

# REPORT ON ALLOTMENTS AUGUST 2021

This report has been prepared by the Parish Clerk, Clair Lewis. The information provided is as interpreted from completed questionnaires.

## Contents

Background .....	1
Response Rate .....	1
Togston Parish .....	2
Togston Crescent Allotments.....	3
East View Allotments.....	4
Issues requiring Policy Decisions.....	5
1. Underletting /Sharing Allotments.....	5
2. Priority for Allotments/First Refusal.....	6

## Background

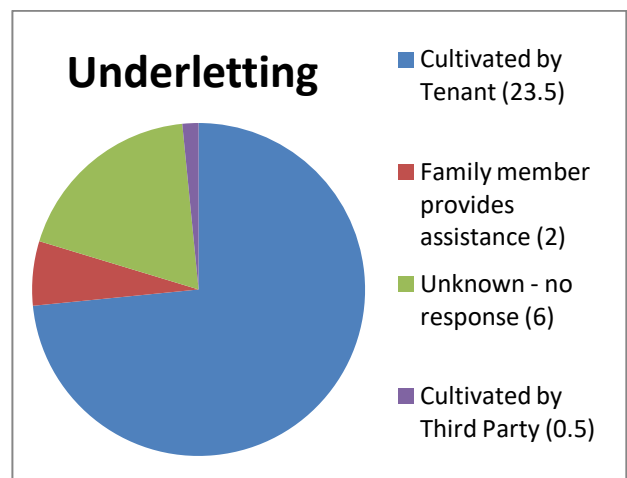
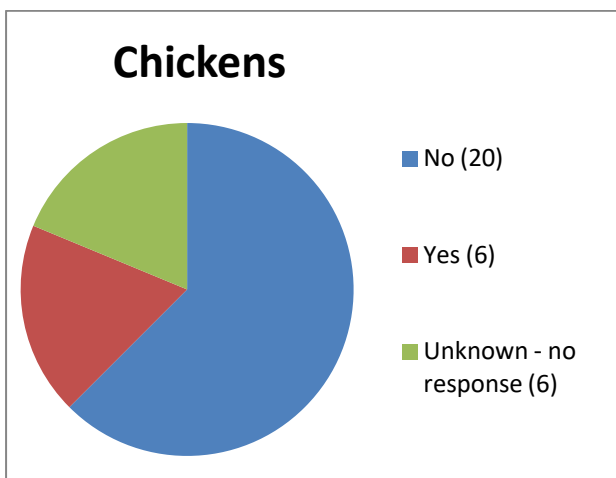
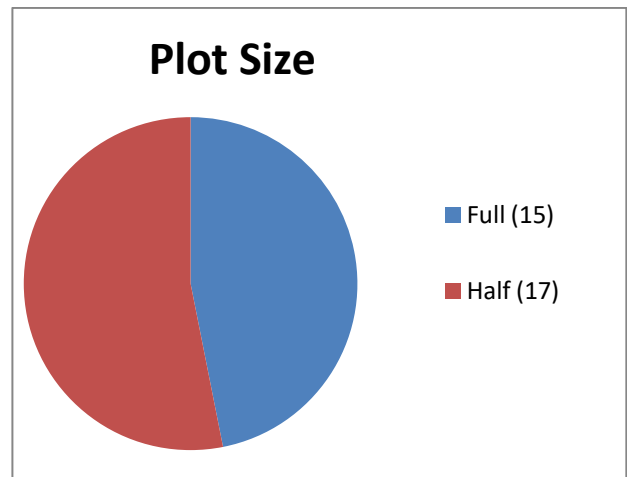
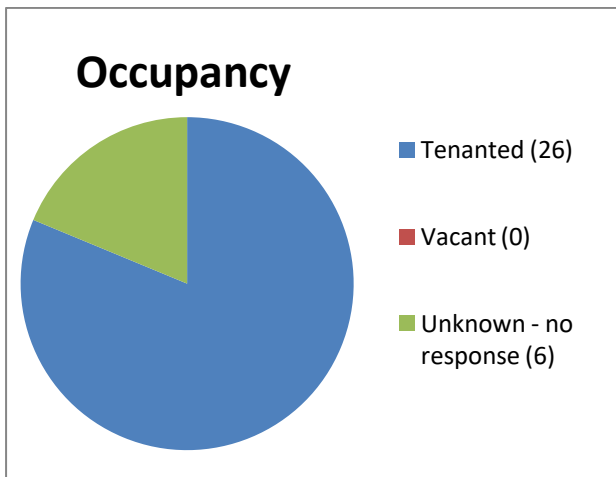
The Parish Council resolved to update its allotment register at its meeting on 19 July. Questionnaires were sent out to all allotment tenants at their last known address in July 2021 and were placed on allotments for which the tenant was not known. Tenants were asked for their contact details, allotment number and plot size (full or half), whether they kept chickens, whether they had any suggestions for improvements and whether they had any issues to report.

