

Our Land

The Newcastle Allotment Strategy

2010 – 2015



Newcastle
City Council



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The Newcastle Allotment Strategy 2010-2015

This strategy was written on behalf of:

Newcastle City Council

and

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group

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Front cover: George Taylor's prize-winning plot with glass, City Allotment and Garden Show 2009.

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Introduction

There are approximately 2700 allotment plots in Newcastle on 74 sites. The land ownership is mixed with 62 of the sites owned and managed by the City Council, the Freeman of the City co-managing some sites, a small number of sites owned by the Duke of Northumberland and a few private sites.

Newcastle City Council operates a devolved management system on its allotments. The entire site is let to an allotment association who divide the land into plots, maintain waiting lists, collect rent and carry out day to day management.

The allotment associations have their own organisation, the Allotment Working Group (AWG). This is an independent organisation which elects representatives from allotment associations. It advises the City Council on how the allotments in the City are managed and where the allotment budget should be spent.

This strategy has been compiled in response to the significant increase in demand for allotment plots in Newcastle upon Tyne in recent years. The devolved management of allotment sites and the formation of the Allotment Working Group have led to a strong partnership between allotment gardeners and the City Council.

The Allotment Working Group has been the driving force behind the development of this allotment strategy and they will be the guiding body in its implementation. With the City Council's backing for the principles and targets of the strategy the Working Group will be able to implement better use of the current stock of allotments, feel more confident that existing sites are secure and when suitable land is identified, that they will have the backing of officers and members for the creation of new sites

Our Vision Statement

Our vision is the establishment in Newcastle upon Tyne of the adequate availability of easily accessible allotments with high quality amenities; in pursuance of excellence in the production and showing of vegetables, fruit and flowers via allotment gardening and driven by the current pioneering system of devolved management.

We support the allotment tradition of innovative individualism, but in conjunction with the provision of a socially inclusive sense of community and the facilitation of community projects. We believe that allotment gardening should be environmentally concerned, sustainable and wild-life friendly.

The Strategy Objectives

In order to achieve this vision, the Allotment Strategy has the following objectives:

- To recognise the multiple benefits of allotments for Newcastle residents, and for the City as a whole in terms of its future development guided by the Sustainable Community Strategy, the Sustainable Cities Index and its WHO status as a Healthy City.
- To safeguard existing and to increase future allotment provision in Newcastle in line with known demand and with regard to future demand.
- To continue to improve the quality of allotment facilities for allotment holders in Newcastle and to continue to improve the quality of Newcastle's innovative devolved allotment management.
- To recognise and promote the importance of allotments in environmental protection and sustainability, especially in relation to future threats of high food cost, fuel scarcity and climate change.
- To recognise the importance of biodiversity and to augment the role of allotments in preserving and enhancing biodiversity.

Section One

The Strategy: Principles and Targets

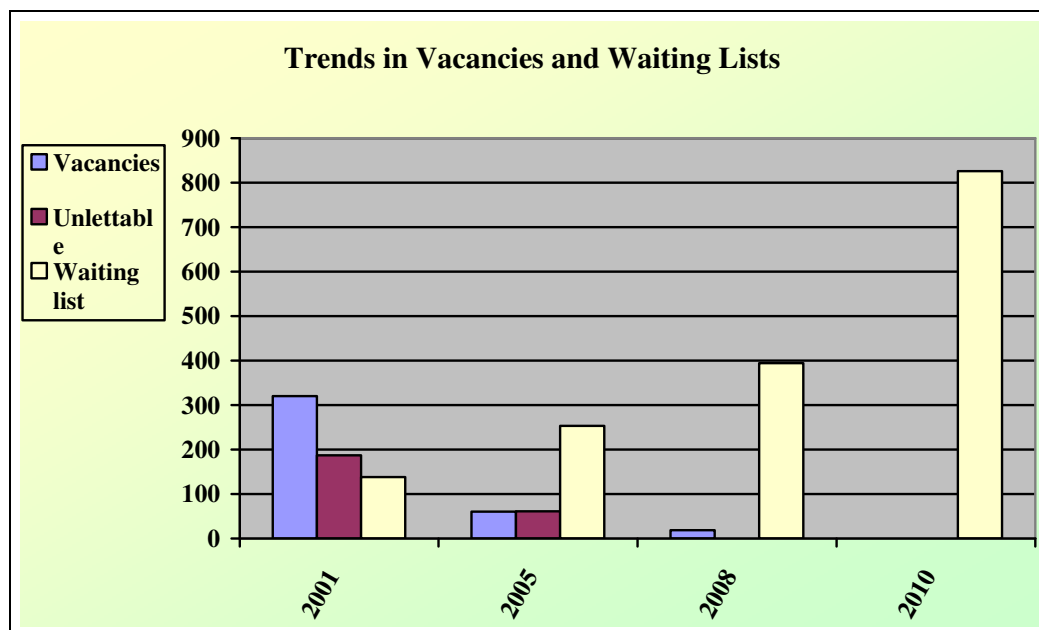
This section takes into account the information collated in sections two to five of the background information document to shape the optimal future direction for Newcastle's allotments in order to move towards realising our vision.

1.1 The Value of Allotments; the Demand for Allotments and their Availability

We show in Section Two that allotments have high value in terms of the physical and mental wellbeing of individual allotment gardeners of all ages and for the social health of their local communities. We also show in Section Five that allotments fulfil many of the multiple requirements of the Sustainable Community Strategy (5.7) that is to shape Newcastle's future development and that the adequate supply of allotments is integral to Newcastle's wider aspirations to be seen nationally and internationally as a Sustainable City (5.5) and as a Healthy City (5.6).

