19th century, other smaller sites were created in the middle 20th century, with two new sites being set up in the last 10 years. This means that the sites tend to have very different characteristics - and so do the plot holders! While the stereotype of an allotment holder has in the past been 'old man in shed' many plots are now used by younger people, women, and families. The allotments have for many years also reflected the wide ethnic background of City residents.

The Allotment Service is the first point of contact for most people looking for an allotment, and it deals with tenancy agreements, repairs and maintenance for direct let sites. The Service works with the allotment associations by giving support and advice, organising the Allotment Forum and competitions for best site, as well as carrying out some repairs and improvements. The Allotment Service has a wide range of contact with other City Council departments where their work has an impact on allotments.

The Action Plan aims to address some of the key questions facing the Allotment Service:

- How many allotment plots should we provide? And where should they be?
 - How should we respond to the current high demand for plots—coming after decades of much lower demand?
 - How can we best look after our sites? What condition do we want them to be in, and who should look after them?
 - What are the options for getting the money and resources we need to look after and improve sites?
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- How can we make sure that allotments are used by as many people as possible, and that no one is put off or excluded?

Aim One

Provide enough allotments

In order to meet its obligations to provide allotments, and to maximise the benefits which allotments bring to City residents, Nottingham City Council will set an overall target for allotment provision, and then work to provide allotments to this standard.

1.1 Develop a provision standard

The statutory duty for local authorities to provide allotments was first introduced in the late 19th century, and later updated by the Small Holdings and Allotment Act 1908:

(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.

However, there is no legal definition of ‘sufficient’, and there has been extensive debate about this ever since. The City Council also has a duty to set out standards for the amount of open space it will provide – including allotments -

Under PPG17: Planning Policy Guidance issued by central government. This suggests that the provision standard for allotments should include three elements:

- Quantity: the overall number of plots required in Nottingham to meet the demand from residents
- Access: making sure that people only have to travel a reasonable distance to reach a plot
- Quality: the condition of the plot

Draft standards:

1 Quantity (number of plots): 2250

2 Access: all residents to have reasonable access to a plot

3 Quality: all sites to be of adequate standard – see 2.2 below

Development work on the Action Plan will look at these standards in more detail, and provide proposals on a site by site basis.

1.2 Retain and protect viable sites

Given the high demand for allotments and the need to provide plots, the vast majority of Nottingham's current allotments will be retained, protected, and improved. The best protection is of course for the sites to be fully tenanted and well used and this Action Plan as a whole will look to do this through promotion and by inspiring people to take up plots.

Other specific actions will include:

- Provision of long term leases for association run sites (see 3.2)
- Option to designate sites as 'Statutory' (see Development Aims)
- Protection of sites through the current Local Plan and the forthcoming Local Development Framework and other planning policies
- Working with private allotment sites to encourage their continued use, and maximise their benefits for City residents.

1.3 Create new sites

A number of areas in the City have very few—or no—allotment sites. The areas without allotments are often heavily built up, and while this makes it difficult to create new sites it's also a reason why these areas need allotments! Without new sites the City Council will struggle to meet the 'access' part of the provision standard. In neighbourhood terms, the following parts of the city have no or very few allotment plots: Hyson Green / Forest Fields, Lenton, Arboretum, The Meadows, Bestwood, Broxtowe, north Sherwood, Aspley, and the city centre.

Experience suggests that these new sites could be quite small [e.g. 30-50 plots] but they need to combine both security with good access. Options for creating new sites include:

- Identify new sites as part of the three Strategic Regeneration Framework (SRF) plans which are being developed across Nottingham, and which may include proposals for major redesign of some city estates
- Some existing allotment sites could be extended to provide additional plots, where there is demand and need.

- Allotment law has long allowed the creation of temporary sites, and if they have local support, these sites could provide good opportunities to meet current demand.
- In addition, the Growing Access to Public Land work strand will provide other opportunities for people to grow food.