## Response Rate

The majority of the questionnaires have been returned with only a few from each site outstanding. The Clerk would like to thank the allotment tenants for their cooperation and speedy responses, which has been a huge help in bringing the allotment register up to date.

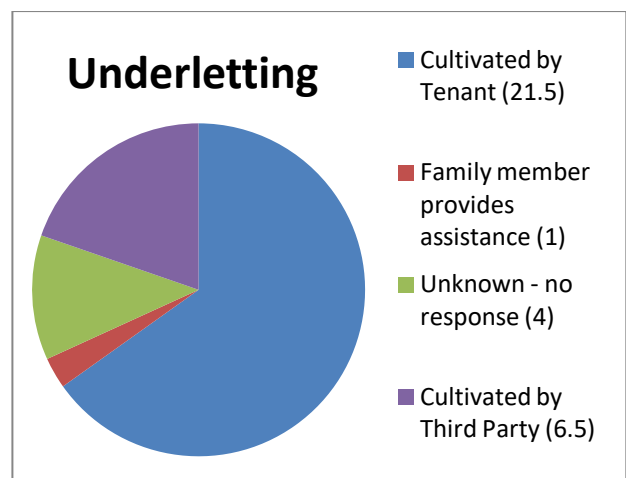
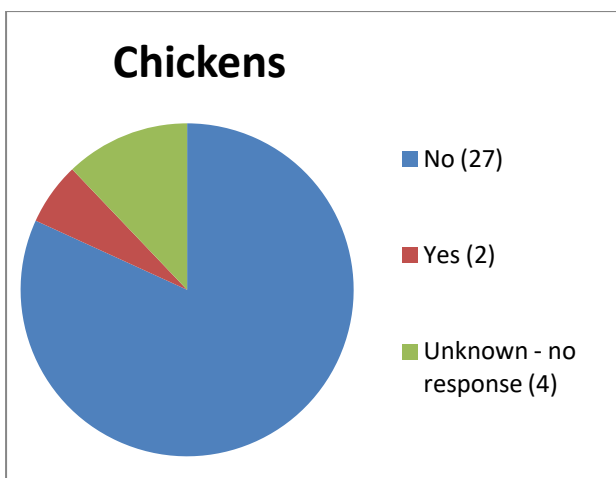
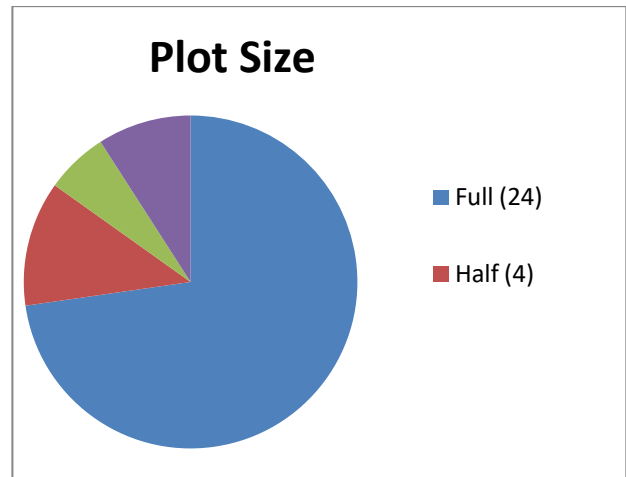
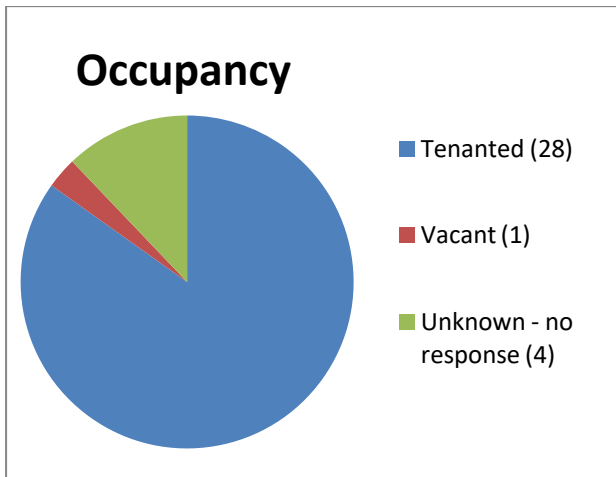
## Togston Parish