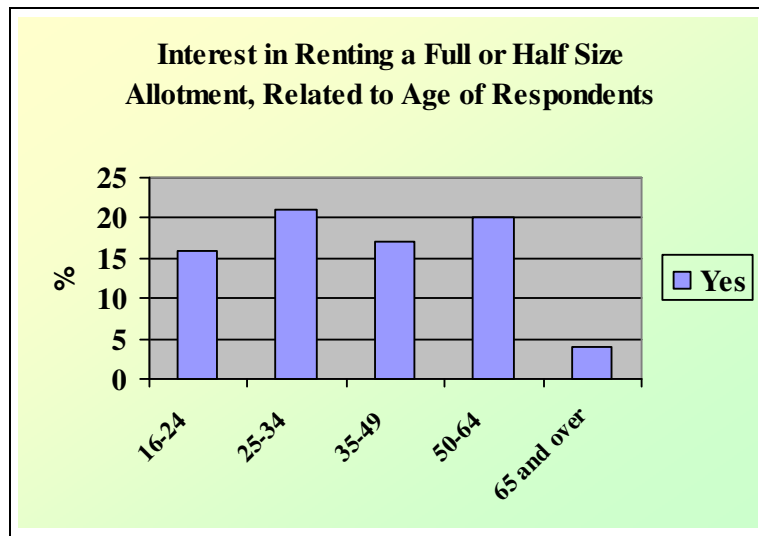
There is currently a very high volume of demand by Newcastle residents for allotments and supply now lags seriously behind this demand. There are currently no vacancies on any of Newcastle's allotment sites and the Newcastle Allotment Working Group (NAWG) has, over the last decade, revitalised all previously unlettable plots. There are now over 800 persons on waiting lists for an allotment plot as illustrated in figure 1.1a:-

Figure 1.1a Trends in vacancies and waiting lists 2001-2010



In Section Four we show that the NAWG community survey of 1,100 face-to-face interviews with a demographic sample of Newcastle residents indicates that 15% were interested in holding an allotment, with young people being particularly interested as shown in Figure 1.1b:-

Figure 1.1b Percentage of community sample interest in allotments by age



The community survey has identified a potential pool of 42,000 Newcastle residents currently interested in tenanting an allotment. Assuming one plot per household this equates to 18,000 households interested in an allotment¹. It seems likely with increasing global food scarcity and increasing fuel poverty that this strong demand for allotments will, in future, become even more powerful and create a tidal wave of unmet need.

We will demonstrate in sections six and two that there is a powerful historical argument for men and women to have the opportunity to cultivate land to produce food for their families, especially in times of hardship and scarcity. When added to the benefits of allotments (section two) and the strong current demand for allotments both in terms of current waiting list and our community survey, we believe the following principle, Principle One, should be upheld.

¹ This is based on Newcastle's current population of 273,600 and households of 117,694.

Principle One:

Newcastle City Council should aspire to meet both current demand for allotments and to plan for even greater future demand for allotments by the residents of the City.

1.2 The Full Use of Existing Designated Allotment Land

We will show in section three that over the past decade Newcastle City Council and the Newcastle Allotment Working Group (NAWG) have worked hard to restore and rejuvenate failing and deteriorated allotment sites (3.20). This has been so successful that there are no longer any vacant or unlettable plots in Newcastle (3.11). Further progress in this area can only come via ensuring that all let plots are cultivated to a reasonable standard that this is monitored by each site association and overseen by NAWG.

Target One

NAWG to set minimum standards for plot cultivation, and ensure that each site carries out regular inspections based upon these standards with annual inspections by the Allotment Officer, NAWG area representative and site secretary.

1.3 The Letting of Plots

We show in section 3.6 that in 2008 in Newcastle there were 636 half plots and 2004 full plots let, making a total full plot equivalent of 2,322 full plots let. Thus half plots currently constitute 25% of all plots. Our community survey shows that there is more interest within the community in working a half plot (11% of all surveyed) than a full plot (4%), and thus half plots should be available for new plot holders. At the same time we wish to validate the traditional belief that a full plot of 250² metres is the minimum plot size to sustain a family, year round and we endorse the right of those wanting to manage a full plot to be able to do so. For a full discussion of the issue of half versus full plots see Appendix Two where the Local Government advice from the 2010 publication “A Place to Grow” is reproduced. This requirement dual for half and full plots is met via Target Two.

Target Two

All new plot holders will be Newcastle City residents and will be given a maximum of a half plot to cultivate. Those demonstrating the ability and desire to cultivate a full plot will be given the opportunity to do so requiring each site to hold two waiting lists. Plot holders who leave Newcastle City limits will be required to vacate their plot.

1.4 The Protection of Current Allotment Provision

We show in section six that since 1945 there has been a progressive diminution in allotment availability in Newcastle from **5,298 plots** to the current level of **2,322 plots**. Much of this loss has been due to removal of allotment sites from land controlled under the Town Moor act. Many of Newcastle's allotment sites have a temporary designation and where possible such designations should be progressed to statutory designation. It is paramount to this strategy that loss of existing allotment provision is halted.

Target Three

The City Council will undertake to protect Newcastle's existing 62 allotment sites. This will necessitate negotiation with the Freemen on the management of sites on Town Moor land, and significant progress towards the re-designation of sites from temporary to statutory status.

