

EXETER CITY COUNCIL



ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

CONTENTS

		PAGE
1	The Purpose of the Strategy	1
2	Introduction	2
3	Current Provision	4
4	Demand for Allotments	5
5	Target Areas of the Strategy	6
	1) Target Area 1	7
	2) Target Area 2	10
	3) Target Area 3	13
	4) Target Area 4	16
	5) Target Area 5	19
6	Appendices	
	1) Map of Exeter Council Allotments Sites	21
	2) Allotments in Devon	22
	3) Spread of Allotments in Exeter	23
	4) Number of Vacant Allotments in Exeter	24
	5) Summary Survey Information	26
	6) Summary Survey Information	27
	7) Allotment Budget 2006/7	28
	8) Allotment Fees and Charges	29
	9) Brief History of Exeter's Allotments	30
	10) Principal of Legislation	31
	11) Relationships to other Strategies	32
8	The Origins And Development of English Allotments	34
9	Allotment Rules and Regulations 2007.	

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

SECTION ONE

1 PURPOSE OF THE STRATEGY

- 1.1 The allotment strategy has been developed for Council provided allotment sites (either directly or through devolved management), not for privately owned sites.
- 1.2 The overall objective of this strategy is to increase the ability and opportunity for people to cultivate allotment plots in Exeter. The strategy seeks through its targets and initiatives to optimise the use of allotment sites for existing and potential plot holders, identify needs and meet demand. All initiatives contained in this strategy are considered in the context of other council strategies, policies and objectives.
- 1.3 This document provides a framework for the next five years to develop and manage allotments in partnership with the users, and provides a focus on five main target areas.
 - 1 Ensuring sufficient allotments
 - 2 Promoting allotment gardening
 - 3 Encouraging sustainability
 - 4 Cultivating good administration
 - 5 Maintaining adequate resources

SECTION TWO

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.7 The provision of allotments by local authorities is a statutory duty. Exeter City Council will continue to provide and promote allotments not only because of this statutory requirement but because allotment gardening can make a valuable contribution to the city's sustainability by providing health, social, economic and environmental benefits. These can be summarised as
- Low cost fresh food production for the family
 - Promotion of healthy affordable diets
 - Healthy recreational activity
 - The opportunity to maintain and develop skills
 - Social contact and as a contribution to community spirit
 - Better partnership working
- 2.3 Allotments are a valuable green sustainable open space within the urban environment. They contribute to the retention of traditional skills and wisdom as well as being highly beneficial to the wildlife of the city.
- 2.4 Current house building trends are towards smaller gardens, as pressure increases to optimise building land, and some householders have no individual garden. These circumstances disproportionately disadvantage those on lower incomes. Allotments provide an opportunity to adjust this imbalance.
- 2.5 The high value – low cost benefits are readily available to all, but most importantly, those who find themselves socially or physically disadvantaged.
- 2.8 This strategy continues the work of the original 2002 strategy, by providing the framework to increase the scope of these benefits, target areas for improvement, and allow the significant improvements over the previous five years to be continued.

SECTION THREE

3 CURRENT PROVISION

3.1 The Sites

There are 26 Local Authority allotment sites across the city. The map at Appendix 1 indicates the location of these. There is a reasonable spread of sites for a city the size of Exeter. Appendix 2 shows how this compares favourably to the rest of Devon. National comparison demonstrates a similar picture. Exeter has well above the average number of plots per household, yet despite this demand cannot be met.

Each site is divided into plots that are normally 10 rods (250m²) each. The preference is now to provide more plots of a smaller size, so that as plots become vacant they are frequently divided into two to provide allotments for two people. This approach has been extremely successful in increasing the number of tenanted plots and encouraging women to take on an allotment. A balance is maintained so that those who wish can have larger plots Appendix 3 shows the current number of plots on each site and the wards in which they are situated.

3.2 Management

The Parks and Open Spaces team, under the Head of Contracts and Direct Services, within the Community and Environment Directorate, manages allotments. The maintenance and improvements are carried out by staff and funded through the annual allotment budget. The Allotments and Play Equipment Officer (APEO) is responsible for the management and administration of all sites.

There are currently 5 Area Allotment Managers (AAM's) who are all plot holders and receive payment based on a percentage of the annual rent collection. Their duties are:

- To collect and administer rents
- Let plots
- Advise on the tenancy rules and ensure they are followed
- Resolve disputes and pass on complaints and items requiring maintenance to the APEO
- Liase with existing and potential plot holders and the local allotment associations.

3.3 Self-Management

There is currently one site, Trews Weir, which operates under a system of self-management. The site has a very good nucleus of highly committed plot holders. The arrangement works well and is a tribute to the considerable

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

effort of their committee. They have managed to improve security and other facilities on the site over recent years.

The committee retains the majority of the rental income for maintenance of the site. Major works remain the responsibility of the council.

3.4 Allotment Associations

These associations are made up of plot holders, usually including the AAM's, and their main purposes are:

- To promote the interests of plot holders
- Organise bulk purchase and resale of seeds, stock and other relevant materials
- Provide an independent forum for discussion and dissemination of information
- Offer tips on cultivation and promote good practice
- Encourage initiatives to protect members from theft, damage and trespass

The City Council provides and maintains 'trading huts' for the associations' use at:

- Ashwood Road
- Butts Park
- Cowick Lane
- Guys/Hylton
- Hamlin Lane
- Prince Charles Road
- Trews Weir
- Whipton Lane.

SECTION FOUR

4 DEMAND FOR ALLOTMENTS

- 4.1 In September 2006 just under 98% of allotment plots were let. Appendix 4 (2002) and Appendix 4a (2006) are graphs of the vacancy/let plots on each of the allotment sites. Given the relatively high number of plots in Exeter this indicates the value that the community, as well as the Council places in this tradition.
- 4.2 The principal reason for some allotment sites not being fully tenanted is that they do not have water available on site. Issues of security or poor ground conditions, which previously affected tenancy levels, have largely been addressed since 2002. Most sites have full occupancy and hold a waiting list, currently estimated between one to four years.
- 4.3 In 1999 a survey of residents to try and identify the importance and priorities that allotments hold was undertaken. Appendices 5 and 6 are extracts from that survey. Clearly a high percentage of respondents had no interest in allotment gardening. However, of those who did not have an allotment but had some interest, the most important issue for them was the need for good information. They also wanted sites nearer to their home but this may, in part, be due to a lack of accessible information. The survey also showed that different sizes or broader use of allotments for family use would be welcomed by some. This is consistent with trends of more women and single parents renting plots, identified by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG). These concerns have been addressed since 2002.
- 4.4 When the survey looked at what the benefits of an allotment were thought to be, the highest proportion was for the British tradition of the enjoyment of gardening. Next was the production of fresh food and having leisure time away from home. It was interesting to see how the social aspect of allotment gardening featured quite strongly. It is likely that a similar survey undertaken today would show the production of fresh food to be the prime reason.
- 4.5 In 1996 a survey of existing plot holders indicated that the three most important improvements to allotment sites were:
1. Better water supply
 2. Better security
 3. Better toilets

These findings were consistent with surveys carried out by other local authorities and NSALG.

