

## **Cripley Meadow Allotment Association Driving and Parking policy – updated June 2020**

The law, our agreement with our landlord and our Constitution all make it clear that allotments are for growing things, not for parking on.

Where they are able to do so, members should walk or cycle to the site.

Members should never drive or park on the grass, orchards, etc, nor should they obstruct or block the tracks except briefly while unloading and loading. Once the loading/unloading is done, members need to move their vehicle to a legitimate parking space on site, or the council car park.

The legitimate parking spaces on site are regularly publicised and available to view on the map on the website. Members shouldn't park anywhere else on site.

Those who drive regularly to the site should park in the adjoining Walton Well Road council car park, so that the few on-site spaces are shared fairly across the whole membership. The Council offer CMAA members a reduced rate (£20) annual permit. (Unlike some associations, CMAA does not restrict new applications to those living in a particular area. However, when given the site tour, applicants who don't live close to the site are told that they are expected to apply for a permit to the Car Park). [Information about the annual permit can be found on the Council's website.](#)

Members should drive slowly on the site – at walking pace or thereabouts – as pedestrians and cyclists and animals can behave unpredictably.

The ultimate sanction for breaking driving and parking rules, as for breaking other rules of the Association, is loss of membership.

The tracks are Victorian in origin, not built for the weight of modern vehicles. Members should minimise wear and tear on the tracks by using alternative means to travel to and from the allotments whenever possible. They should never drive when the track surface is wet or frozen (as this disproportionately erodes it) or when there is water lying anywhere on the site (as the gravel beds under the site shift when flooded and track foundations are particularly vulnerable then). This is not a theoretical risk – we have twice had expensive repairs to collapses. Maintaining the tracks costs the Association thousands of pounds a year. Rebuilding the tracks from scratch is unaffordable, so we must preserve what we have.

Most allotment holders understand that there are environmental reasons for reducing car usage. Both in terms of global warming, and in terms of making the site a quieter, less polluted space for all to enjoy.

Over the last few years, the Committee has received increasing complaints and comments about others' driving and parking. The matter has been aired at the last two Annual Reports and AGMs, as well as numerous newsletters and conversations on site, and a driving and parking survey was sent to all members late in 2019 to gather data. 114 members (just over half of our membership) responded. The key points are that the majority are in favour of drivers driving very slowly on site, but there was no general appetite for radical change in our existing vehicular access and parking arrangements.

Covid-19 has seen an increase in site use, a need for the Committee to remind members more often about the rules and an appeal to all members not to drive if possible, and to leave on-site parking spaces for those who really need them (health conditions, high risk of infection...). There has been a huge degree of support from the membership.

The Committee keeps policy constantly under review, aiming to strike the balance between different member perspectives. We continue to

- communicate generally and 1:1 about parking and the agreed rules of our allotment community
- encourage fewer car trips
- remind frequent-drivers to get car park permits
- educate drivers to not drive onto the site when there is standing water or frost and provide financial information so that members understand the high cost of maintaining our tracks, and the prohibitive cost of replacing them
- remind drivers that the lower speeds reduce the risk of accident and injury to other site users
- raise awareness that the lower speed also reduces wear on the tracks which is especially dramatic when there is subsurface soil moisture.

The ongoing re-negotiation of our lease with our landlord, Oxford City Council, may well bring further changes to driving and parking arrangements.