

West Oxford Allotments

Osney, St Thomas & New Botley Allotment Association



Introduction

There has been some discussion around a potential plot annual rent increase as the rents have remained fixed for the past 5 years. The association has been encountering some increase costs for water, electricity and it looks as though the City council will also be increasing their site rents in 2026 as the lease negotiations with the Oxford Federation look to be concluding. As part of the lease negotiations there also appears to be more responsibility for site maintenance being put onto the associations, such as boundary fence maintenance etc. With these things in mind a plot rent review is probably overdue rent review.

Previous Accounts

Looking at the prior years accounts it looks like from a running cost point of view we are losing money which is being made up by the work done by the shop volunteers and on some occasions by the association's financial reserves, which while keeps the rent for individuals low it risks the association not being on a sound financial footing come the lease changes putting more of a financial burden on the association to maintain the sites or deal with unexpected costs such as unchecked water leaks.

The below is a summary of the last three treasures report figure, with new purchases excluded from the expenses.

Item	2022	2023	2024*
Site Lease	£1,139.65	£1,139.65	£1,139.65
Electricity	£347.19	£187.81	£339.14
Water	£1,822.05	£1,138.06	£8,561.95
Site Maintenance	£1,560.76	£3,936.15	£1,807.44
Other Costs	£162.00	£969.66	£448.93
Total Running Costs	£5,031.65	£7,371.33	£12,297.11
Rent Income	£5,853.04	£5,634.27	£5,628.89
Account Interest	£0.00	£52.46	£100.16
Profit/Loss	£821.39	£1,737.06	£6,568.06
Shop Income	£2,183.52	£1,926.16	£3,033.56
Profit after Shop Income	£3,004.91	£189.10	£3,534.50

*2024 report is draft, the sharp increase in water was due to a significant over winter leak, a reasonable estimate should be in the £2,000 range, resulting in a small overall loss and a profit after shop income.

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Council Rent Increases



The proposed council rent increase while an increased cost, isn't that significant given the accounts above, essentially being an annual increase of just over £100. In addition to the annual increase there is also a back payment of £325 which can be covered by reserves.

Site	Rents from 2015	Proposed Rent	% Increase
Botley Meadow	£284.07	£311.12	9.52%
Twenty Pound Meadow	£855.58	£937.06	9.52%
Total	£1,139.65	£1,248.18	

New Projects Requiring Capital

There have been a number of projects proposed which would require capital outlay, which would not be considered as part of the site running costs, such as converting TPM to harvested river water, communal polytunnel space, Toilet facilities, accessible raised beds, improvements to the shop amongst many. Some of which would reduce running costs, increase income and improve the facilities of the site. With out a reserve the association wouldn't be able to achieve these while maintaining a strategic reserve for unexpected costs of maintaining the sites.

We would propose that profit from the shop is not used for overcoming shortfalls but is ringfenced for projects that improves the sites and funds, alongside grant application and donations, the capital outlay required to achieve the projects.

Shop Finances

If the shop profit is to be accurately reflected then it would make sense for it to have separate accounts, in that any costs introduced by having the shop are accounted for by the shop, such as electricity use and not reported as Association costs. This would require some seed funding by the Association to cover the first pre-season restocking but then could be managed on a self-sustaining basis. And any annual profits being reserved for restocking and capital projects.

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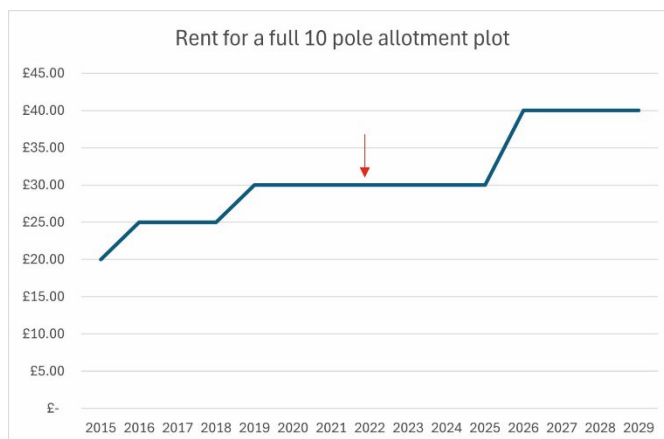
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Options

In keeping with past practice, we should probably have raised the rent at some point around 2021/22 but kept it static for various reasons.

1. Keep rents the same, but use current reserves to fund projects to reduce running costs, such as TPM water harvesting and increase income through projects such as Polytunnel renting, starter plots etc.
2. Increase Plot Rents across both sites to cover all running costs and generate a surplus for the strategic reserve and capital projects. We would propose £40/£20
3. Ringfence shop profit and income from grants in a separate account for capital outlay projects, report separately



Possible Model

Item	Budget
Site Lease	£1,250
Electricity	Shop Accounts as only user
Water	£2,000
Site Maintenance	£3,000
Other Costs	£500
Total Running Costs	£6,750
Rent Income*see below	£7,920
Profit/Loss	£1,170

Rent Estimations		
Full Plots Available on TPM	165	(179 plot numbers, 14 not for rent)
Occupancy Estimate at TPM	87%	(19 Vacant Oct 2025)
Estimated Rented Plots TPM	144	
Full Plots Available on BM	55	(59 plot numbers, 4 not for rent)
Occupancy Estimate at BM	98%	(1 vacant July 2025)
Estimated Rented Plots BM	54	
Total Rented Plots	198	
Annual Rent Charge per Full Plot	£40.00	(see appendix with some comparisons)
Total Rental Income	£7,920	

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Appendix

Allotment Costs

AI Overview

The specific cost for Tilbury Lane allotments is not available, but costs for similar allotments in the Oxford area are approximately **£53 per year for a full (10 pole) plot** and **£29 for a half plot (5 pole)**, based on the East Ward Allotment Association rates for 2025/26. You should contact the Oxford City Council or your local allotment association for precise figures and to get on the waiting list, as plots are often in high demand. [🔗](#)

Approximate costs in Oxford

- **Full plot (10 poles):** About £53 per year [🔗](#)
- **Half plot (5 poles):** About £29 per year [🔗](#)
- **Other plot sizes:** Rents vary by plot size. For example, the Cripsey Meadow Allotment Association charges roughly £40 to £90 per year for plots, plus a small fee for membership in the local umbrella group. [🔗](#)

Some research done 2 or 3 years ago on other Oxford Association Fees that were publicly available at the time. The annual fee equivalent took into account ground rent and annual membership fees, but not one-off costs of joining fees or deposits.

Name	Annual Fee 10 pole equivalent
Barns Court, Cowley	£ 42.00
Barracks Lane, Cowley	£ 63.00
Cripsey Meadow, Walton Well Road	£ 110.50
Cotteslowe, Cotteslowe Park	£ 40.00
East Ward, Cricket Road	£ 40.00
Elder Stubbs Charity Allotments	£ 38.00
Fairacres Road, Iffley	£ 110.00
Lower Wolvercote, Wolvercote Common	£ 30.00
Marston Ferry & Blackhall, Marston Ferry Road	£ 32.00
South Ward, Redbridge	£ 20.00
Thompson Terrace, Rose Hill	£ 40.00
Botley & North Hinksey Parish Council	£ 30.00
Mean (Sum/Count)	£ 49.63
Median (middle value)	£ 40.00
Mode (most frequent)	£ 40.00