1.5 The Expansion of Allotment Provision in Newcastle

We have shown in section 1.1 that in order to meet current and future demand for allotments by Newcastle residents, a massive expansion of allotment provision will be needed. We agree with the New Local Government Network (5.4.) who propose that councils such as Newcastle City Council should explore all avenues for the provision of more allotments including the utilisation of brown-field sites and the encouragement of donation of land by large landowners. We advocate that all Newcastle residents should have allotments available within walking distance (one kilometre) of their residence as described in Newcastle's Green Spaces Policy (5.10). The current distribution of Newcastle allotments is described in section 3.4

Target Four

Newcastle City Council and the Allotment Working Group will investigate the suitability of private and public land for new allotment sites within the City and when opportunities arise will identify adequate funding for establishing new sites, with the aim of providing for current and future allotment demand

Work is currently being undertaken in this respect as described in Appendix 3.

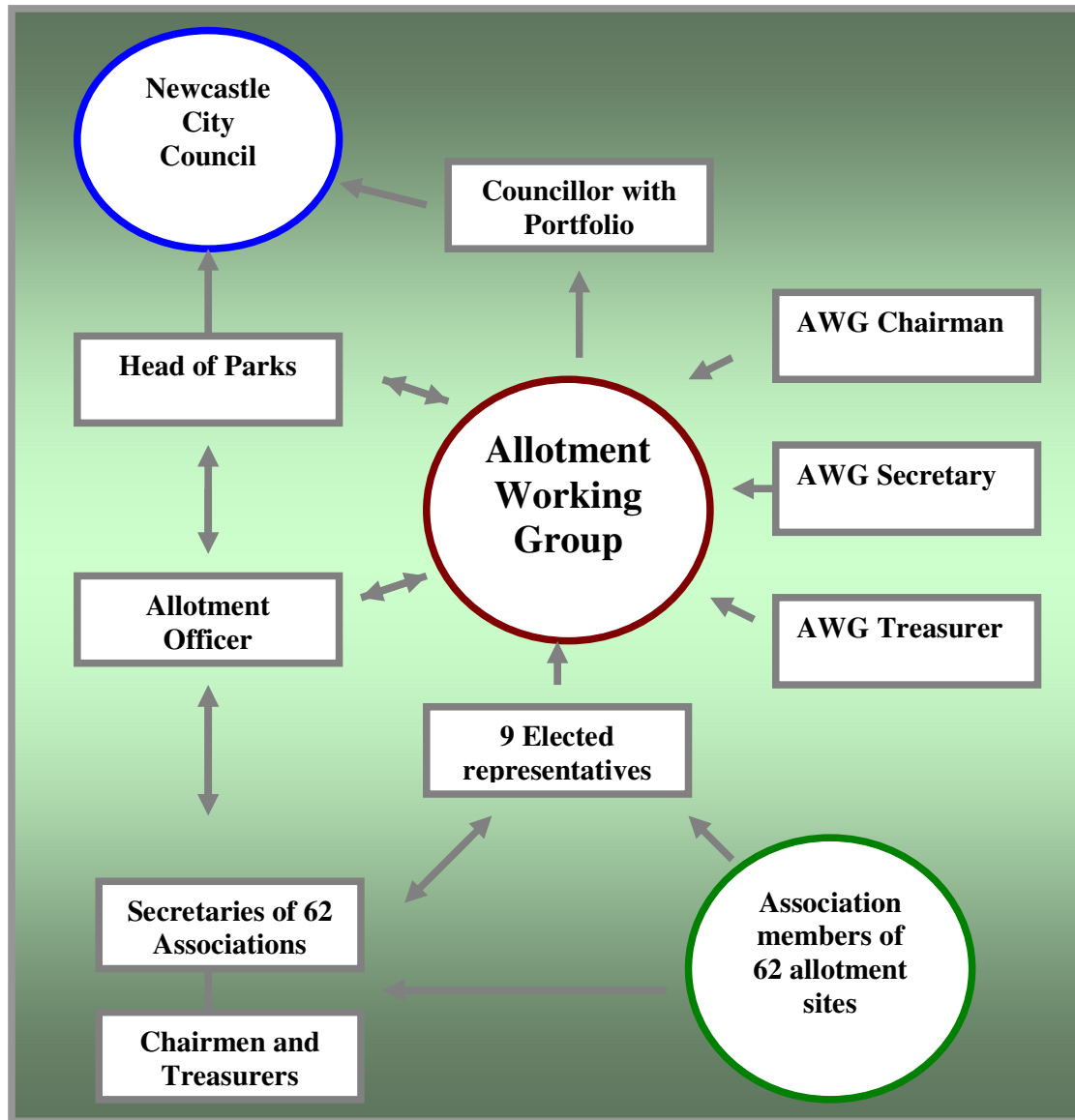
1.6 The Quality of Newcastle's Allotments and Their Management

While many authorities strive to develop devolved management on their sites, Newcastle has operated such a system for many years. Each allotment association is responsible for letting of plots and the day-to-day running of their site. Each association holds a lease from the City Council. The management of Newcastle City Council's allotment stock falls under the remit of the Parks and Countryside Service. Newcastle City Council employs a dedicated Allotment Officer to provide overall coordinated management of all sites, working closely with site secretaries on such issues as organizing repairs, dealing with difficult tenants and making funding applications.