(It should be noted that in the 10 years since the survey was undertaken, where water supplies were available on allotment sites they have been upgraded and improved, particularly with regard to reducing water leaks. The limited cost benefit of installing a supply on those sites without mains water, which are all smaller sites, has influenced the prioritisation of improvement works. The sustainable use of water is the next challenge).

SECTION FIVE

5 TARGET AREAS OF THE STRATEGY

- 5.1 Ensuring sufficient Allotments
- 5.2 Promoting Allotment Gardening
- 5.3 Encouraging sustainability
- 5.4 Cultivating Good administration
- 5.5 Maintaining Adequate Resources

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

TARGET AREA 1

1 Ensuring Sufficient Allotments

The improvements arising from the 2002 strategy have coincided with a nationwide interest in local and personal food production. As a result there are substantial waiting lists at most sites. In order to address existing and planned demand the following proposals are made.

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
1A	<u>Safeguarding existing provision.</u> Retain the level of allotments provision for Exeter.	Ownership of the leased portion of Trews Weir allotments has changed hands, and the new owner is keen for the allotments to remain. All allotment plots retained and tenancy levels improved, reducing threat of closure.	Investigate the status of temporary sites and seek change of status to permanent site where it is in the wider interest to do so. Identify threats or proposals that would adversely affect allotment provision, e.g. causes of sudden decline in tenancy level
1B	<u>Meeting changes in demand</u> Investigate whether any local or social demand deficiencies that occur due to demographic change can be met from existing open space or via Planning proposals (LDF and Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990) Aim to provide an allotment site within a one-mile radius of any residential location, with regard to likely changes in population density	A Public Open Space Audit undertaken as part of the management of Section 106 agreements and to meet PPG17 needs. Potential additional sites are being investigated where Allotments are heavily over-subscribed or there is lack of current provision	Monitor allotment demand by area Identify other potential sites. E.g. through LDF and S106 agreements, private land (leasehold), or other public bodies (St Loves, University) See also 1D

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
	<p>arising from the Local Development Framework. Where demand is demonstrated or could be calculated.</p>		
1C	<p><u>Maximise the use of existing allotments.</u> Improve existing locations Examine alternative uses for sites or parts of sites that cannot be let</p>	<p>Car parking provision has been made on a number of sites by utilising poorest plots. Habitats enhanced by hedge planting and infilling unused corners with planting to aid security. Improvements to plot condition and soil where these factors are preventing take up of plots. Marypole Allotments – new track, layout, water supplies has increased occupancy across the whole site</p>	<p>With the heavy demand in the city for allotments the earlier proposal of releasing the land at the south of Marypole Allotments should be reconsidered. Ensure that tenants actively work their plots, and plots with large percentages of uncultivated land are reclaimed to be let to others. This approach requires careful management to ensure those who use their plots as “Leisure Gardens” (e.g. young mums) are not penalised Those who may be struggling to manage a full size plot are assisted in reducing or moving to a smaller plot</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reassess further car parking areas, for example existing car parks on areas of good soil are returned to cultivation, using only areas of poor ground for car parking • Direct assistance to improve sites e.g. installing drainage systems, the control of pernicious weeds by such measures as the use of large scale membranes and re-soiling.

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
1D	<p><u>Keeping options open to improve the service.</u></p> <p>Consider offering alternative locations where available if tenants are in favour of moving even where demand and supply are met.</p>		<p>Liaise with Planning regarding potential land swaps.</p> <p>The option of alternative locations is constantly under review</p> <p>Investigate Partnership working with others, e.g. adjacent Local Authorities, other public bodies, the University, to use land for allotments on a leasing basis.</p> <p>When examining alternative uses to consider in particular:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The possibility of generating income The potential for temporary uses.

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

TARGET AREA 2

2 Promoting Allotment Gardening

Since the Allotment Strategy was written in 2002 a significant change has occurred locally and nationally in that the opportunity to grow your own food fruit and vegetables is perceived as an extremely desirable and achievable benefit by a large proportion of the population. The subject has received publicity and endorsement from a wide spectrum of the news media. However, whilst the subject is receiving positive publicity in general there remains the need to provide good quality relevant information as assistance and guidance at a local level, especially for new or aspiring plot holders. The Council should be seen as a facilitator for peer and support groups. Allotment Associations have been revitalised with support from the Council, at a time when the Exeter Allotment Federation has disbanded.

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
2A	<p><u>Communication</u> Continue to improve on and target weaknesses in communication The production of easy to follow useful information, including: Pamphlets Display boards/posters at key times/sites on a wider range of sites Website information Links with other promotions, e.g. healthy living, organic growing, traditional skills</p>	<p>Allotments are now advertised in the Exeter Health Directory, available in all GP surgeries. The Council's website now contains a substantial amount of information on allotments, where to find them and how to rent one Most sites are equipped with notice boards. Very positive allotment features in the local press has maintained momentum</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to use web site as prime information tool. This is easy to provide regular update link to other promotions • Update and reproduce the series of information posters for notice boards • Ensure information on allotment issues is clearly and readily accessible to the widest range of users. • There must also be a focus on the means of keeping information updated, pointing towards e-communication, and on-site notice boards, which can also be used by associations and individuals. • Undertake user survey (see also 4D)

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
2B	<p><u>Equalities</u> To make a wider range of plots available to suit different needs and ethics. This will include, where appropriate standard plots, half and quarter plots and group plots:</p>	<p>All sites have options for smaller plots, though this occasionally requires plots to be vacated on the more popular sites. Managers are now alert to the possibility of non-standard plots and have identified a number suited for possible splitting when they become vacant. Areas of plots were designated “No chemicals use”. A number of ethnic and refugee groups have been encouraged to take up allotment plots. These are frequently grouped together</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Earmark plots nearest to entrances and car parking areas as those more suited to people with mobility restrictions. • Advertise on the website and elsewhere the availability of non-standard plots • Identify more segregated “No Chemical” options
2C	<p><u>Accessibility</u> Specific needs To identify and designate plots suitable for those with mobility difficulties or for organic use, where demand is indicated. This could be as part of the revitalisation of an area of vacant plots, as part of site improvement scheme or on a new allotment site.</p>	<p>A pilot project at Marypole installed additional hard surfacing and raised planters for partially non- ambulant persons.</p>	<p>Identify the potential for disabled use or demand for organic gardening at all allotment sites. By definition those with mobility difficulties drive or are driven to sites, therefore the most sensible approach at this level is to provide facilities at specific sites. Need to identify “lower level” disabilities so that those who have some difficulty in getting to or working their plots have some assistance.</p>
2D	<p><u>Newbies</u> Improve customer care and on site help for new or inexperienced plot holders and to reduce early drop out rates by: use of notice boards investigating the introduction of site representatives encouraging better partnership</p>	<p>Site representatives are in place on most sites Noticeboards are on most sites Expand the current practice of maintaining vacant plots in reasonable condition in order to encourage letting</p>	<p>Instigate regular AAMs meetings Set up training and induction for new representatives, and a structure of regular meetings/consultations. Allotment Associations have been revitalised in St Thomas and Cowick. Associations or similar groups are actively encouraged as they can provide aid and assistance at a local level, and act as a focus group.</p>