There are 32 allotments at this site. Fifteen are full size and seventeen are half size. One plot is partly used by a third party for hens. Two half plots are cultivated by the family member of the tenant to provide temporary assistance due to personal circumstances. The remaining plots are cultivated by the tenants. Six plots did not return a questionnaire. There are no known vacancies.



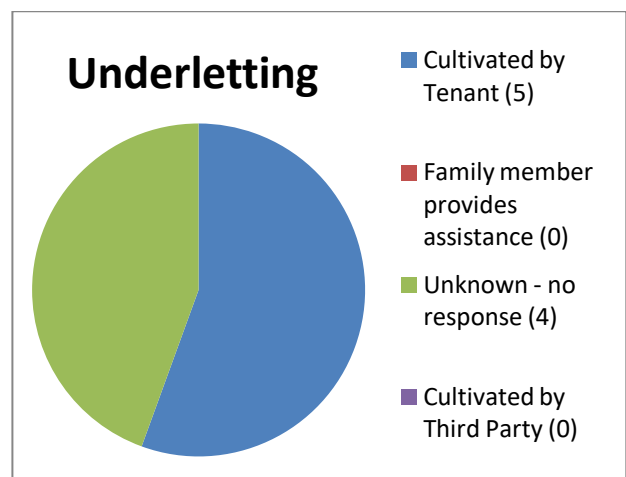
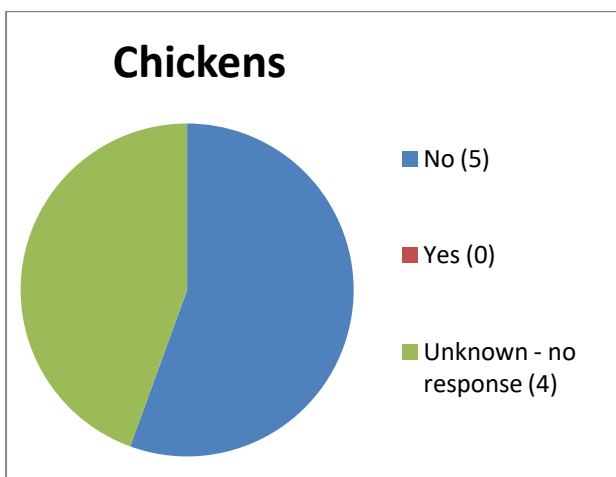
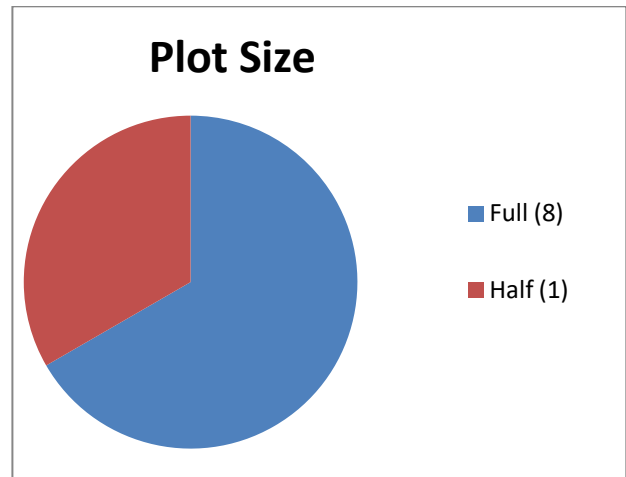
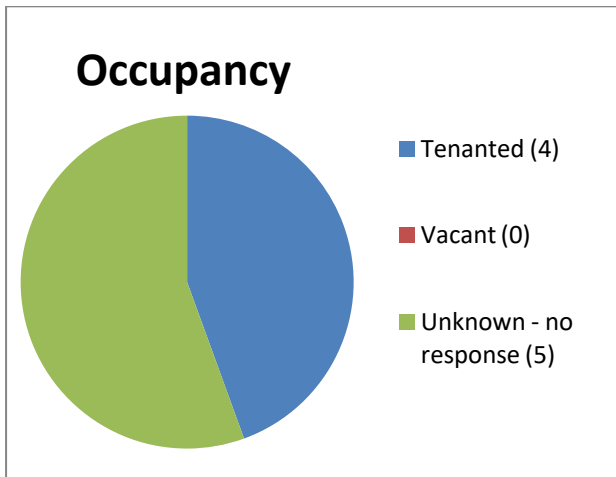
## Togston Crescent Allotments

