

TAKE FIVE

Your guide to letting
land for allotments in
five steps



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Your guide to letting land for allotments

1. Why should I consider letting out land for allotments?

Interest in allotments has soared over the past two years, driven by the pandemic and a renewed appreciation of locally-sourced food. In August 2020 the National Allotment Society reported increases of up to 300% in applications to join council waiting lists.

As councils struggle to meet demand, private landowners may consider diversifying into allotments as a way to generate income from land while providing a community benefit. In some cases, landowners may be able to earn more money from renting the land than they can from farming it.

2. How can I get started?

Firstly, take advice on whether you need planning permission to convert land into allotments. If it's agricultural land - that is, land used for horticulture, fruit growing, seed growing or the keeping of livestock - you should not need to get planning permission. However, permission may be required if any building operations, such as the construction of sheds, polytunnels or fences above a certain height, are to take place on the land.

Make sure the land is accessible, clear of debris and contamination and has good, nutritious soil. Divide the land into plots - the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners recommends that an acre of land can house up to 15 standard sized plots, with room for vehicle access and footpaths.

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3. How can I attract tenants?

Most people who are looking for allotments will be in touch with their local authority and may be on long waiting lists. If your local council has an allotment officer, you could ask them to let those who are waiting know that there is an available alternative. There are plenty of other ways to spread the word about your site - including local gardening clubs, local interest groups on social media sites such as Facebook, community noticeboards, local libraries and good old-fashioned leaflet drops!

4. What legal agreements do I need?

Once you have found people who want to take allotments, you will want to get an allotment letting agreement in place - this is a form of tenancy agreement and should be drawn up by a lawyer. This legally binding document should cover everything from the amount of rent paid, permissible uses for the plot, and the rights and responsibilities of the tenant. This will probably include conditions for use, such as an obligation to keep the plot tidy and not use it for commercial benefit.

Allotments are usually leased for a year at a time. The Allotments Act 1950 states that landlords must give 12 months' notice of termination to a tenant - although this is reduced to one month if the allotment holder has breached any conditions of their tenancy agreement.

5. Where can I find out more?

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners, also known as The National Allotment Society, has a wealth of resources for would-be allotment holders and private landowners. Visit [here](#) to find out more and download resources including health and safety policies, funding advice, and a [guide](#) to creating new allotment sites.



Would you like to know more?

Please contact one of our expert lawyers in this sector:

[Jonathan Thompson](#)