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
<p>2E</p>	<p><u>Appearances are important</u> Control weed growth and reduce the spread of seed from vacant plots. This will improve the appearance of the site both for tenants and passers by. Initially this will be done by strimmer but other methods, in keeping with the Council's Environmental Strategy and sustainable practices will be considered.</p>	<p>Positive management of sites has led to an increase in the number of plots available for letting. At Hamlin Lane Allotments - 10 plots that were totally overgrown have been cleared and ploughed, and are now all let. Prince Charles Rd Allotments - 10 plots cleared and being let. Contractors will be used at peak periods (when parks staff are busiest) to control vegetation on vacant plots.</p>	<p>Use of mulching mats in preference to herbicides. The practice of keeping plots tidy has been very successful in achieving high occupancy levels, which in turn reduces maintenance costs.</p>
<p>2F</p>	<p><u>Fair distribution of facilities</u> Prioritise available resources, in a balanced way, between maintaining promotional activity and the maintenance and improvement of site facilities.</p>	<p>Replacement bases for existing portaloos have been designed and manufactured locally, prolonging the life of the facilities. Skips have been provided with great success The Prince Charles access track was resurfaced A database of all structures in allotments has been set up, including trading huts to plan maintenance and improvements.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The infrastructure and facilities on allotments need to be upgraded to further encourage a wider range of plot holders. • Toilets are seen as vital in encouraging women and those with young families onto the sites. • Trading huts provide the focus for the Allotment Associations. • Roads and tracks in good condition are essential to encourage access by all. • Water • Security • Identify lifespan of structures.

TARGET AREA 3

3 Encouraging Sustainability

Allotment sites provide an increasingly valuable and noticeable area of green space, as gardens continue to reduce in size. However, the security needs of allotments mean that they cannot fully be a substitute for public open space.

The range of plant species on an allotment site means they are a rich habit for wildlife. Opportunities remain to develop wildlife value in hedging areas and sections that have no realistic prospect of coming back into use, but care is needed to ensure this is not to the detriment of allotment provision.

Within the cultivated area of allotments, principles of sustainable gardening are relevant. Many plot holders are very skilled and knowledgeable on issues of sustainability (it is an inherent aspect of allotmenting.) The Council has a commitment to minimise the use of pesticides (this includes insecticides, fungicides and weed killers). However this commitment will be approached by persuasion not coercion through rules and regulations, except where an area of plots is designated for 'organic' use.

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
3A	To encourage, and where possible, support good environmental practice including organic alternatives to fertilizers and pesticides.	See 2A Provided information giving advice on good organic practice to all allotment holders	There needs to be a culture of encouraging organic use and good practice that reduces the need for pesticides. As amateur pesticide use becomes more restricted, with approval for chemical formulations being withdrawn, plot holders will have to turn to other methods. The use of pesticides by plot holders will need to be more actively managed, and information made available on a regular basis, especially regarding the withdrawal of pesticides.

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

			Continue the promotion of composting, no-dig techniques and similar alternative methods.
3B	Encourage associations to draw on the expertise already in the allotment movement both locally and nationally through links with NSALG.	The Allotments officer attends AGMs of the various Associations when available. Information/updates provided for the associations at AGMs etc	The NSALG is limited in its attraction to plot holders, it's primary function in practice being to provide insurance. The City Council should act as a mentor and conduit for relevant information and guidance from a range of sources e.g. RHS, Henry Doubleday Research Assoc, Soil Association
3C	To consider opportunities that arise for improved wildlife habitats in partnership with the allotment holders and their associations i.e. wildlife groups. In particular using natural features within the site, for example: hedging.	Hedgerows replanted using mixtures of species include Hawthorn, Holly and Blackthorn. Other hedges strengthened by a combination of the removal of unsuitable species, planting in available gaps and cutting and laying, encouraging wildlife and preventing unauthorised access	Wherever practical e.g. at boundaries and car parks, plots with severe perennial weed problems or in odd corners, hedges, plantations or simply grass banks are managed to enhance biodiversity. Reduce unnecessary maintenance e.g. high levels of strimming Identify projects to increase hedging, ditches to encourage toads (a natural predator of slugs), hedgehog habitats. Willow and hazel coppicing (for use by plot holders)
3D	Continue to support the development of the allotment associations and appropriate trading to support cost effective gardening and encourage organic or sustainable gardening. Opportunities for associations to sell surplus fruit and vegetables produced on allotments should be investigated. These may include sale days in allotment huts or the possible use of the Farmers Market.	Officers have begun to investigate the feasibility of sale at markets and to appropriate local organisations	There is not yet the organisational ability or support for selling surplus vegetables and fruit on a regular basis or even at local level. (e.g. at the trading huts). Ad hoc selling or bartering does go on and could be actively encouraged.

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

3E	Supply and use of water	Leak detection systems in place. Consumption constantly monitored Mulching to reduce irrigation needs promoted	Be more pro active in promoting and encouraging <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The use of rain water capture and storage. e.g. Investigate underground storage. 2. Mulches to conserve soil moisture 3. Timing of cropping to maximise soil water 4. Use of drought resistant species and varieties
3F	Recycling		Investigate opportunities to promote/reward recycling initiatives

TARGET AREA 4

4 Cultivating Good Administration

The need for good records and administration is essential for the efficient running of this public service and the development of a partnership approach to management.

At present all except one site, (Trews Weir) is managed directly by the Council. This self-management scheme has been a success due to the hard work and commitment of this group. It may never be suitable for all sites or desired by all allotment holders. However potential may exist if the commitment of a group is strong enough but support from the council would also be needed.

The recent development of the allotment associations could provide a platform to encourage the optimum participation for each group, at the level with which they are comfortable.

All records are maintained on a database subject to the Data Protection Act 1998. It would be beneficial if this could be transferred to the Asset Management system. If improved and meaningful participation is to be achieved and informed decisions made it is important that the way in which information is coded and held is progressively improved.

The improvements over the lifetime of the first Allotment Strategy has shown the benefits of better on-site customer care, forward planning, financial management, promotion of sites to a wider audience and supporting the development of the associations.

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
4A	To encourage the Allotment Associations to be active in providing a useful forum for their plot holders, in particular to have healthy and appropriate trading services to reduce the costs of	The reformation of the St Thomas & District Allotment Association at Guys /Hylton & Cowick Lane has been supported by the Council and they now have free use of the trading huts at the two sites. The Association now buys	Associations and Allotment Groups are beneficial on a number of levels, and should be actively encouraged in areas where there are currently no Allotment Associations or similar groups. See 2D.