1.4 Change the use of underused sites

A small – but significant – proportion of allotment plots and sites in Nottingham are currently unused, and often overgrown or derelict. Some plots and sites have a viable future and will be brought back into full use [see aim 2] but a number of sites are underused because of their location. Many of them are effectively ‘landlocked’ by neighbouring housing and have no or little access. The sites are expensive and difficult to maintain, can be a focus for fly tipping and other forms of anti-social behaviour, and provide little benefit in terms of allotment provision.

Underused sites could have a number of different future uses:

- Conversion to wildlife areas
- Sale of plots to neighbouring properties
- Change of use to new housing or other forms of development
- Maintenance as community garden or food growing area

The development stage of the Action Plan will consider options for each currently underused site, and consult with the local community, site neighbours, and other interested parties on the above options.

1.5 Increase tenancy levels within sites

Allotment law makes it the duty of NCC to provide a sufficient number of allotments for residents, but some plots are currently being used in ‘other’ ways: by non – city residents, by community groups or for nature conservation, or by people who already have one plot. These uses currently make up about 40% of NCC plots on viable sites. When demand for allotments was low it was often better to have them used in this way than be left vacant, but it does now prevent city residents having access to plots. Tenancy levels can be increased if vacant plots are no longer allocated in these ways. In addition, low levels of demand (and lack of allotment service resources) have seen some plots being poorly cultivated.

Plots in Nottingham are bigger than the national average (reflecting the history of detached town gardens) and new gardeners can struggle to maintain a large plot. Where suitable, plots can be divided to allow more people to move successfully to a site.

An increase in the tenancy levels within sites can be achieved by:

- Changing procedures for the allocation of vacant plots
- Improving site management to make sure plots are being cultivated.
- Dividing large plots into smaller ones.

Aim Two

Improve the quality and condition of sites

The quality of allotment and community garden sites is just as important as their quantity. Poor infrastructure and outdated facilities have a negative impact on gardeners using the sites and on the local neighbourhood. NCC will work with partners to improve the quality of allotment sites.

2.1 Draw up management and maintenance plans for all sites

At present, there is no comprehensive plan for how allotments in Nottingham should be run or looked after, what conditions they are in or their legal status, nor is there a co-ordinated plan for how they should be repaired or improved. While a lot of things get done by common sense and routine, many other things get missed out, and sometimes short term decisions or repairs can make it harder to sort long term problems later. Overall, some sites are in a very poor condition, others are too likely to need major repair in the near future, and many will not meet the standards and demands of the 21st century. The majority of NCC parks now have management and maintenance plans, and one has also been developed for the St Ann's Allotments Restoration Project.

For a plan to be successful there has to be discussion and agreement, so that everyone involved knows what to expect. Putting some part of the plan into action can be easy, but other parts – especially any expensive repair or improvement work can take longer. But having a plan in place is important, it means that the short term decisions don't get in the way of the long term (you don't repair the road first and then have to dig it up again to repair the water pipes underneath), and it means that when funding does become available it's quicker and easier to use it.

• Management and Maintenance Plans will be developed for all NCC sites, with the Allotment Service working closely with associations and direct let tenants. Some initial work will be carried out as part of the development of the Action Plan (to March 2010), and then completed by 2011.

· All Management & Maintenance Plans will be reviewed and updated annually.

2.2 Implement site improvements

The Management and Maintenance Plans for allotment sites will include an assessment of their current condition and identify needs for repair or improvement. For some sites this may be a matter of urgency, while others (especially recently established sites) may not need major works for some years.

This draft Action Plan cannot detail the repair and improvement works, but based on the recent experience the majority of sites are likely to need extensive works within the next 10 years. Aim four looks at the options for funding such work and the work of partnerships. Securing the funding and carrying out the works will be of one of the major challenges for this Action Plan, but it will put Nottingham's allotments on to a firm footing into the 21st century.

Development work on the Action Plan will identify an outline programme of works by March 2010.

In order to measure the condition of sites Nottingham City Council will set a series of standards for site condition. The basic standard will be 'adequate', which sets a level at which the plots can be considered fit for use and for rent. Standards will then rise, using Bronze, Silver, and Gold measures.