What is particularly innovative is Newcastle's creation of an Allotment Working Group to create a three-tier system of management partnership. In 1999, following Newcastle City Council's move to an Executive System, the Allotments Working Group (AWG) was formed and was constituted in 2002. AWG consists of 8 area representatives elected by the 62 Newcastle Allotment associations with a co-opted Chair, Treasurer and Secretary and the Allotments Officer. The constitution ensures that the group reflects the views of allotments throughout the City. The AWG acts both as an advisory body and as middle management on allotment issues, oversees the overall health of Newcastle's allotments and their associations and decides upon the allocation of the Working Group Allotment budget. This budget represents the combined rents paid by each allotment association and is used to secure perimeter fences, repair water supplies, renovate derelict or failing plots and sites and for pest control, though it does not cover the salary of the Allotment Officer. The AWG has produced template documents for allotment associations including a model constitution and rules and guidance on running a committee.

The relationships of the Allotment Working Group are represented diagrammatically in Figure 1.6a

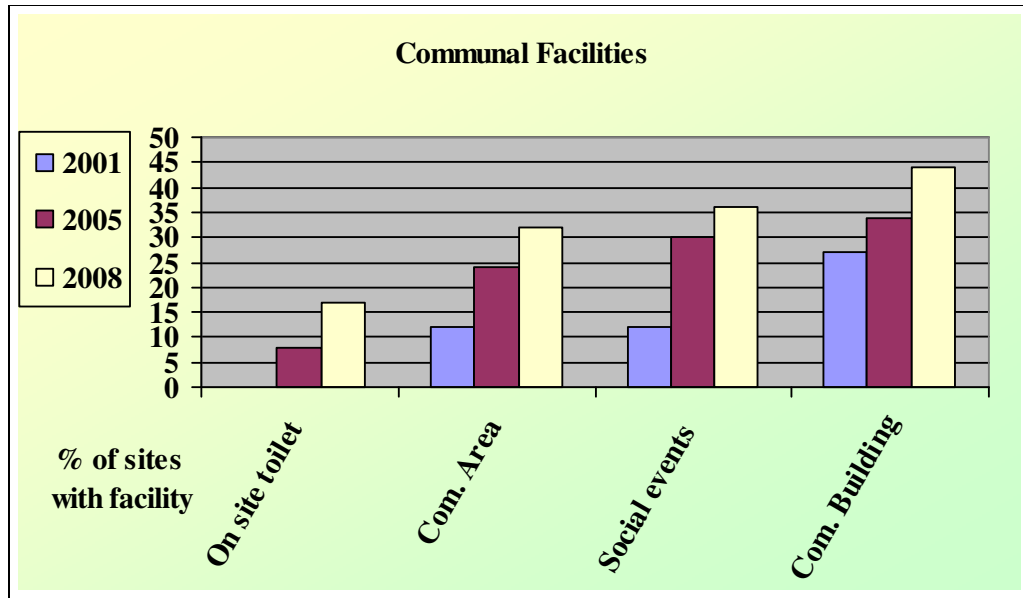
Figure 1.6a - The Relationships of the Allotment Working Group



We show in section 3.12 that the Newcastle Allotment Working Group has improved the democratic functioning of its 62 allotment associations by the establishment of a culture emphasising the importance of properly constituted committees and properly managed association rules. This has helped turn round failing allotment sites (see the Benwell Lane case study 3.16).

NAWG has also improved basic facilities such as water availability and perimeter security in its allotment sites, and has overseen the flowering of a self-improvement culture amongst allotment associations, which in turn has resulted in increased availability of communal facilities such as on-site toilets and communal space and buildings as illustrated in figure 1.6b.

Figure 1.6b Communal facilities on Newcastle allotment sites 2001-2008



NAWG has also successfully established the Newcastle Allotment and Garden Show (case study 3.16) and this, we believe, has acted as focus for a sense of an allotment community in Newcastle and as a stimulus to a cascading increase of social events on allotment sites (3.15). We believe that allotment sites should actively encourage disadvantaged, minority groups (see the Comfrey Project case study 3.11) and young people into allotment gardening. Finally in section three we describe ongoing threats to the quality of Newcastle's allotments in terms of theft and vandalism (3.18) and flooding (3.19).

We believe that the quality of Newcastle's allotments and their devolved management structure should be safeguarded as described in Principle Two.

Principle Two

Newcastle City Council's devolved management has been a successful innovation that should be nurtured and should continue to improve the structural and communal quality of allotment sites and protect them from threats to that quality.

1.7 Nurturing the Devolved Management Structure

The success of the tertiary management structure depends upon a number of factors. First the Allotment Working Group needs clear lines of representation within the Council hierarchy of officers. This has worked well with the Head of Parks and Countryside Service taking an active and facilitatory role in NAWG. Indeed we would like to improve the work of the AWG by formalising arrangements with Portfolio and other members for their regular attendance, advice and support. Secondly the Allotment Working Group needs to work closely with the Allotments Officer with clearly defined roles for both. From a practical point of view this has worked well. However the Allotment Officer is so busy reacting to practical problems that there has been little time for strategic thinking, proactive monitoring and policy production. We believe that designated time for allotment strategic thinking and proactive monitoring needs to be allocated at a level within the Council above that of Allotment Officer. Thirdly the management structure needs to tread a fine line between the facilitation of the autonomous function of individual allotment associations and a degree of central bureaucratic control. We believe that the successful development of allotments in Newcastle over the past decade indicates that this good balance has been achieved, but that if the overall quality of allotment provision is to be improved there does need to be increased proactive monitoring (see Targets 6 to 10 below).