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
	allotment gardening, to accurately represent the views of their members in resolving problems, prioritising any future spend and initiatives.	materials for other satellite sites and is working with Topsham Allotments Association and the Stoke Hill Association to reduce costs.	
4B	To carry out basic essential maintenance to the infrastructure of the sites and to consult the associations in the prioritisation of available funds for improvements.	<p>The 1996 Survey highlighted security, accessibility, and water as the key areas of concern. All these points have been addressed at the sites with the worst problems, and are a contributing factor to the success of allotments in Exeter. Security has been significantly improved on those sites where this was identified as affecting tenants adversely. Tracks have been upgraded and parking areas repositioned.</p> <p>Leak detection management has been installed to reduce costs of water leaks. An assessment of all water supplies is under way in order to plan replacement rather than react to leaks.</p>	Use the lessons learnt to inform other improvement programmes. Complete the assessment of water supply. Undertake “reality checks” to check quality of repairs and improvements
4C	Continue to improve clarity of accounting and decision-making and to investigate integrated computer system incorporating a Geographical Information System (GIS) for modern management of the service.	Allotment management is included in the specification. New IT system on-stream by March 2006	Map sites onto GIS Work towards expanding the use of Asset Management software
4D	Continue to improve the on site customer care for all plot holders	Site representatives are in place on most sites (see 2D)	Undertake another user survey to complement and update the 1996 data. (see also 2A) Site representatives are in place on most allotments, and it is policy to recruit then

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
			wherever it is practical to do so. Monitor the feedback from plot holders and gain insight into
4E	To review the tenancy agreement periodically, at least every five years. The purpose of this will be to ensure that the service continues to develop and the tenancies/leases reflect the current vision for allotments.	New Rules and Regulations are drafted. Rent collection now once per year instead of biannually.	The New Rules and Regulations are to be formally adopted in 2007. A full web presence was achieved some time ago
4F	To provide support and advice to groups who wish to move towards self-management either wholly or in part.	The success of the APEO in increasing allotment use and supporting Allotment Associations has resulted in plot holders being more than happy for the current situation to continue. Far from allotments closing, there is demand for more land for allotments, which is usually the starting points for associations or groups to seek to self manage. They also see the continued improvements across all sites as fair and equitable.	Maintain liaison with existing groups Consider self-management as part of any partnering arrangement with other bodies especially if this results in broader allotment provision.
4G	Ensure all income is collected and banked, and all payments made within guideline timescales.	Rent collection process complimented by Internal Audit	Continue assistance of Audit to ensure accuracy and probity in rent collection and banking

TARGET AREA 5

5 Maintaining Adequate Resources

There has been substantial investment in making improvements to site facilities, information and promotional activity.

Appendix 7 gives a summary breakdown of the budget currently provided by the Council. As at 2006/7, this is £38,850 for the year, supplemented by the budgeted rental income of £18,000, giving a total of £56,850 available for the allotment service.

Of this £16,920 is for maintenance and improvements. This part of the budget needs careful prioritisation as it is needed for both reactive and planned as well as cyclical grounds maintenance on the sites.

Direct comparison of rents is difficult as local authorities have different discount systems. The current charges and discounts are shown in Appendix 8 with some comparative data from other local authorities.

From time to time there may be opportunities to obtain some external funding through Government, European Union or Lottery Grants. Other opportunities for income generation may emerge, for example the various Lottery funding initiatives for health related promotions and community schemes. Funding has been achieved through the Council's Equalities funding.

Neither of these options is likely to provide the core funding required to maintain the service.

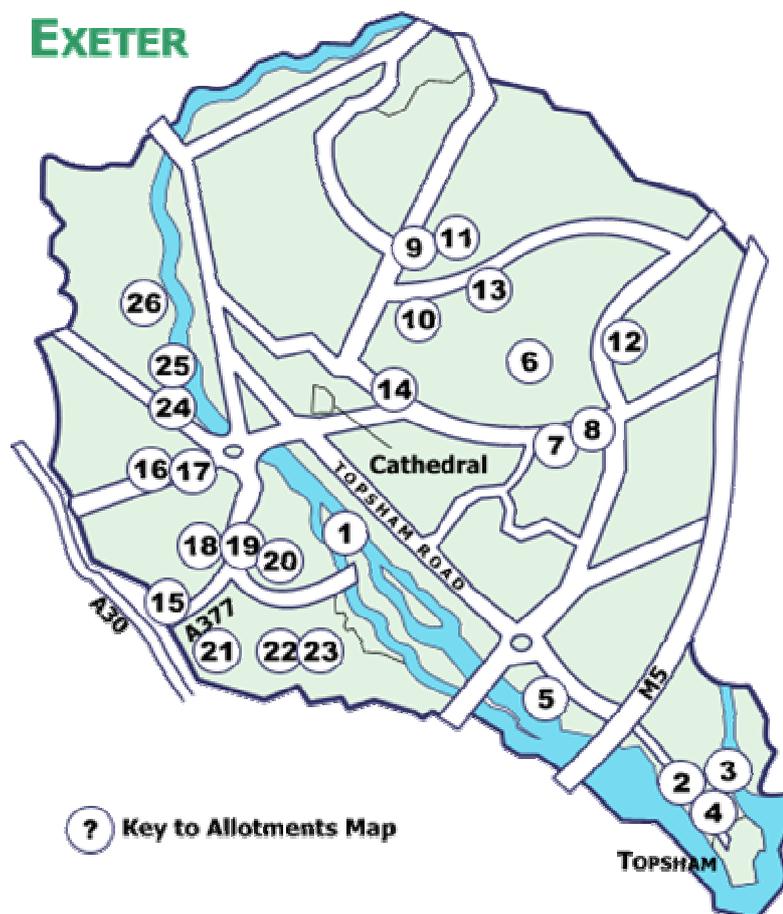
It may be possible to reduce the budgetary requirements of allotments by increasing rent, as demand currently exceeds supply. However, this could be seen as counter-productive in terms of community health, and would adversely affect the very people who most need allotments.

