Dear allotment tenant

I am writing to you to update you on a few matters regarding allotments and the coronavirus pandemic

The government is presently advising the population to stay at home and practice social distancing, whilst being allowed to take one form of exercise a day. If working your allotment is to continue being seen as legitimate exercise then it is imperative that plot-holders follow all the guidelines. Allotment sites are as risky as anywhere else. Please take heed  of the following advice and  guidelines:

·         Any plot-holder who is **[self isolating](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/covid-19-stay-at-home-guidance/stay-at-home-guidance-for-households-with-possible-coronavirus-covid-19-infection)**, because a household member is ill with corona-virus, should not be visiting the site.

·         Keep hand sanitiser in your shed and wash your hands regularly

·         Use hand sanitiser before opening and after closing any gate locks

·         Wash hands when you get home

·         DO NOT gather together for a chat even if you are 2 metres apart. Allotment visits are for the purpose of exercise and cultivation and NOT socialising.

·         Observe “Social Distancing” with each other, 2-3 metres apart, particularly when using water troughs and taps

·         We discourage you from taking your children to your plot. If your children are present with you at the allotment then they must be kept within the confines of your plot and not run around on communal paths and spaces.

·         Do not share tools

·         Minimise the contact with each other, for example, no handshakes

·         Do not wash your hands in water troughs

Bonfires:

In this time of lockdown, I ask that you do not light bonfires as the allotment rules prohibits them between 1st April and 30 September for the purpose of preserving the air quality for all . A large proportion of the working population is at home, and some of those people live close to allotment sites. Bonfires increase the risk to those with respiratory illness, which,  in turn, puts a further strain on the NHS. Lighting bonfires also makes visiting the allotment site an unpleasant experience for fellow allotment holders, as well as residents.  Please adhere to the rules.

Plot Inspections:

The Council normally commences plot inspections, at this time of the year, to check for cultivation levels. Parks- and the Council as a whole- face resource challenges as a result of reduced staffing levels due to the coronavirus pandemic. Parks is providing only core services, and those services that are deemed essential, at this time. We accept that some tenants will be unable to cultivate their plots, due to illness, self isolation, or altered family and work dynamics. As circumstances are exceptional, it has been decided to suspend plot inspections for the time being and until further notice.

Stay well and safe cultivating -

Gerard Parry

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