Target Five

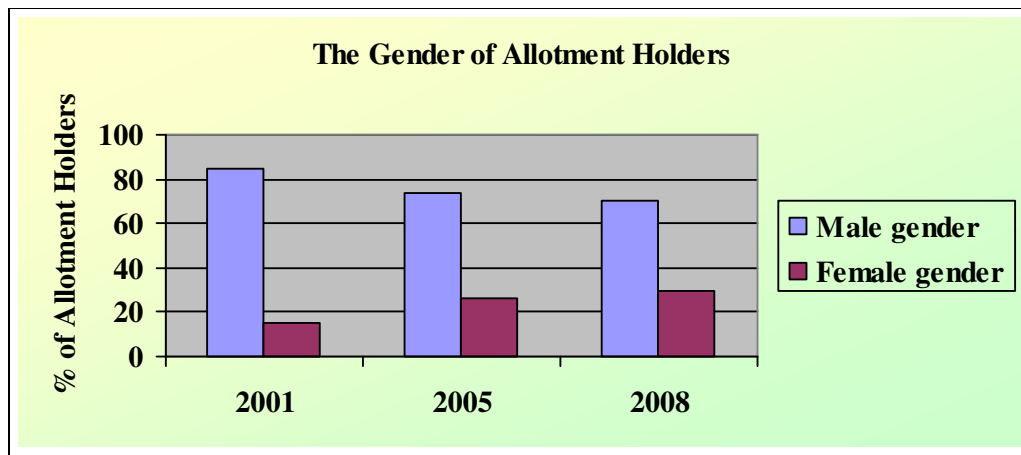
Management will be improved by more active liaison with councillors and by more designated strategic and monitoring time at a senior level above that of Allotment Officer

Newcastle's devolved management can deliver and protect quality allotments as follows:-

1.8 Improvement of Basic Site Facilities

We believe that it is an essential requirement that allotment sites have in place adequate basic facilities. Traditionally these have been a water supply and secure perimeter fencing. However the gender structure of our allotments is changing with increasing numbers of women gardeners over the last decade as illustrated in figure 1.8 below

Figure 1.8 Gender of allotment holders 2001-2008



This gender change and the need to ensure social equity, means we have now to add, as basic facilities, on-site toilets and facilities for the old, infirm and less able to access and to be able to work allotments². (See the Littlemoor less able case study section 5.7).

Target Six

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will work towards ensuring that all allotment sites in Newcastle have the basic facilities of: water, secure perimeter fencing or hedging, on-site toilets and facilities for the old and less able.

1.9 Improving Communal Facilities and Social Inclusivity

In section 5.7 we show the important contributions of allotments in Newcastle's Sustainable Community Strategy and how NAWG has helped increase the sense of a Newcastle allotment community via its annual show, its newsletter and website (3.16). NAWG has overseen increases in both communal facilities and communal events on allotment sites which ensure that allotment sites are not only viable communities themselves, but also reach out to the community around them (3.15). We believe that this reaching out into the community can be greatly helped by letting some plots to specific community groups (see Comfrey project case study 3.11), which should be encouraged. In this respect we need to create a central register of all community run plots in Newcastle which can be used to identify where there may be room for specific encouragement of disadvantaged or minority groups.

² The national charity Thrive details aids for gardening for the blind and partially-sighted; those who have suffered strokes and heart attacks; sufferers from dementia; gardening to improve well-being. See <http://www.thrive.org.uk/do-you-find-gardening-difficult.aspx>

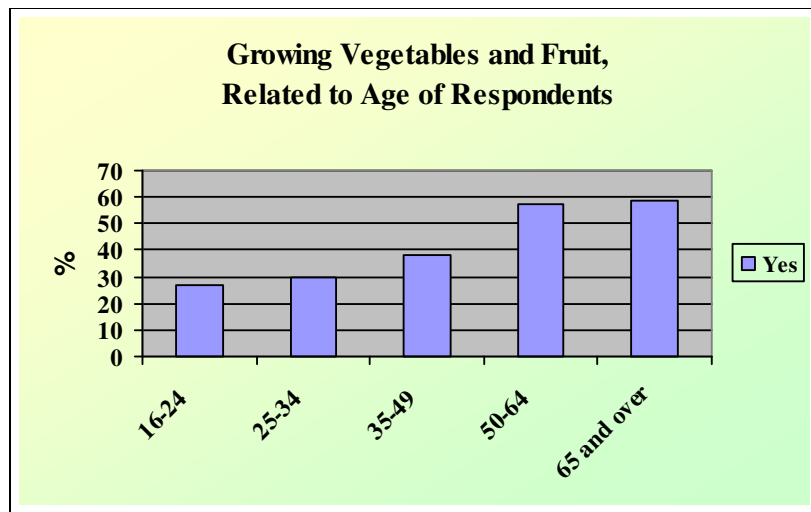
Target Seven

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will continue to promote a sense of a Newcastle allotment community, to promote an increase in social facilities and events on sites and will facilitate communal tenure of plots, with a central register of all communal plots as a first step in encouraging disadvantaged and minority groups into allotment gardening.

1.10 Improving Opportunities for Young People to Learn About Growing

NAWG's community research shows that the traditional skills of growing fruit and vegetables are not being handed down to the younger generation as illustrated in figure 1.10 below

Figure 1.10 Percentage of community sample with experience of growing vegetables



This highlights the need for greater education both of children and young adults about growing. Such skills can perhaps best be learned by schools having plots on allotment sites they can visit year-round. We are aware that a number of schools have plots on allotment sites, but a central register is needed to know how many schools have plots and where they are. From this can be derived a plan to encourage more schools to become involved. At the same time allotment sites need to be safe places for children and vulnerable adults and the Allotment Working Group needs to produce a template children, young persons and vulnerable adult's protection policy for use by individual allotment associations.

Target Eight

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will encourage school involvement in allotment sites and will create a template children and vulnerable adult protection policy.