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

The proposals are:-

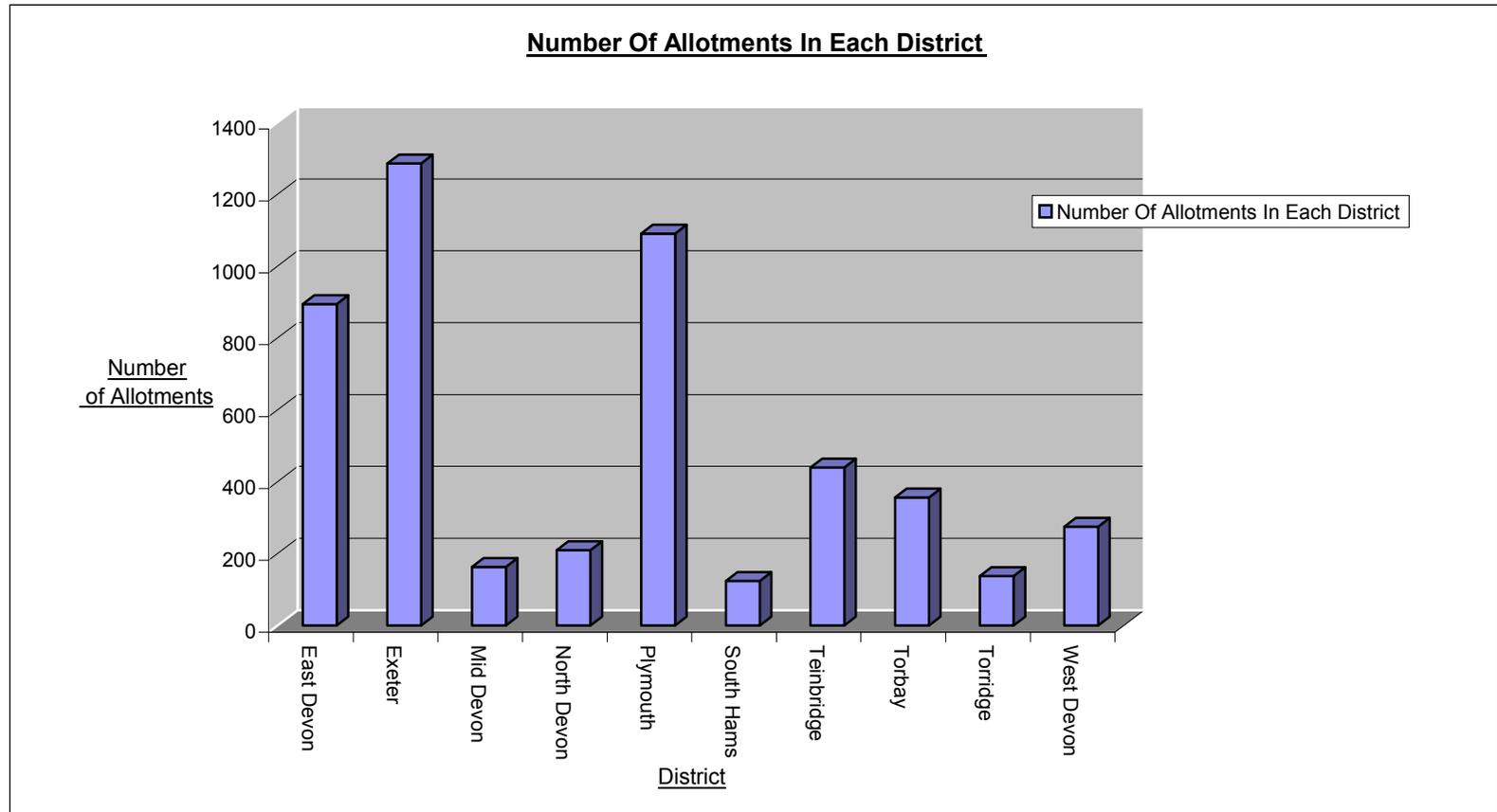
Target	Proposal	Action taken 2002-2007	Future actions from 2007
5A	Prioritise improvement projects with an annually revised action plan, drawn up in consultation with the AAMs, Field representatives and allotment associations. The Council will consider the allotment priorities each year against other projects also requiring funding and the capital resources available	Allotment infrastructure improvements targeted those issues of greatest concern to plot holders. The improved communications between field representatives, AAMs and the APEO has resulted in an understanding of prioritisation and phasing of works.	Continue the long term planning and phasing of improvement schemes.
5B	Seek opportunities for external funding for improvement or promotional projects and apply as found appropriate	Successful in funding works to improve disabled access at Marypole allotments.	Continue to seek out additional funding streams, with a particular focus on equalities and sustainability.
5C	Due consideration and consultation will be given to the possibility of generating some income from the sale of non-viable sites or parts of sites.		Consideration to be given to any proposals that would be of long term overall benefit to allotment provision, e.g. land swaps
5D	The fees and charges will be reviewed from time to time, but with the value of low cost food production, healthy activity and social inclusion in mind.	Allotment rents are increased every two years in line with RPI.	Continue to increase rents as appropriate. Consider the value of rent increases above inflation to fund more expensive capital improvements e.g. water management

ALLOTMENT LOCATIONS



- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1 Trews Weir | 10 Prince Charles Road | 19 Regent Street (Pinces 2) |
| 2 Butts Park | 11 Mincinglake Road | 20 Ashwood Road |
| 3 Cemetery | 12 Hospital Lane | 21 Ide Lane |
| 4 Sunhill | 13 Beacon Lane | 22 Clapperbrook Field 1 |
| 5 Glasshouse Lane | 14 Polsloe Road | 23 Clapperbrook Field 2 |
| 6 Hamlin Lane | 15 Cowick Lane | 24 Guys |
| 7 Whipton Lane | 16 Newman Road (East) | 25 Hylton |
| 8 Sweetbrier Lane | 17 Newman Road (West) | 26 Rackfields |
| 9 Marypole Road | 18 Pinces 1 | |

Not to Scale.

