

For Council: 16 December 2024 ENCLOSURE 1

LICHFIELD & DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

Affiliated to The Royal Horticultural Society No. 19554358

Mr T Briggs (Parish Council Clerk)
Lichfield City Council
Donegal House
Bore Street
Lichfield
WS13 6LU

October 2024

Dear Tony,

Lichfield & District Allotments Society – Allotment Provision

At the September meeting of the Lichfield and District Allotments Society (LDAS) the committee discussed the current waiting list. It was agreed that the Society would formally approach Lichfield City Council to ask for additional allotment provision. Section 23(1) of *The Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908* provides that if allotment authorities 'are of the opinion that there is a demand for allotments...in the borough, district or parish the council shall provide a sufficient number of allotments to persons...resident in the borough district or parish and desiring the same.' Under Section 23(2), in determining demand an authority must take into consideration 'a representation in writing by any six registered parliamentary electors or rate payers.'¹

To summarise the current position:

- There is significant demand for allotments in Lichfield. The LDAS waiting list has consistently stood at about 120-130 for the last two years. Despite turnover across all sites, demand continues to outstrip supply. A background note is at **Annex A**.
- As you know, following discussion with Lichfield District Council (LDC), in March 2024 we had a preliminary discussion with Persimmon about the proposed Cricket Lane development, and we commented on the allotment proposals for the site. We have been unable to obtain any clarification on the timescales for the development, however, any additional allotment capacity from it seems to be several years away. In the meantime, it seems likely that demand for allotments in Lichfield will continue to grow.

¹ <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Edw7/8/36/section/23>

LICHFIELD & DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

Affiliated to The Royal Horticultural Society No. 19554358

We therefore consider that we need to take formal steps to secure additional allotment land, and the resources to cover the necessary supporting infrastructure. Our aspiration is for the new allotments to be available within 12-18 months.

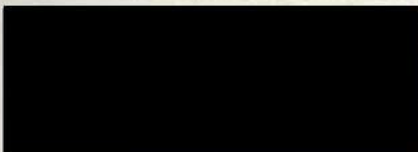
Reasonable provision to address this demand would be an area of land sufficient to contain at least 25 full plots (150 sq m)/ 50 half plots (75 sq m). A functioning allotment will also require space for path(s), parking, sheds, skips, deliveries and water troughs and potential communal areas. The actual area required for an allotment will depend on the shape and characteristics of the potential sites, for example, a site located in a residential area may require tree/ hedge planting, which would need to be taken into account in the overall requirement. Our assessment is that the overall requirement is likely to be Ca. 3 acres.

Lichfield City Council are responsible for our current allotments. For reasons of history, LDAS has traditionally served residents drawn from the Lichfield district, although city residents represent the majority of the existing members and of those on the waiting list. We do not currently believe that it would be helpful or politic to restrict LDAS allotments to those who are resident within the boundaries of Lichfield City Council, or that it would contribute significantly to solving the problem. I appreciate that you may wish to discuss the matter further with LDC.

In conclusion, I am writing now, enclosing a petition (**Annex B**) to respectfully request Lichfield City Council to consider our request for further allotments.

Thank you for your assistance,

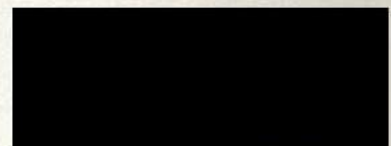
With best Regards,



David Ramsbottom
Acting Chair



Martin Cornish
Treasurer



Elizabeth Bowsher
Secretary

LICHFIELD & DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

Affiliated to The Royal Horticultural Society No. 19554358

Annex A

LICHFIELD DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY: NEW ALLOTMENTS PROJECT

SUMMARY

Lichfield and District Allotments Society

Lichfield City Council own and lease five allotments to the Lichfield and District Allotments Society (LDAS): Beacon Street, Cherry Orchard, Christchurch, The Moggs and Netherstowe. LDAS let out individual plots and manage the allotments.

Collectively the sites contain 162 full size plots and there are currently about 250 members. Many plots are subdivided into half or quarter plots, optimising the use of the allotments as a whole. Current rental is £50 pa for a full plot (apportioned for subdivided plots). Tenant turnover is variable – the longest standing tenants joined in 1987; some tenants remain less than a season.

Waiting List

Plots are allocated to tenants from the waiting list. As plots become vacant they are offered to those who have waited longest. The waiting list is maintained on an ongoing basis, taking account of additions and removals to fill vacancies. It was 40 in January 2020, 90 in January 2021, 119 in January 2022 and 136 in November 2023. The current waiting list stood at 131 in September 2024.

The 'main' waiting list is 'pooled' for all sites, that is, waiters from the top of the list are offered a plot at sites as plots become available. Applicants may express a preference for a particular site and, where possible, we try to accommodate preferences. People at the top of the list currently wait for upwards of 18 months for an allotment. Average turnover over the past four years is about 32 tenants a year, implying it could take more than four years to clear the current waiting list.

LICHFIELD & DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

Affiliated to The Royal Horticultural Society No. 19554358

Site Management

We have several measures in place to manage sites efficiently which contributes to managing allotment demand:

- Plot management: We keep our 'plot management' documentation under review to ensure that LDAS's expectations about expected cultivation standards are explicit and so that we can act promptly when individual tenants do not maintain their plots to the required standard, ultimately leading to eviction.
- Subdividing plots: when possible, we subdivide full size plots to create half and quarter plots, creating more allotment availability.
- Waiting list review: The waiting list is reviewed periodically to make sure that all those waiting still want a plot.

New Allotments Project

LDAS would like to work with both LCC and LDC to create more allotment provision in Lichfield. Analysis of the current waiting list suggests that applicants are drawn from across the Lichfield district, not any particular area and the current waiting list pooling system suggests that the location of any new site is a lower order priority. In addition to land, new allotments would require an infrastructure (gates, paths etc) – this has a cost and would form part of discussions.

LICHFIELD DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

October 2024

LICHFIELD & DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

Affiliated to The Royal Horticultural Society No. 19554358

Annex B

To: Tony Briggs, Town Clerk, Lichfield City Council

Petition from Lichfield & District Allotments Society for Additional Allotments

Section 23 of *The Small Holdings and Allotments Act 1908* provides that if allotment authorities 'are of the opinion that there is a demand for allotments... in the borough, district or parish the council shall provide a sufficient number of allotments to persons...resident in the borough district or parish and desiring the same.'

Section 23 (2) states that in determining demand an authority must take into consideration 'a representation in writing by any six registered parliamentary electors or rate payers'

We the undersigned, hereby make our representation to Lichfield City Council to consider our application for additional allotments to be provided in a timely manner.

Name	Address	Signature
------	---------	-----------