



PRESS RELEASE

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NEWBURY TOWN COUNCIL - ALLOTMENT RENTS

Unfortunately, there has been a lot of misinformation circulated in the media about allotment rents in Newbury.

The overall allotment service provided in Newbury is of very high standard. As well as the basic provision of land, the allotment service includes provision of water, security, maintenance of shared areas, pest control, parking, and occasional skips for excess rubbish. The level of thought and care that goes into the allotment service by the stewards, the services team and the community services committee is significant and more than by most other providers. Our commitment to allotment provision is plain to see.

The cost of providing allotments consists of around £22,000 in direct costs and around £40,000 in indirect staff costs. The total revenue from allotment rents is around £12,500. The difference is made up by all the residents of Newbury contributing through the precept part of their Council Tax. i.e. Newbury residents subsidise around 80% of the allotment costs.

To be fair to all residents of Newbury, allotment rents have been increased to reduce the subsidy and move towards at least covering the direct costs incurred. The new rent level of £6.94 per pole, which we believe to be at a reasonable level for the service supplied, will provide £17,500 revenue, reducing the subsidy provided by Newbury residents by £5,000. We are always looking at ways of being more efficient in provision of services, which will also help reduce the subsidy in the long run. We are also continuing our search for additional sites, which may help increase the net revenue and certainly reduce waiting lists.

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The average allotment plot size is 4.7 poles, so the average increase in rent per year is £10.50, or around 20p per week. For each plot holder the impact will be slightly different.

Cllr Ifor Sheldon, Leader of Newbury Town Council said “It is disappointing that a minority of our allotment tenants cannot stand back and recognise the true and fair value of the service provided to them, and the support they receive from the whole of Newbury. The average tenant pays around 63p per week for their allotment. We hope that understanding will eventually set in, so that we can all work together to keep improving the allotment service”.

END

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