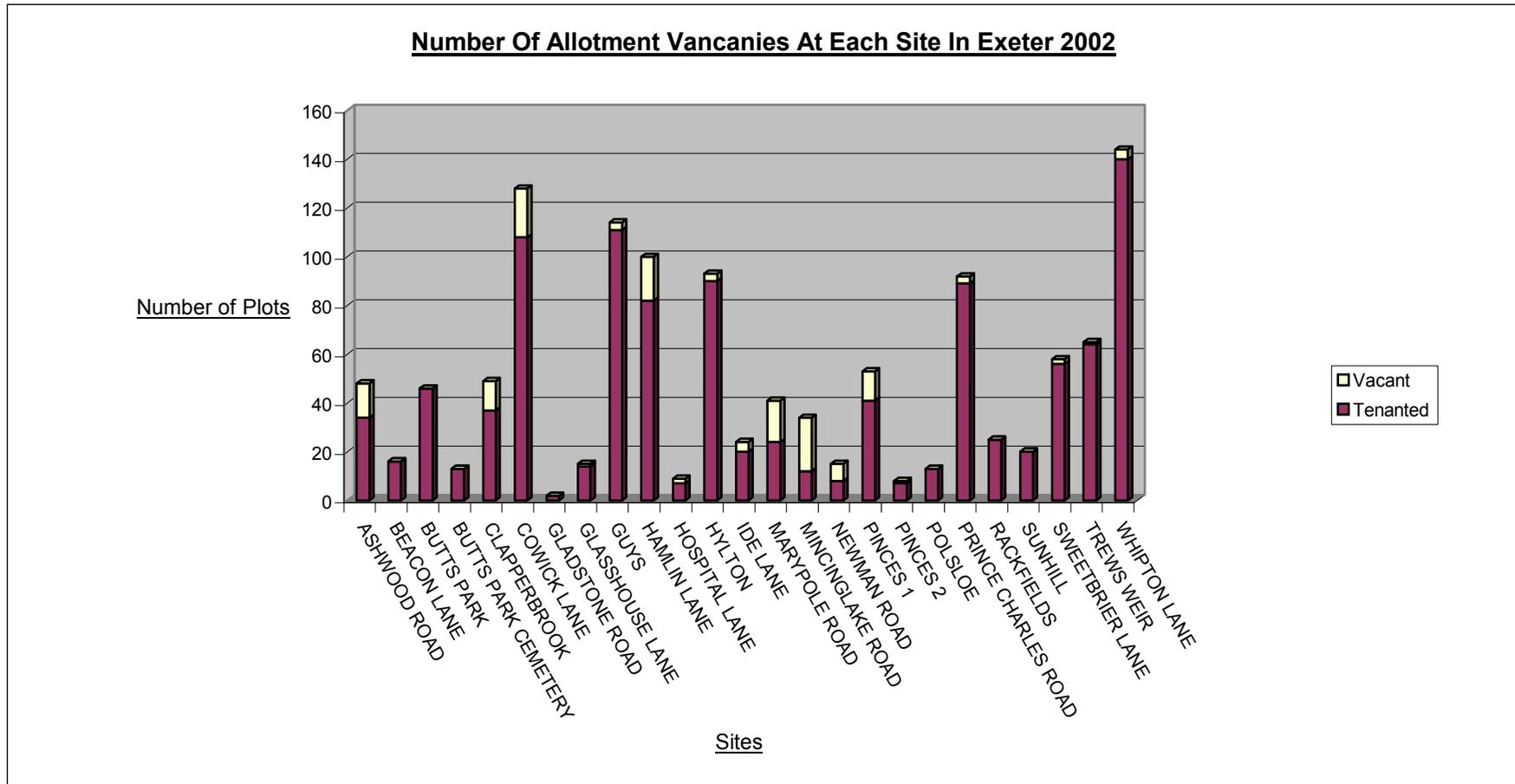


APPENDIX 3

A TABLE TO SHOW THE SPREAD OF ALLOTMENT PROVISION
ACROSS THE CITY

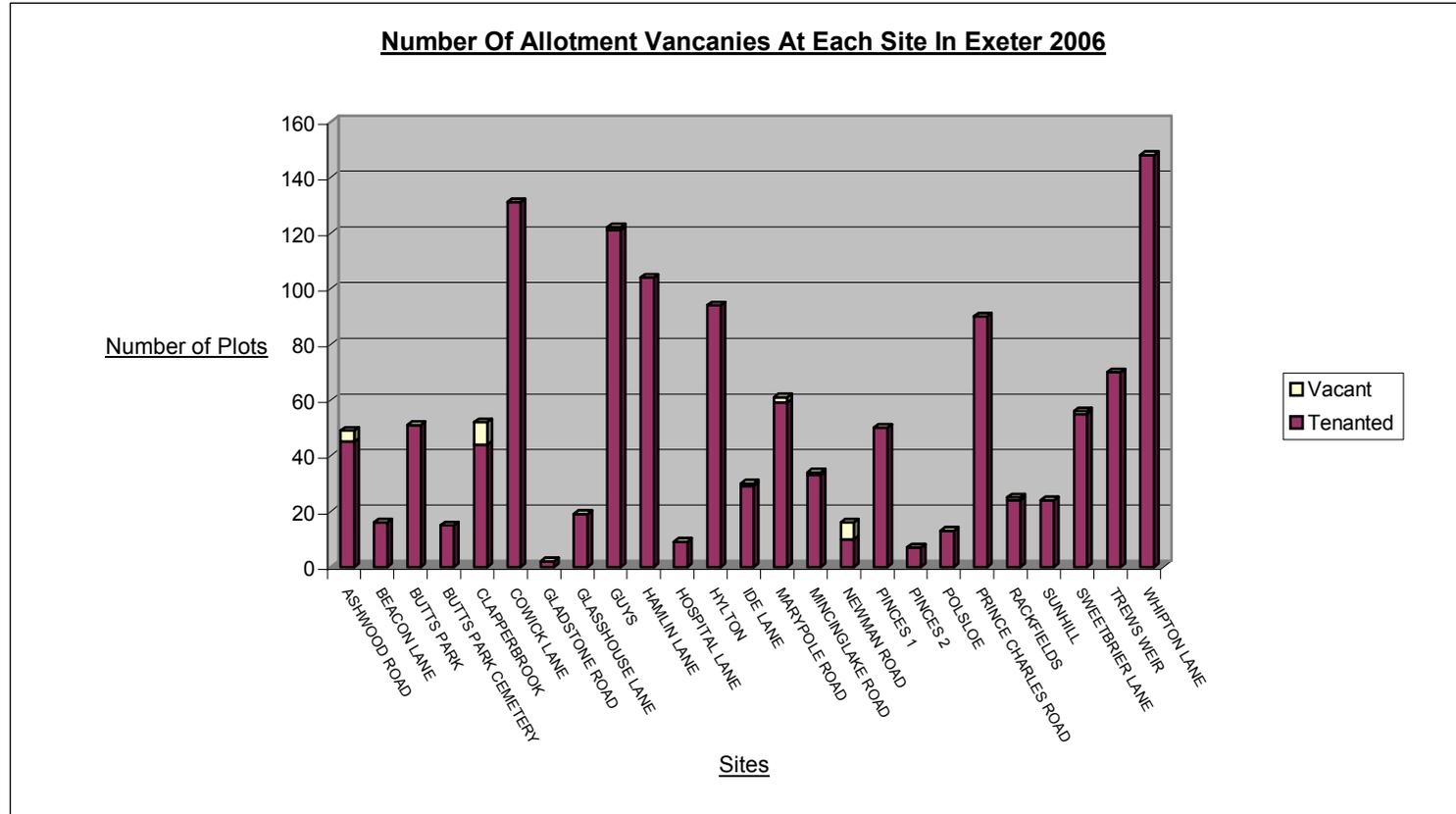
Map Reference	Allotment Site	Ward	Number of Plots 2006	Number of Plots 2002
1	Trews Weir	Alphington	70	66
2	Butts Park	Topsham	51	44
3	Cemetery	Topsham	15	14
4	Sunhill	Topsham	24	23
5	Glasshouse Lane	Priory	19	19
6	Hamlin lane	Whipton Barton	104	101
7	Whipton Lane	Whipton Barton	148	146
8	Sweetbrier Lane	Whipton Barton	56	57
9	Marypole Road	Pennsylvania	61	30
10	Prince Charles Road	Polsole	90	91
11	Mincinglake Road	Mincinglake	34	34
12	Hospital Lane	Whipton Barton	9	9
13	Beacon Lane	Mincinglake	16	16
14	Polsloe Road	Newtown	13	13
15	Cowick Lane	Alphington	131	127
16	Newman Road (East)	Cowick	10	9
17	Newman Road (West)	Cowick	6	6
18	Pinces 1	Alphington/ St Thomas	50	49
19	Regent Street (Pinces 2)	Alphington/ St Thomas	7	6
20	Ashwood Road	Alphington	49	45
21	Ide Lane	Alphington	30	29
22	Clapperbrook Field 1	Alphington	26	21
23	Clapperbrook Field 2	Alphington	26	26
24	Guys	Exwick	122	114
25	Hylton	Exwick	94	93
26	Rackfields	Exwick	25	25
			1286	1213