There are 33 allotments at this site. Most are full size, with a few half plots. At the east end of the terrace, two plots have been divided into halves and thirds. Six plots are cultivated entirely (except for hedge cutting at one allotment) by a third party and one plot is partly cultivated by a third party. The remaining plots are cultivated by the tenant. Five plots did not return a questionnaire; one of these is known to be vacant.



## East View Allotments

There are 9 allotments at this site: these appear to be arranged into four double plots and one half plot. Only two questionnaires were returned.



## Issues requiring Policy Decisions

The following two issues need policy decisions to allow the Clerk to complete the review of tenants (and to resolve any underletting) and to begin allocating vacant allotments.

Helpful suggestions for improvements were received from a number of tenants along with some issues; these will be the subject of a second report to be presented at a subsequent meeting.

### 1. Underletting /Sharing Allotments

Underletting is a breach of the tenancy agreement. It was resolved at the Council's meeting on 19 July that if underletting is taking place, the tenancy would be terminated and the plot would be offered to the person cultivating it in the first instance, then to the waiting list if the person cultivating it does not wish to continue.

Currently some plots are wholly cultivated by a third party with no involvement from the registered allotment tenant. In some cases, this arrangement is linked to the tenancy of a particular property. The arrangement is 'free of charge'. In other cases, family members have taken over the cultivation, in one case on a temporary basis and in another on a more permanent basis.

#### Decisions to be taken:

a. What does the Council consider to be "underletting"?

Does money have to change hands?

Is it enough that the use of the allotment by a third party is on a permanent or continuous basis rather than temporary help (for example, during maternity leave or sickness)?

Is it where the third party has exclusive use?

b. Is "allotment sharing" permitted?

For example, working together with a third party to cultivate the whole allotment or dividing it into sections and each taking a part?

Would there be a minimum amount of work that the main tenant would need to do, or could the "sharer" cultivate the whole plot?

At what point would this become "underletting"?

c. If sharing is permitted, what happens when the registered allotment tenant gives up the tenancy/dies?

Does the "sharer" get first refusal?

Should it depend on how long the sharing has been taking place, and/or should there be a minimum period to avoid last minute sharing to 'jump the waiting list'?

If they are to get first refusal, a registration system for sharing would need to be introduced. How many people would be allowed to "share" a single plot?

## 2. Priority for Allotments/First Refusal

At present, the Council has a waiting list for allotments. It is important that vacant allotments are allocated fairly and that everyone has an equal opportunity to have an allotment.

### Decisions to be taken:

- a. Should certain applicants get priority on the waiting list?

For example, should residents within the parish be on a Priority Waiting List and those from outside the parish be on a secondary list?

Should priority be given to people without an allotment or should everyone be treated in strict order of application, regardless of whether they already have an allotment?

Should applicants be allowed to turn down an allotment and keep their place on the waiting list? Or do they have to take the first allotment they are offered? How many allotments should they be allowed to refuse before they lose their priority?

- b. Should new occupants (whether tenants or purchasers) of Togston Crescent be offered first refusal on the corresponding allotment if it is vacant?

This could result in them “jumping the waiting list” if there is one at the time.

If so, should it only be for the corresponding allotment to the house number? What if this is already taken?

If so, should this principle be extended to East View Allotments as some of these are tenanted by residents of East View?

- c. Should family members or allotment helpers/sharers be offered first refusal when the registered tenancy ends?

Family members? If so, which? Spouses? Partners? Children? Grandchildren? Other relatives?

Should the registered allotment tenant be required to register their “successor” with the Council?

If the Council allows family members or sharers to take on the tenancy after it ends, how many times can this happen? For example, could three generations of the same family have it one after another? Four?

Do they need to fulfil any requirements, for example, to be on the waiting list?

(see also notes about sharing allotments in the section on Underletting/Sharing above)