Adequate standard:

Appropriate security - Not contaminated (e.g. by asbestos, Japanese knotweed, toxins) - Not overgrown, or with excessive shade - Not subject to regular flooding - Accessible

Bronze, Silver and Gold standards will be drawn up as part of the development of the Action Plan.

2.3 Establish a high quality site maintenance system

At present, the majority of allotment sites in Nottingham are managed by allotment associations, and as part of their leasehold agreement the associations maintain the sites and carry out repairs – often with volunteers from the site. On some direct let sites the Allotment Service has maintenance contracts in place for hedge cutting and other annual works, and contractors are used to carry out ad hoc repairs and some improvements. Allotment tenants also play a role in maintaining many sites.

Maintenance of sites in recent years has not been adequate for a number of reasons: the low demand for sites and the number neglected plots; limited budgets and staff; absence of management & maintenance plans; uncertainty of responsibility.

A high quality maintenance system for allotments in Nottingham will be through a combination of approaches:

- Setting standards and specifications through the Management and Maintenance Plans
- Supporting allotment associations
- Carrying out contracted works on direct let sites, and having an in-house maintenance worker
- Clarifying roles and responsibilities (e.g. role of allotment association under lease agreements, shared boundaries with Nottingham City Homes)
- Developing volunteer, community, and training schemes which can contribute to site maintenance.

Aim Three

Support community management

Well run sites are essential: this is not only about the way in which a site is maintained and repaired, but also how it is managed and run and how plot holders are treated as tenants. Over 70% of allotment plots owned and provided by the City Council are on sites which are now managed by associations or other groups. The City has a long standing policy to encourage associations, and it will aim to give further support to deliver allotment provision in partnership.

3:1 Provide leasehold and management agreements

The majority of Nottingham's allotments are now run as 'leasehold' sites by allotment associations. NCC leases out the site out on a long term basis (usually 25 -30 years) and the association takes on responsibility for day to day management and maintenance of the sites. The association collects rents, which are then due for payment to NCC, but 75% of this is then repaid to the association.

NCC believes that the current agreement can be improved in ways which can bring benefits to the associations, plot holders and the allotment service as a whole. As part of the development of this

Action Plan a new model lease will be drafted, which will aim to improve the current one in a number of ways:

- Be easier to understand
- Identity responsibility for major repairs
- Link the lease to improved management of the sites
- Clarify the role of NCC on tenancy issues
- Work with associations as fully constituted organisations
- Bring greater support to the associations.

This new model lease will be offered to all existing associations (and to new lease hold sites), but the current leases will remain in force for associations which choose to keep them.

The allotment service will therefore provide leasehold and management agreements in three ways:

- Continuation of current leasehold agreements
- Introduction of new model lease
- Management agreements for direct let sites.

3:2 Support and encourage the management of sites by allotment associations

With 70% of NCC plots on sites being managed by associations this form of community management is now well established. However, managing an allotment site takes a great deal of time and experience which can put a heavy burden on voluntary committee members, and NCC continue to have obligations towards the sites under lease agreements. Support for allotment associations is therefore essential if the aims of the Action Plan are to be met and this support will take a number of forms:

- Making sure NCC carries out its obligations under the terms of the lease with associations.
- Consulting with associations on issues relating to allotments, via the allotment forum and contact with individual associations
- Providing information, training and advice on site management, funding and other issues.
- Giving support on tenancy issues on accordance with the terms of the lease.

3:3 Introduce new forms of partnership management for direct let sites

Leasehold agreements are not suitable for all sites. They work best when there is a strong allotment association, and this is also less common where sites are small or fragmented. These direct let sites can still benefit from some form of plot holder involvement (taking on some responsibility for site management or in partnership with local community organisations or NCC departments).

NCC will encourage community management on direct let sites by:

- Encouraging allotment associations to be set up and run on direct let sites
- Setting up agreements with associations or individual plot holders so that they can take some responsibility for site management.
- Developing links with local community organisations or other NCC departments. To encourage a form of ‘neighbourhood management’ especially on fragmented sites.
- Where appropriate, support associations in taking up a full lease agreement to manage their sites.