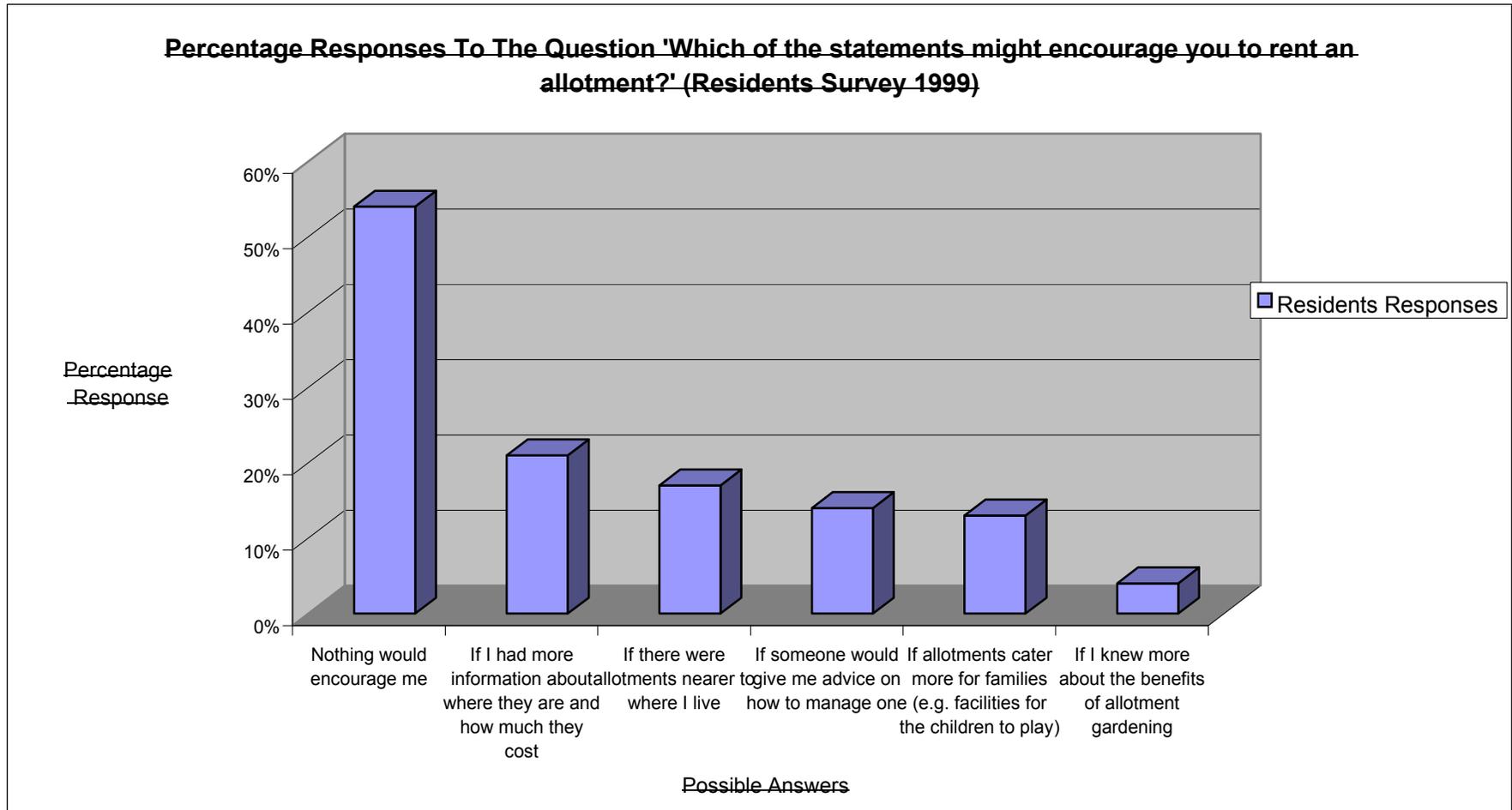
Increase in plot numbers due primarily to splitting large plots into smaller ones.

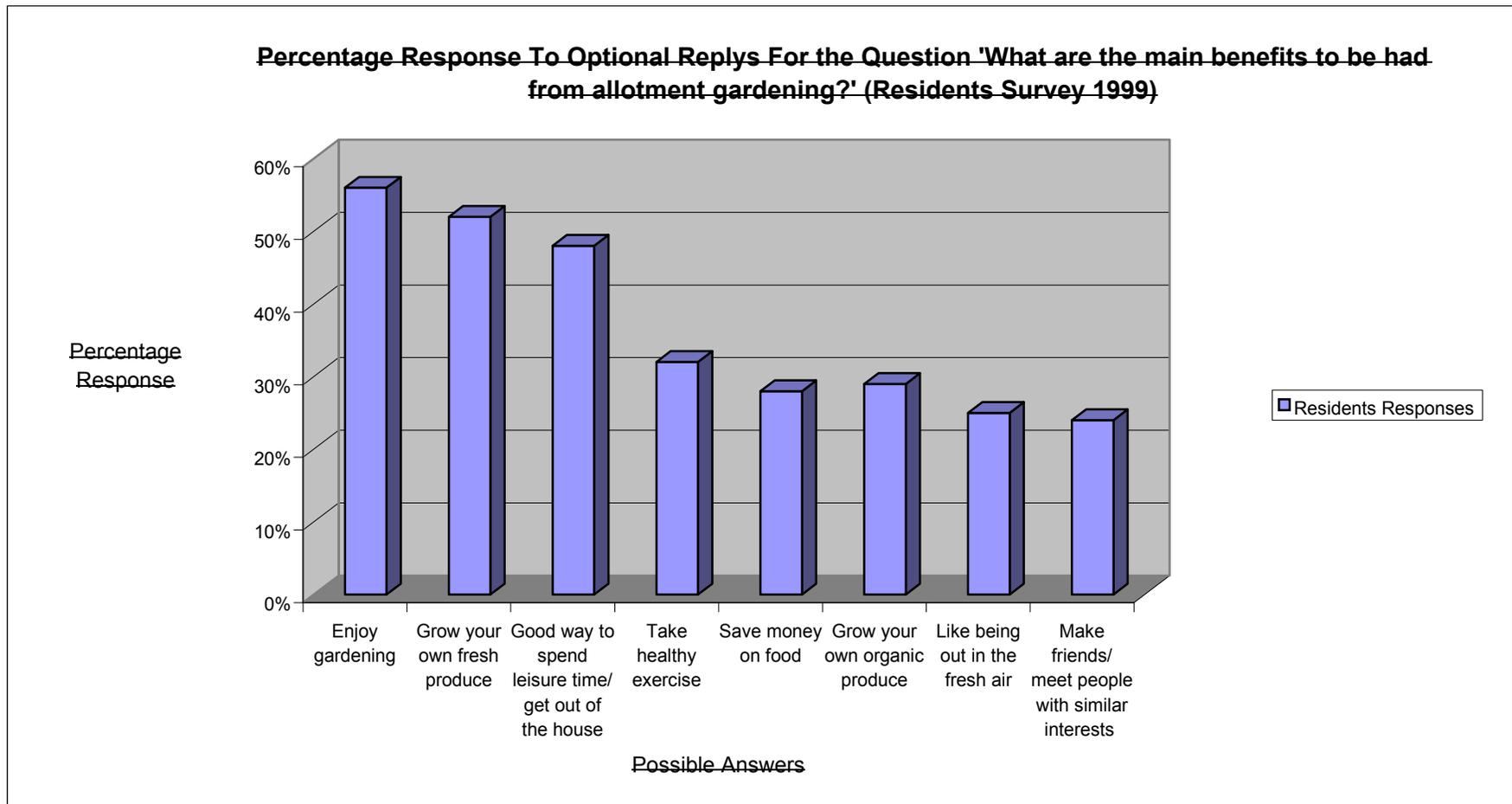


ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

APPENDIX 4a







**ALLOTMENT BUDGET 2006/7
SUMMARY BREAKDOWN**

Overheads	£
Administration	13,780
Self Management and Rent	1,580
Staff Pay	16,070
AAM Commission	3,400
Cleansing	810
Water	4,290
Sub Total	<u>39,930</u>
 <u>Reactive and Planned Maintenance</u>	
Reactive Work	11,130
Planned Maintenance Work	5,790
Sub Total	<u>16,920</u>
TOTAL BUDGET	<u>56,850</u>
 Rental Income	 18,000
Balance provided by Council	38,850

A BRIEF HISTORY OF EXETER'S ALLOTMENTS

It is certain that a number of allotment sites were in use in Exeter in the late nineteenth century. One of the first allotments was believed to be on the Water Lane site, currently occupied now by derelict industrial buildings.