1.11 Threats to Allotment Sites from Theft and Vandalism

Our research has shown that Newcastle allotments continue to suffer from high levels of theft and vandalism, with 79% of sites reporting crime in 2008 (3.18). Crime can result in low morale among plot-holders and even plots being abandoned. Currently only one site has CCTV cameras in operation. We believe it would be helpful if there was a central register held of crime on allotment sites in order to produce a co-ordinated plan to protect sites from theft and vandalism.

Target Nine

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will hold a central register of crimes on its 62 sites and produce a co-ordinated plan to deter crime and encourage associations to involve local community policing.

1.12 Threats from Flooding

It has been noted that flooding, which destroys crops and damages soil structure, seems to be an increasing problem on some Newcastle allotments, probably due to climate change (3.19). Some sites have recently experienced greater flooding than in living memory. We believe it is essential to reduce damage from flooding by ensuring adequate drainage and that the first step is to collate all evidence of allotment flooding. The second step is to create a plan to deal with flooding which includes identifying sources of finance for drainage works.

Target Ten

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will collate information upon flooding throughout all sites and will liaise with relevant bodies to alleviate flooding and identify sources of finance for this work

1.13 Environmental and Ecological Enhancement

We show in section five that allotments are integral to a wide range of Newcastle environmental and ecological strategies:- the Sustainable Community Strategy (5.7), the Climate Change Strategy (5.9), the Green Spaces Strategy (5.10), the Biodiversity Action Plan (5.11), the Bee Strategy (5.12), the Tree Strategy (5.13) and the obesity strategy (5.14) with whom they share common targets. Allotments have an important role to play in the environmental and ecological enhancement of urban Newcastle (see the Moorside bee conservation case study 5.12). We believe Newcastle's environmental well being should be guided by the following principle: -

Principle Three

Allotments make important contributions to Newcastle's environmental and ecological wellbeing which need to be recognised and fully integrated with a wide range of existing local strategies.

1.14 Managing Environmental Impact

We show that allotments contribute to managing environmental impact (5.7) by composting and recycling; by reducing packaging and landfill (2.5); by reducing food miles and by offering the potential for organic food production free of pesticides and herbicides. We believe that the trend amongst allotment holders is strongly towards organic growing, but this trend needs to be quantified by further detailed research. Included in this research should be some quantification of which pesticides and herbicides are still being used upon allotments and their potential negative effects upon wildlife. The Newcastle Biodiversity Action Plan has in the past included an "amnesty" for toxic chemicals held at the bottom of garden sheds to be handed in. However we believe that there is scope for a more intensive educational programme directed towards allotment holder's use of pesticides and herbicides. NAWG have in place a bonfire ban from April to November. Further extension of this ban would depend upon a plan of how to deal alternatively with noxious weeds and disease infected vegetable waste.

Target Eleven

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will research the current use of pesticides and herbicides on its allotment sites with a view to a focussed educational programme advocating organic gardening.

1.15 Climate Change and Low Carbon Footprint Food

We have shown that it is recognised nationally that allotments have a significant role in future-proofing as evidenced by allotment provision being a key indicator for the Sustainable Cities Index (5.5). Allotments provide a source of fresh, low-cost food with a very low carbon footprint (5.9) and we believe that this should be the subject of a research project in conjunction with a further education partner to calculate the carbon savings over one year of a fully cultivated allotment plot.

Target Twelve

The Newcastle Allotment Working Group in conjunction with a further education partner will conduct research to show the carbon savings of Newcastle's allotments.

1.16 Peak Oil and Green Energy

Global climate change and the reduction in available fuel resources require a major rethink about how we produce our energy. The use of solar and wind power are to be fully explored within that exercise and the availability of suitable areas uncluttered by high buildings and open to the elements suggests that many allotment sites could adopt renewable energy production.

There are clearly practical problems to be overcome by ingenuity and careful planning - noise from turbines, security, costs and difficulty of installation. There are huge benefits to be gained from such installations, particularly for the individual allotment associations, for example free and practically unlimited electricity to provide carbon neutral power for all manner of garden machinery, a cash return for power transmitted to the national grid, electricity to power security devices to increase anti-vandal and burglary protection. A major benefit would undoubtedly be the contribution that the allotment community would be making to the greening of our City. Although this would be a small contribution to no-carbon power production it would put our City at the forefront of green innovation.

We suggest that the first step would be to pioneer a pilot project with a view to rolling this out, if successful, to further suitable sites.

Target Thirteen

Newcastle Allotment Working Group in co-ordination with Newcastle City Council will initiate a pilot project to produce renewable energy on an allotment site with a view to a larger renewable energy project for Newcastle's allotments.

1.17 Allotments and Wildlife

We show in section five that allotments have an important role to play in conserving wildlife (5.5) and providing green corridors within the City (5.9). This conservation potential is particularly important in relation to threatened species such as the red-listed (seriously threatened) songbirds and bullfinch, hedgehogs, bats and bees. There is great scope for liaison with voluntary wildlife conservation bodies such as the RSPB and Northumberland Wildlife Trust in joint ventures for further improving this conservation potential. A key element in realizing this potential is education of allotment holders both towards positive conservation measures and the elimination of threats to wildlife such as those posed by herbicides and pesticides.

Target Fourteen

Newcastle Allotment Working Group, in conjunction with the new Wildlife Strategy, will support sites in joint projects with voluntary wildlife conservation bodies and will create a specific plan designed to educate allotment holders about how to improve the conservation of wildlife and eliminate threats to wildlife on their 62 sites.