Aim Four

Secure resources

Although the allotment service is run by Nottingham City Council, a large amount of what happens to look after sites and plots is done on a voluntary basis or paid for by other people. On the most obvious level, it's the work of individual gardeners who look after their own plots which keeps the allotments going. In addition, work is carried out by the allotment associations and by community groups, or funded by other City Council departments or by grants. Partnership is one of the key themes of this Action Plan, and the role of partners in securing the resources needed to put the Action Plan into practice is looked at in this aim.

The diagram below shows the general areas of funding and resources which contribute to Nottingham's ‘allotment pie’.

This diversity is one of the strengths of allotments – partners are able to bring in a range of resources, often unavailable to the City Council.

4.1 Draw up detailed budget and financial plan

At this stage in the draft Action Plan it is not possible to give a detailed budget for the next 10 years – much of this depends on the work to be carried out in Aim One (provision of sites) and Aim Two (site conditions and improvement plans).

Development work on the Action Plan will provide an outline budget with an emphasis on expenditure, and look at likely sources of income.

Points below look at two key areas of income:

- Resources available to NCC
- Partnership resources

4.2 Maximise NCC resources

The resources available to the Allotment Service from within NCC are in three overall areas:

1. Rents received from allotment plots and sites
2. Revenue funding going direct to the Allotment Service each year
3. Additional funding from within NCC

Rental income

The rent income from allotment plots make up a small part of the overall income for the service, but it is a relatively stable amount from one year to the next. This income can obviously be maximised by achieving higher tenancy levels and few vacant plots - one of the overall aims of this Action Plan. There is no legal obligation for allotments to 'pay their way', and a relatively low rent level is important to make sure disadvantaged sections of the community are not prevented from taking up plots, but rent levels have not changed for a number of years and there is no system in place to decide on how the level is set. .

- The development stage of the Action Plan will include a review of the rents for direct let plots, and proposals for future rent levels
- At present the rents for leasehold sites are linked to the levels for direct let, and this will continue.

Revenue funding

Annual revenue funding going direct to the Allotment Service covers the cost of Allotment Officers, other staff and office overheads, and the repair and maintenance budgets. There has been a significant increase in this funding in 2008-2010, and this draft Action Plan assumes this will remain stable for the period 2010-2013 (the first three years of implementation).

Additional funding

In 2008-2010 Nottingham City Council has provided £320k for capital improvement works for allotment sites, in addition to the annual revenue budget for repairs and maintenance. Further funding for allotment sites has come from the Area Committees. These are important sources of income in their own right, and can also play an important role in securing match funding from other funding bodies.

The Allotment Service will continue to take the lead on identifying the need for resources, as part of the overall Food Growing Framework. Potential sources of funding are likely to be:

- ‘Section 106’ money (from developers setting up large building projects)
- Funding related to the Single Regeneration Frameworks
- Central government grants or regeneration programmes (some of which may be announced in the lifespan of this Action Plan)
- Contributions from Area Committees
- Possible sale of some allotment plots

These funds will be used to maximise additional funding available through partners – see the following.

4.3 Work in partnership and secure additional resources

Funding for allotment improvements and activities may be available from charities or other grant giving organisations like the National Lottery. Nottingham City Council can apply for some of this funding directly, but many charities etc will not fund local authorities. In these cases the Allotment Service can support applications by allotment associations which are eligible, and in some cases use NCC resources (see above) as match funding.

‘Resources’ doesn’t only mean money coming in directly: it can be voluntary work, or the work time of other organisations. Allotments can play an important role in encouraging community and other organisations to get involved with their neighbourhood – perhaps by clearing overgrown plots, providing materials or giving professional or technical advice. More formal partnerships can be established with bigger organisations where there is a common interest e.g. with NCH or other social landlords to maintain the boundaries to a site.