Ashwood Road Allotments would appear to have the distinction of the oldest allotment site still in existence. In 1920 the rent was one shilling and eight pence a square pole. On the 20th February 1920, the St Thomas Allotment Holders Protection Association was formed. One of the founder members and early Chairman was T A C Coles. On the 30th July 1920 Guys Field was donated by the Guys family to the City Council, and by September 1921 the list of sites included Regent Street, Cowick Lane (not the current site), Guys Field, Exe Street, Railway (probably Ashwood), Exwick, Okehampton Street and Buddle Lane.

In 1946 the current Cowick Lane site was obtained from a farmer named Bonus.

Between the wars the St Thomas area was heavily populated by manual workers. As a consequence there was substantial demand for allotments in this area. It is known that there were allotments located in such areas as Pennsylvania, but it should be remembered that much of the development in Stoke Hill, Whipton, Barton and Wonford was post war. Wards such as Pinhoe at the time were not even within the Exeter City Council boundary. Thus 'the St Thomas Allotments Association grew and, until recently, remained one of the largest and strongest Allotment Associations in the City.

Following the war, and particularly in the housing developments east of the City, further allotment provision was made by both purchasing land for the specific purpose of creating allotments, and by designating areas within new housing estates as allotment sites. When Topsham was incorporated into the City, the allotment sites at Rushmoor, Sunhill Cemetery and Butts Park came under the management of the City Council.

During the Second World War many of the playing fields in the City were cultivated to grow food. Immediately after the war, the desire to grow food continued for some while, but by the 1970s it was clear that, in some areas, there was over provision of allotments. Lambert Road and Trews Weir No 1 allotments have been closed and, more recently,

Tithe Barn Lane and Rushmoor allotments have followed, and part of Hylton allotment was used for housing.

Since 2002 the occupancy rate within Exeter has increased considerably, to the extent that there are significant waiting lists on most sites. Exeter has been in the vanguard of a recent national re-awakening of interest in food production at a local and personal level. .

PRINCIPAL LEGISLATION RELATING TO ALLOTMENTS

1 The Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908

This repealed and consolidated the previous law, and deals almost entirely with the provision of allotments and the compensation payable to tenants on the termination of their tenancies.

2 The Land Settlement (Facilities) Act 1919

This abolished the reference to "labouring population", which had been a previous requisite, and made Metropolitan Borough Councils allotment authorities for the first time.

3 The Allotments Act 1922

This gave some measure of security of tenure to the tenants and improved their rights to compensation on termination.

4 The Allotments Act 1925

For the first time this required Town Planning Authorities to give special consideration to allotments when preparing their town planning schemes.

5 The Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1926

This was primarily concerned with smallholdings.

6 The Agricultural Land (Utilisation) Act 1931

This was a measure to relieve unemployment at the time, by encouraging allotments and smallholdings.

7 The Allotments Act 1950

This was passed as a consequence of the report of the Allotments Advisory Committee, although not all the recommendations were implemented. In particular it improved the security of tenure in respect of allotment gardens and amended the law relating to allotment tenancies. It also restricted the obligations of Local Authorities in the matter of allotment provision and increased the amount that may be expended out of the rates on allotments.

Subsequent legislation, particularly the Town and Country Planning Act 1971, the Local Government Planning and Land Act 1980, and the Local Government and Planning (Amendment) Act 1981 have had considerable influence on forward planning of allotments.

LINKS TO EXETER'S VISION AND STRATEGIES

3.1 The Council's Mission and Vision Statements

"To enhance Exeter as the regional capital and to work in partnership to improve the quality of life for all people living, working and visiting the city".

These give strong support to the objectives of improving the quality of life for residents and the targeting of resources for community use.

3.2 The Leisure Strategy - Allotments are an important leisure facility and this strategy seeks to maximise the use of allotments as a valuable leisure resource, encouraging fitness in all age groups.

3.3 Equal Opportunities and Social Inclusion - Providing equality of access to all sections of the community is seen as central to the allotment service. This will be considered in the way in which we promote allotments, in any future improvements to the layout and facilities and the setting of charges.

3.4 The Environmental Strategy 2001-2006 (Environment and Climate Change Strategy 2006 -11 Final Draft Nov 2006) Local Agenda 21 - Links include water use, sustainable land use, health and organic and sustainable food production.

*The Council has adopted an **Environmental Mission Statement**, which states that we will:*

- carry out our functions with a consistent and integrated approach to the environment.*
- seek to minimise environmental damage and promote sustainable development.*
- manage and continually improve our environmental and sustainability performance.*

ALLOTMENT STRATEGY 2007-2011

3.5 Community Safety Strategy

Encourage safety by good liaison, self-help schemes and designing in safety and a sense of security in any new or revised sites.

3.6 Health Improvement Plan

Links can be made to the Healthy Exeter promotions. Physical exercise in working and relaxing in the fresh air on allotments can benefit people physically and mentally. The production and consumption of vegetables and fruit will contribute to a healthy diet.

3.7 Local Development Framework

The Local Plan provides the overall planning guidance of the city. Zoning areas for development, such as housing or industry gives a vision of likely land use. It is also a useful tool to identify future needs, including allotments.

3.8 Other Links

This strategy has been prepared with reference to the Department of the Environment, Transport and Regions 'Good Practice Guide for the Management of Allotments' published in 2001.

THE ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT OF ENGLISH ALLOTMENTS.

Allotments, meaning parcels of land allocated to an individual, arose initially as a result of the enclosure movements in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Two classes of allotments, in particular, were created from some local enclosure acts, and neither of these allotments can now be used for other purposes.

Field Allotments

For the purpose of supplying fields for the poor of the parish.

Field Garden Allotments

These were gardens not exceeding a quarter of an acre. Appropriated by the Enclosure Commissioners for the labouring poor. The administration of these was passed to Parish Councils under the Local Government Act 1894. In the early part of the nineteenth century, prior to general allotments legislation, churchwardens were empowered to provide land for cultivation by the parish poor. The Allotments Extension Act of 1882 allowed land, held by charity trustees for the benefit of the poor, to be let as allotments to labourers and others.

The origins of allotments were almost totally rural. It was only in the nineteenth century that the idea of urban allotments took hold, and this culminated in the Allotment Acts of 1887 and 1890, which made the provision of allotments compulsory on any Local Authority where a need was shown to exist. The Smallholdings and Allotments Act 1908, consolidated these measures, and remains to the present day the principal act so far as allotments are concerned.

Today, allotment sites are a noticeable feature in most of our towns and, to a lesser extent, in villages. The allotments movement has been influenced this century by the following factors, many interacting with each other:

- (a) The further industrialisation and growth of towns and subsequent drift of populations away from the countryside.
- (b) The growth of the number of private allotments and the formation of local allotment societies.
- (c) The wars of 1914 -1918 and 1939 -1945 and, particularly, the Dig for Victory movement in the Second World War.
- (d) The large expansion in Local Authority housing immediately post 1945, with most houses having a garden.