1.18 Allotments and Bees

We describe why bee conservation is vitally important and show that allotments provide important habitats for the conservation of bees (5.12 and Moorside case study). Allotments can accommodate a diverse selection of flowers, herbs and vegetables that provide nectar for honeybees, bumblebees and solitary bees the year round and the 78 hectares of allotment land in Newcastle can become an important reservoir of essential forage for honeybees, bumblebees and solitary bees.

Target Fifteen

Newcastle Allotment Working Group, in conjunction with the Bee Strategy, will encourage beekeeping on its allotment sites; will promote education about the importance of bees, their decline, and how plots may be improved as a source of year-round forage for bees.

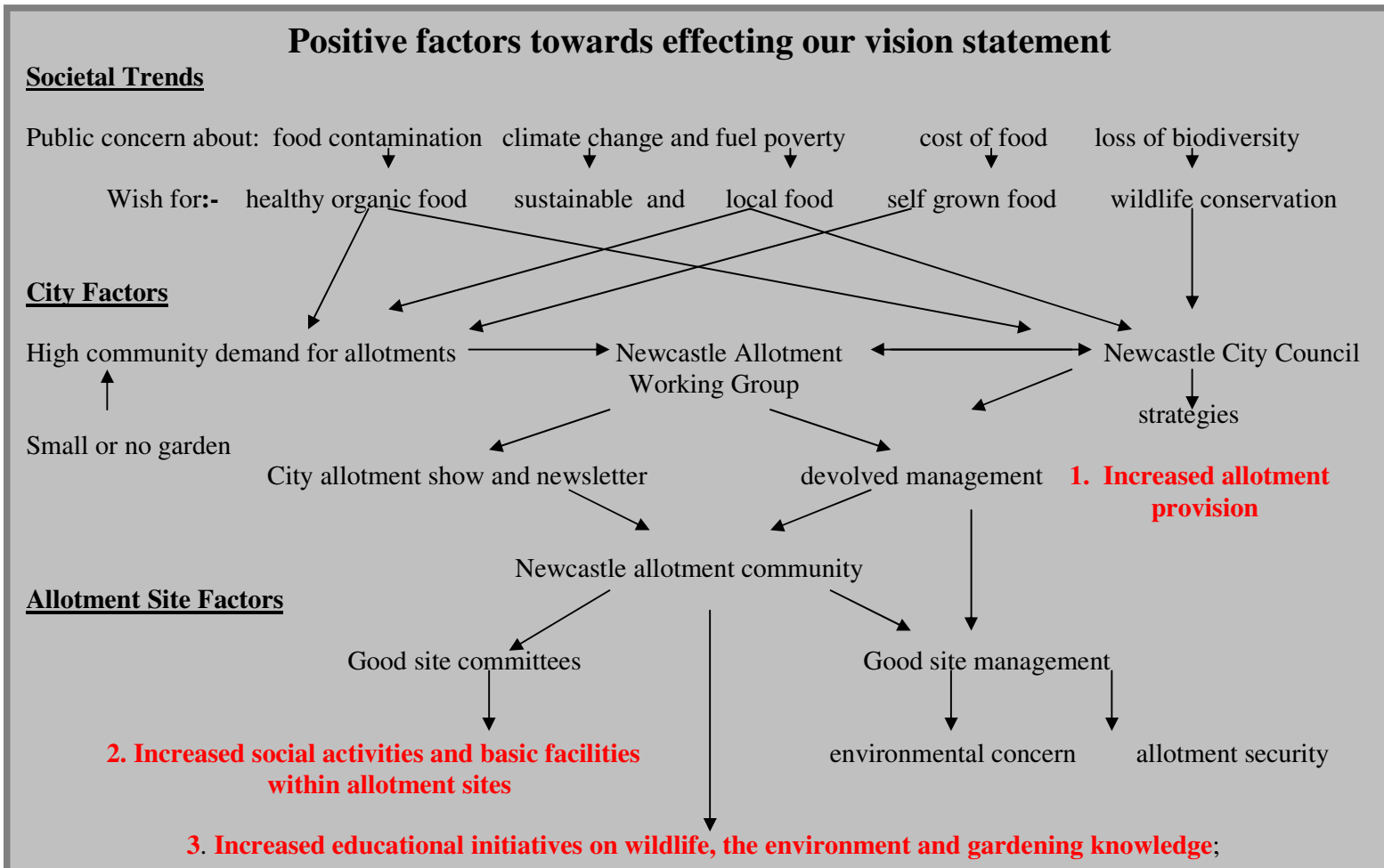
1.19 Allotments and Hedges

Target Sixteen

Newcastle Allotment Working Group will arrange a citywide survey of allotment hedging to gauge the potential for an extensive hedge-planting campaign.

We show in section five that hedges on allotments have multiple benefits. They contribute to the Newcastle's Tree Strategy (5.13) and they provide food and shelter for birds and mammals, especially if the hedge is planted with native species such as hawthorn and blackthorn (5.12). Hedges can contribute to adaptation to climate change by providing wild life corridors (5.10) and they contribute to the greening of urban space (5.11). Finally they contribute to the security of the site when planted around the perimeter. Some work on planting native hedges has been done as part of the Newcastle Biodiversity Action Plan, but this has not been quantified. We believe that what is now required is a systematic survey of all Newcastle's allotment sites to find out what percentage of perimeters have hedging and to gauge the potential for a massive hedge planting scheme.