- Secure grant funding through direct applications and by supporting applications from allotment associations and community groups.
- Secure resources through partnerships

Aim Five

Promote and celebrate allotment gardening

People are at the core of allotments. For nearly two hundred years thousands of individual gardeners have tended plots and cared for Nottingham's allotments. Maintaining this tradition—keeping it alive in the future—is essential. This aim looks at ways to encourage, support, and celebrate allotment use in the city.

5.1 Publicise and encourage take up

The high demand for plots means that the Allotment Service is currently undertaking very little work to publicise plots. This situation may change – and some sites may need promoting in their local area. There is also a danger that the people who contact the Allotment Service at present are already ‘in the know’. A broader plan to market allotments can make sure that everyone gets a fair chance to take on a plot, and that sites don't become underused in the future.

- Publicise and encourage the take up of allotments to make sure plots are in use and available to all sections of the community.

Allotments tend to be one of the hidden treasures of Nottingham: they mean a lot to the people who use them but are something of a secret to everyone else. While many plot holders see their own plots as a place for peace and quiet, there are plenty of opportunities to use the media (newspapers, TV and radio etc) to give allotments a positive image and celebrate the work of plot holders.

- Ensure positive media coverage for allotments

5.2 Operate an effective waiting list and letting system

Once people know about allotments, they need to be able to find out if plots are available, and be offered a plot if one is vacant. This has traditionally been one of the major roles of the Allotment Service, but this is changing as more sites are managed by associations and other forms of community management. The key elements of a city-wide take up and letting system will be:

- An easy way for potential plot holders to contact the Allotment Service or associations

- More detailed information to let potential plot holders know more about taking on and looking after a plot
- A system for recording vacant plots, so that people can be told if some are available or how long they may have to wait
- Waiting list to record interest – and the areas where people want a plot
- Process to allocate plots and issue tenancy agreements

5.3 Celebrate, research, and archive, allotment use in Nottingham

Nottingham has long history of allotment gardening, a history which shows both continuity (in the long use of sites) and change (how plots are used, the changes in communities). This history generally went unrecorded, perhaps because it seemed so everyday, but a range of people and organisations have begun to recognise the importance of researching and archiving this material before more is lost (including – for example – work on the heritage site of St Ann’s allotments).

- Work with partners to research, and create an archive of, material about the history and heritage of allotments in Nottingham, and use this to celebrate and recognise this history.

People use allotments in different ways – to grow prize vegetables, to keep chickens, or have somewhere for their children to play. This diversity can also reflect the background of the plot holders e.g. with gardeners from the Caribbean bringing plants like kalliloo to the city. While there are often good informal links between gardeners, there is little wider recognition of this aspect of gardening.

- Work with partners to organise activities which celebrate and strengthen the diverse cultural heritage of gardeners.

For many years, there have been arrange of competitions connected to allotments in the city. The Allotment Service has organised Allotment Site Competitions to judge the overall condition of sites, and also best individual plot. Associations and other groups have run produce competitions and exhibitions. All these events help to celebrate allotment gardening, and encourage the improvement of sites and plots, and they can also work as part of the wider Food Growing Framework to inspire people to grow food in the city.

- Work with partners to organise a range of allotment and produce competitions and events to celebrate and promote food growing.

Aim Six

Deliver a high quality Allotment Service

This final Aim digs deep to look at the things which need to be in place to make everything else happen: how this Action Plan will be developed and used, the legal framework, and the Allotment Service itself.

6:1 Work within a strong legal framework

By and large, allotment gardening is a healthy and pleasurable activity and on a day to day level the continued success of allotments in Nottingham is based on co operation, good will, hard work and common sense. There are times however, when this has to be backed up by written agreements and legal procedures.

A key document is the NCC tenancy agreement which is issued to the direct let tenants, giving them the right to use their plot. It also sets out the legal dos and don'ts on how the plot can be used. The current tenancy agreement is difficult to understand and in many ways out of date. It also doesn't relate to the use of plots by community groups.

