

Allotment report – 1st February 2026

a. Plot rental payments

There are four people who appear to have not yet paid their rent:

Plot 10, Plot 22, Plot 28, and Plot 43. I am working with the Parish Clerks to chase up these outstanding payments.

b. Waiting list.

We only have one person on our waiting list who is from Offord Darcy.

c. Plot allocation update

We have three full plots available.

Plot 23 (the old Community Plot), plot 25 and plot 26.

d. Plot condition

The plots are dormant now with very little growing. The recent constant wet weather has left the plots soggy and difficult to work. However, with the snow drops and daffodils out spring is on its way. We expect to see more activity at the plots as they prepare the beds for planting out in the spring.

e. Plot inspections.

The last plot inspection was on the 11th October 2025. We do not do plot inspections over the winter as the plots lay dormant with very little activity.

The last inspection identified three plots where attention was required. These were Plot 12, Plot 18 and Plot 26. Requests to attend their plots were sent.

Plot 12, which had been a continuous problem over the last 18 months and had received numerous requests to attend their plot, were sent a notice to quit and have subsequently left the allotments.

Plot 18, which has also been a continuous problem and has also received numerous requests to attend their plot, responded with a commitment to return the plot to good order in 2026. We will closely monitor progress and, if nothing changes, they will also receive a notice to quit.

Plot 26 responded to our request and, due to a change in their personal circumstances, decided to vacate.

We are restarting Plot Inspections, and the next one will be conducted on the 2nd March 2026. We will be following a “three strikes” policy. This means that if a plot holder receives three consecutive requests to attend their plot and no improvement is made we will then request the Parish Council send the plot holder a “Notice to Quit” giving them 4 weeks to remove their belongings and return the plot to the condition that they took it on. If they fail to do this we will retain their deposit and use it to pay for the plot to be cleared and put back in good order.

f. 2025 / 2026 Budget Planning

Outside of the normal running costs being;

- 1 Pest Control Contractor
- 2 General Maintenance & Repairs
- 3 National Allotment Association membership
- 4 Prize Money - Best Kept Allotment
- 5 Support for clearing vacated plots.
- 6 Community plot
- 7 Savills Rent

We have no requirements to fund any project for 2026.

g. Previous project update.

Below is an update on the success of the previous projects.

- The Polytunnel.

This has been a major success, so much so that space was limited during the seed growing period. Many plot holders have taken advantage of it, and we have received several positive

comments. This has given those who don't have space to grow seeds at home somewhere where that can grow seeds.

- Allotment boundaries.

The chain link fence along the Silverstreet side and across the front of the allotments remain in good order. A hedge has been planted along the front chain link fence and is growing well. As part of the monthly inspections, we will include a review of the Silver Street fence to ensure plot holders are not restricting access to it and are keeping it clear.

We will need to address the boundary along the field side at some point as the hedgerow needs attention. We will work with the Buckden Tree Warden to return it to good order by removing any dead wood and allowing new shoots to grow.

The wild fence at the A1 end has been a great success. At no cost, other than a few days hard work working with the Buckden Tree Warden we have managed to create an impenetrable barrier which will stop anyone from accessing the plots from the footpath along the A1. This will continue to improve as the brambles thicken and enhance the barrier.

- Buckden Orchard.

The small orchard, which was planted last year has taken well. There are now 8 young fruit trees in the orchard which will start producing fruit over the next few years. This has been such a success that we have decided to extend it and are going to plant more fruit and nut trees into the neighbouring plot which is now vacant. Our intention is to create an orchard with wildflowers growing underneath the trees. This will encourage more insects and propagators into the allotments at a time when their natural habitats are diminishing. We will also look to introduce some bug hotels into the area so that they can hibernate over winter.

- Free soil improver.

We have received several free-soil improver deliveries from Huntingdon District Council which have been well received, so much so that you need to be quick and collect some if you want some for your plot, it goes within a week or two!

We will continue to work with Huntingdon District Council and request further deliveries during the spring in 2026.

h. 2026 Project Plan.

We are still focussed on providing a facility at the front of the allotments to provide disability access allowing people with restrictions to enjoy growing produce and enjoying the social engagement with fellow plot holders.

We have already built 5 raised beds behind the polytunnel that allows people with restricted mobility to attend them. All the materials used has been recycled from those leaving the allotments or donated by fellow plot holders.

The next step in the project is to lay paving slabs around the area to make it more wheelchair friendly. We already have the slabs which we have recycled of have been donated.

We hope to have this area up and running by April ready for the start of the growing season.