Addendum to Section One



AWG – Allotment Working Group
 AO – Allotment Officer
 RDO – Recreation Development Officer
 NCC – Newcastle City Council

Newcastle Allotment Strategy – Action Plan 2010-15

	Target	Milestones and Monitoring	Timescale	Responsibility
Target One	NAWG to set minimum standards for plot cultivation, and ensure that each site carries out regular inspections based upon these standards with annual inspections by the Allotment Officer, NAWG area representative and site secretary.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree minimum cultivation levels • Create a system for annual site inspections. • Ensure all sites are inspected. 	Winter 2010 Spring 2011	AWG AWG / AO / RDO AO
Target Two	All new plot holders will be given a maximum of a half plot to cultivate. Those demonstrating the ability and desire to cultivate a full plot will be given the opportunity to do so. This requires each site to hold two waiting lists.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Instruct secretaries to divide all plots in half for new gardeners. • Issue guidance on managing a second waiting list for full plots. 	Spring 2011 Spring 2011	NCC AWG
Target Three	The City Council will undertake to protect Newcastle's existing 62 allotment sites. This will necessitate negotiation with the Freeman on the management of sites on Town Moor land, significant progress towards the re-designation of sites from temporary to statutory status.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open negotiations with the Freeman • Identify sites with the potential to become statutory. • Investigate process needed for designation of statutory sites 	Ongoing Winter 2010 2011	P&C manager AWG/RDO RDO
Target Four	Newcastle City Council and the Allotment Working Group will investigate the suitability of private and public land for new allotment sites within the City and when opportunities arise will identify adequate funding for establishing new sites, with the aim of providing for current and future	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compile a list of potential land • Work out standard costs for creation of allotments • Prioritise list by area / demand • Identify funding on a site by site basis 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	RDO AO / RDO AWG / RDO AWG / RDO
Target Five	Management will be improved by more active liaison with councillors and by more designated strategic and monitoring time at a senior level above that of Allotment Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that the portfolio member and senior officers receive an invitation and minutes from all NAWG meetings 	Ongoing	AO / RDO

Target Six	The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will work towards ensuring that all allotment sites in Newcastle have the basic facilities of: water, secure perimeter fencing or hedging, on-site toilets and facilities for the old and less able.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify needs on a site by site basis. Prioritise work. Identify funding. 	Site survey 2011/12 Spring 2012 Ongoing	AO AO / RDO AWG / AO / RDO
Target Seven	The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will continue to promote a sense of a Newcastle allotment community, to promote an increase in social facilities and events on sites and will facilitate communal tenure of plots, with a central register of all communal plots as a first step in encouraging disadvantaged and minority groups into allotment gardening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep records of all community groups on sites. Promote the achievements of groups and associations through Dig This. Increase the distribution of Dig This. Send Dig this to members, senior officers and the press office. 	Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing Ongoing	AO / AWG AWG AO / AWG AO
Target Eight	The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will encourage school involvement in allotment sites and will create a template children and vulnerable adult protection policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send allotment information and guidance on site visits to all Newcastle schools. Create a template children and vulnerable adult protection policy. 	Spring 2012 2011	AWG / AO AWG / RDO
Target Nine	The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will hold a central register of crimes on its 62 sites and produce a co-ordinated plan to deter crime and encourage associations to involve local community policing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all crimes are recorded on the Allotment database. Set trigger points for reporting to SNAPS meetings. 	Ongoing Winter 2010	AO AWG / AO
Target Ten	The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will collate information upon flooding throughout all sites and will liaise with relevant bodies to alleviate flooding and identify sources of finance for this work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify sites with specific flooding issues. Prioritise work Identify funding site by site 	Ongoing Winter 2010 Ongoing	AO / AWG AO / AWG AO / RDO / AWG
Target Eleven	The Newcastle Allotment Working Group will research the current use of pesticides and herbicides on its allotment sites with a view to a focussed educational programme advocating organic gardening.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all issues of Dig This carry organic gardening advise. Produce an organic gardening guide for new gardeners. Explore a partnership with 	Ongoing 2012 Ongoing	AWG AWG RDO

		Ouseburn Farm and Newcastle College to provide training in organic growing.		
Target Twelve	The Newcastle Allotment Working Group in conjunction with a further education partner will conduct research to show the carbon savings of Newcastle's allotments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Engage a further education partner. 	2011	AWG
Target Thirteen	Newcastle Allotment Working Group in co-ordination with Newcastle City Council will initiate a pilot project to produce renewable energy on an allotment site with a view to a larger renewable energy project for Newcastle's allotments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify a suitable site for a pilot project. Secure funding 	2011 2011	AWG AWG / RDO
Target Fourteen	Newcastle Allotment Working Group, in conjunction with the new Wildlife Strategy, will support sites in joint projects with voluntary wildlife conservation bodies and will create a specific plan designed to educate allotment holders about how to improve the conservation of wildlife and eliminate threats to wildlife on their 62 sites.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure all issues of Dig This carry wildlife gardening information. Produce a gardening with wildlife guide for new gardeners. 	Ongoing 2012	AWG AWG
Target Fifteen	Newcastle Allotment Working Group, in conjunction with the Bee Strategy, will encourage bee-keeping on its allotment sites; will promote education about the importance of bees, their decline, and how plots may be improved as a source of year-round forage for bees.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Bee group to produce guidance for sites who would like to install a hive Ensure the gardening with wildlife guide contains information about supporting bees 	Ongoing 2012	AWG AWG
Target Sixteen	Newcastle Allotment Working Group will arrange a citywide survey of allotment hedging to gauge the potential for an extensive hedge-planting campaign.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify sites with potential for new or additional hedging Identify and apply for funding for hedging Plant 1km of hedging on allotments 	Winter 2010 2011 By 2015	AO AWG / RDO