

Ashley Vale Allotment Association

Trees, Shrubs & Hedges policy

Trees, shrubs & hedges form an important part of biodiversity in the landscape of our allotment site, indeed Ashley Vale is named after its Ash trees. Trees support insect and bird life and form networks in the soil with fungi. Trees are appreciated by many plot holders for their beauty and shade in the summer. We have many old mature fruit trees which would not normally be allowed on allotments. Many of these are special & unusual varieties which have provided and will continue to provide bountiful harvests for decades. We want to look after all of these whilst reducing the number of trees causing shading issues now, or in the near future including Ash, Sycamore, Buddlia and especially non-native trees such as Bay, Conifers and young Holm Oak.

Field reps are planning to identify some problematic small trees and will ask plot holders to remove them. If you are unable to do the work yourself we can help and we plan to run a volunteer day to cut down some trees by February 2025. If you have a tree which you would like to see removed or reduced, please contact your field rep. Failure to reduce or remove problematic trees could result in a plot eviction notice so do discuss any concerns you have with your field rep.

Bristol City Council allotment rules state that 'No large or ornamental trees are allowed on a plot. If you notice seedling trees take them out.' Bristol City Council go on to say 'Removal of a large tree must only be carried out by a qualified person, you don't have to get permission to remove a tree if it's small – as a rough guide, if you can fit your hands around the trunk you don't need permission.'

Can we remind all plot holders of the rules:

Fruit trees

Must be on dwarfing rootstock, at least .5m in from the edge of the plot and not causing significant shade to adjacent plots. A maximum of 25 % of plot area may be covered when the trees are fully grown. No more than 3 free standing dwarf fruit trees are allowed but more varieties might be accommodated by carefully sited and well managed cordons, espaliers & stepovers.

Apples must be on rootstocks M20,M26,M27,M29, M9 only; if the rootstock is not specified do not buy it

Problem Plants

You must remove **tree seedlings** when they are small.

You must not plant **fast growing invasive plants** and you must remove any on your plot including Willow, Bay, Bamboo, Buddlia, Holly, (Grape vines)

Remove **non-native trees** such as Conifers & Bay completely.

If you have a vine, bay, buddleia or willow tree that you don't want to remove completely please speak to us, it may be possible for you to keep it if you prune it back to within 1m of the ground by the end of February each year.

Do not plant any more **hedges**, we have enough now. From 2005 to 2020 we planted a lot of new hedges for erosion control, windbreaks & wildlife value, we do not need any more.

Carry out all major tree work between October and March to avoid the nesting season of birds.

Ashley Vale Allotment committee acknowledges the value of mature native trees for wildlife and a number of historic fruit trees for their wonderful harvest, all these and our rich diverse hedges will form a sustainable feature of our landscape for decades to come.

Ashley Vale Allotment Association, founded 1917.

Working with St Werburghs City Farm & Bristol City Council.