As part of the development stage of the Action Plan, the tenancy agreement for direct let plots will be revised, along with the policies and procedures the allotment service uses – for example – allocating plots or dealing with transfer requests. While the current lease agreements with associations don't require them to use all NCC tenancy, the allotment service will encourage them to use the revised version (and the policies and procedures.)

The allotment service has a range of other responsibilities which it has to meet, including: removal of hazardous waste, wildlife and animal welfare, public safety and obligations to neighbouring property holders or other NCC Departments. The development stage of the Action Plan will also review these obligations:

- Introduce and implement a revised NCC tenancy agreement for direct let plots
- Manage direct let tenancies within clear policies and procedures.
- Encourage allotment associations to work within the same – or similar – tenancy agreements policies and procedures
- Manage allotments in Nottingham so that the service meets its full range of legal obligations.

6:2 Provide excellent customer service

The 'customers' of the allotment service are varied. They include: residents who want a plot or have a concern about a plot near their home, plot holders and allotment associations, other NCC departments. and elected councillors, partnership organisations waiting to deliver the FGF, and local and national organisations interested in allotments as a whole. To a large extent, 'excellent customer service' will be provided by the allotment service as it works on the actions in this Action Plan by doing the job the customers expect. But other specific actions will be put in place:

- Put in place and keep up to date systems for record keeping, billing, and other administration and financial management tasks.
- Allocate staff time to respond to day to day enquiries (within corporate guidelines)

6:3 Monitor review and update the Allotment Action Plan

The allotment Action Plan is designed to be a practical document - not something that is put on a shelf and forgotten about – and plot holders and residents want to see practical results and benefits, putting it into action, checking its working and keeping it up to date will be a key challenge involving not only the allotment service but also plot holders and associations, partners in the FGF and a range of City Council departments.. This will be done in a number of ways:

- As part of the development work, establishing an ‘allotment Action Plan working group’ to bring together key organisations that will be responsible for delivering the Strategy and the allotment main stream of the FGF.
- Incorporate the proposals in the allotment Action Plan into other NCC policies and strategies, particularly those which effect allotment provision and use.
- Co-ordinate with other local authorities to make sure that NCC policies are consistent with the best national examples.
- Monitor the work of the Action Plan on an annual basis to identify achievements and issues for improvement.
- Undertake a full review and – if necessary - revision of the Action Plan after three years (by April 2013)

Development of the Action Plan

A number of issues looked at in this draft Action Plan need further development before completion – by March 2010.

- 1.1 Provision standards
- 1.2 Option to designate sites as ‘Statutory’
- 1.4 Consultation on use of underused sites
- 2.1 Outline programme of site improvements
- 2.2 Define quality standards
- 3.1 Draw up a new model lease
- 4.1 Prepare outline budget and financial plan
- 4.2 Proposal for rent levels
- 6.1 Revise tenancy agreement
- 6.1 Policy and procedures for service delivery
- 6.1 Review

The majority of allotment sites in Nottingham are well used and successful, and the high demand for plots will mean that most of the currently vacant plots can be brought into use. However, some sites are very hard to let, and are currently in poor condition. These sites are identified in the site proposal tables, and alternative uses are outlined, but the support of local neighbourhoods is essential for this to be successful.

3 Year targets (to March 2013)

1. Identify locations for up to four new allotment sites
2. Change the use of currently underused sites
3. Increase by 25% the number of City residents with an allotment
4. All sites to be of Adequate standard
5. Management & Maintenance Plans to be in place for all sites
6. Improvement in customer satisfaction with the Allotment Service (measured by survey from 2010 base line)
7. Introduction of new tenancy agreement for direct let sites
8. Annual monitoring of the Action Plan, with 3 year review
9. All sites of over 20 plots to have lease or management agreement in place
10. Reduce average waiting time to 1 year

Targets to be confirmed following the development stage of the Action Plan:

1. Sites to be given Statutory status

2. Increase in income from plot rental
3. Overall improvement in site quality
4. Additional resources secured for site improvements
5. Five sites operating under the new model lease