



Social **Farms**
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Ffermydd a Gerddi
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Allotment FAQs
Advice for growers
and land-seekers
in Wales

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Allotment FAQs

If you are a grower looking for an allotment plot or a landowner seeking to make land available for growing, our Frequently Asked Questions are a good place to start.

What is an Allotment Plot?

- Each allotment plot is for the benefit of 1 or 2 individuals / a family. They are not a community growing project, although a community growing project could count as 1 plot.
- Allotment plots were traditionally 250m², but more commonly plots are ½ sized (120m²), ¼ sized (60m²). Micro-plots are also widely recognised now, as being anything from 3m² (approx. 8ft x 4ft) to 8m² and can grow a surplus for 1 person if used well. See below for size definitions.

We want to develop community growing opportunities – how do allotments relate to this?

- Allotments for individuals are a way for people currently participating in communal growing projects to ‘progress’ once they have developed their skills and knowledge in growing. A plot is an opportunity to have a small piece of land and be motivated by growing veg. This isn’t necessarily at the detriment of work on a communal plot but an addition to it.

- One model for allotments that could be developed is several micro allotment plots, as part of a wider community growing site. Funding is currently available through [Keep Wales Tidy Local Places for Nature](#) for the development of food growing spaces for the community. This support could be used to develop a community element, with a number of small micro-allotment plots also on the site. Micro-allotments can be used to generate a sustainable income for the group. Charging £10 a year rent will generate enough income to buy seeds or a few new tools for the following year.
- Allotment plots, particularly micro-plots, allow individuals and families to have autonomy over their own growing space, whilst mixing with other allotment plot holders. Most allotment plots have communal facilities, equipment, gatherings and informal and formal peer support, and so still provide a community growing opportunity.
- Surplus allotment produce could go to food surplus projects, local veg box, community freezer or fridge schemes. Growing numbers of cafes and restaurants wishing to source local produce – all distinctly assisting the local food supply chain and community delivery.

I'm a land-owner – what about the liability of running allotments?

- There are great opportunities in the development of new allotment plots:
 - To help Wales satisfy the huge demand for outdoors and growing space
 - To deliver against and demonstrate your contribution to the Wellbeing of Future Generations Act
 - To deliver your own and the nation's zero-carbon objectives, post Covid, green recovery agendas
 - Devolved, community-run allotment management committees running a number of sites can offer:
 - Job outcomes, employability, training opportunities
 - Social and environmental benefits (meeting water quality and manure store regulations, tackling loneliness, flooding and drought, potential to improve soil quality)
 - Supporting your work to increase the provision of local food
 - Building more resilient and cohesive local communities

- Assist with forthcoming subsidy changes – ‘payments for public benefit’
- SF&G can support the development of a site-wide lease agreement for a community group/CIC, who would then manage the site and hold the public liability and risk assessments necessary to run the site safely
- A ground rent could be paid to the landowner from the managing community enterprise

Can land-bank be used for allotments?

- Absolutely! Sites ideally need a minimum of 10 years land lease agreement if they are to gain any grant funding for the development of the site, but historically many Local Authority allotment sites have been situated on future burial grounds (set aside until needed), so the sites do not need to be forever

Does the site need planning permission? / What does the site need?

- Growing of food at any scale is an agricultural use of land, so a change of use planning application is not normally needed.
- Small sheds and greenhouses have permitted development rights now in Wales, so this also makes things easier. Some sites provide communal tool storage to keep sites looking tidier.
- Space for communal composting of green-waste and water storage/ mains water are also ideally needed.
- SF&GC can offer support and advice on a case-by-case basis with a in-house chartered town planner in our Wales team.
- Further [guidance on planning permissions](#) needed for food growing uses of land is available via our Community Land Advisory Service.

Definition of Allotment Plot sizes:

- Allotment plots for individuals based on a plot being ½ a traditional allotment plot size or 120m² approx
- Allotment plots for individuals based on a plot being ¼ a traditional allotment plot size or 60m² approx
- Micro-allotment plots of individuals (based on a plot being 8m² or greater)
- Shared allotment plots for community groups & other creative solutions

More information

This resource has been produced as part of The National Allotment Development Team in Wales. The National Allotment Development Team is one of six areas of work within the Resilient Green Spaces project.

Resilient Green Spaces is a groundbreaking partnership between Social Farms & Gardens, Cardiff University Sustainable Places Research Institute, Development Trusts Association Wales, Gwynedd Council, The LandWorker's Alliance, Lantra, Open Food Network, and Shared Assets. It has received funding through the Welsh Government Rural Communities – Rural Development Programme 2014-2020, which is funded by the [European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development](#) and the Welsh Government.

For more information on Social Farms & Gardens or the National Allotment Development Team Wales please contact wales@farmgarden.org.uk

For more on Resilient Green Spaces and to stay updated on the project, see our website <https://www.farmgarden.org.uk/resilient-green-spaces>

