



# **St Ann's Allotments**

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**Hungerhill Developments Ltd - part of The Renewal Trust** 

## **St Ann's Allotments Management and Maintenance Plan Chapter 1**

This is the Introduction to the Management and Maintenance Plan.

Please note this document was written in 2019 so some information has changed and maybe out of date. We have updated some information about volunteering on site, the staff structure has been updated to show current staffing for the Allotments Team and information has been added to show changes to the Board of Directors. Below is a brief timeline from funding being awarded to present day to give some context to this document.

- HLF funding was awarded in May 2019.
- Work tendered out and consultants appointed in September 2019.
- March 2020 the county went into lockdown due to the Covid-19 pandemic.
- The Allotment Team focussed on keeping the site open for plot holders only.
- Project files were completed with an evaluation report and filed with HLF in December 2020.
- During 2021, the ongoing restrictions affected tenants, visitors and staff alike with the visitor centre remaining closed.
- Covid safe one-to-one vacant plot tours returned in May 2021 along with a plant swap and sale. This valuable social event, evidenced the caution with which people were reconnecting.
- From spring of 2021 we focussed on proactive site management, which has involved a degree of 'catch up' for the time when operations were negatively impacted during various lockdowns/restrictions.

Through our Newsletters we have tried to communicate the site priorities for re-opening along with information about the two specific areas of work – 'starter plots' and 'woodland plots' along with the success of DEFRA funding for the New Roots programme.

# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Concept of the Management Plan

This plan provides the basis for managing, maintaining and developing the allotments for the next 10 years. It also operates within the framework of a 30 year lease and service level agreement between Nottingham City Council and the Renewal Trust (commenced in 2008) for the future management of the site. It is anticipated that this plan will be revised and updated annually in line with the milestones of the action plan and delivery of any capital improvements, with major reviews in Year 3 (2020/23), Year 5 (2024/25), and Year 10 (2029/30).

In producing the plan, we seek to bring together the management, maintenance and development of St Ann's Allotments into an overall framework and to achieve the vision:

*"To protect and preserve the heritage of St Ann's Allotments, ensure high quality maintenance and continued improvement and secure a sustainable and resilient future for the allotments so that continue being used as allotments for local gardeners and as a resource for the wider community that encourages involvement in activities and events, volunteering and learning".*

This plan is intended to be both a working document and a reference document which will inform HDL and key stakeholders as to the management principles involved in maintaining the allotments to a high standard. It is a working document in that it contains actions and timetables that will need to be implemented and reviewed. It is a reference document as the plan does not contain every piece of information needed to run the site – it provides references to other documents, policies and strategies and explores their implications for the allotments. As such, the plan should be read in conjunction with these documents in order to ensure efficient and appropriate management, maintenance and development of the site.

This plan has been prepared for a number of audiences; the HDL board, site based staff, key stakeholders / partner organisations, volunteers and ploholders. The plan has also been produced to assist with achieving the Green Flag Community Award for the full allotment site and as such we have used the award criteria as a structure for the analysis section 3.6. The plan also has the potential to be of interest to future funding bodies.

## 1.2 Management Plan Production

The production of this plan has been driven by the following factors:

- The need to identify overall improvements and deliver them in a phased approach at the allotments.
- The need to enhance and conserve the historic and nature conservation value of the site through restoring the built heritage and enhancing wildlife plots and make a positive environmental and ecological impact.
- The need to ensure that any improvements to facilities / future developments are in keeping with the historic character of the site.
- To improve allotment infrastructure to include upgrading of the borehole and gates.
- To maximise plot uptake and enhance use of the allotments through a targeted programme of plot clearance and the provision of new plots to include woodland plots, accessible plots and starter plots.
- To maximise the value of the allotments and their development as assets for neighbourhood renewal and environmental sustainability.
- To provide high quality long-term management and maintenance for the allotments, with secure revenue funding and active involvement of stakeholders and plot holders.
- The desire to identify opportunities for HDL and key stakeholders to work more closely together to provide an exciting range of activities that will increase the range of audiences and strengthen links with the community.
- To increase the use, awareness and appreciation of the allotments and prevent barriers to access.
- To enhance interpretation of the allotments, including the creation of a heritage trail with an associated trail map and leaflet.
- To increase volunteering opportunities for gardeners, local people and businesses and enhance skills through training, contributing to regeneration and to the health and welfare of local people.
- The need to reduce costs and increase income generation through business planning in order to future proof the allotments and ensure sustained enhanced maintenance regimes.
- The aspiration to achieve a Green Flag Community Award for the whole site in the future.
- To enable the monitoring of success and progress against work programmes and management targets.

The refreshed Management and Maintenance Plan aims to provide a coherent way forward for managing the site. It recognises the diversity of management activities which contribute to maintaining the site's uniqueness and the funding challenges which lie ahead.

The process of plan production has been an evolution from the previous management plan (2013-18) and the emerging masterplan proposals (ADP 2020). The plan has been brought together by consultants with valuable input from site based staff and key stakeholders.

## **2 Current Situation - Where are we now?**

### **2.1 The Site and Location**

The site is owned by Nottingham City Council and is leased to Hungerhill Developments Ltd on a 30 year lease. The allotments are a key strategic green space with the City of Nottingham and hold a Community Green Flag Award for the Community Orchard. The allotments consist of 679 individual gardens spread across three connecting sites; Hungerhill Gardens (449 plots), Stonepit Coppice Gardens (179 plots) and Gorse Close Gardens (51 plots).

In April 2020 83% of plots on site were tenanted with 10% allocated as designated wildlife areas. They are a very popular local resource and the waiting list for a plot averages around 80.

The site is approximately 1.5 km north-east Nottingham City Centre and covers 75 acres, 1/3 of the size of Nottingham City Centre. The site currently falls within the Mapperley electoral ward of Nottingham City Council but is also on the boundary of the St Ann's ward. Bordering the site are two parks; Sycamore Park and Coppice Park, The Sycamore Centre and Hill View Community Centre and housing.



### 2.1.1 Features and Facilities

St Ann's Allotments represents more than just an allotment site; it is a diverse, well-loved and vibrant resource within a deprived inner city area of Nottingham. The site hosts a visitor centre, a number of display and interpretation gardens (Oliver's Heritage Garden) that comprise a 19th century plot devoted to roses and a Second World War "Dig for Victory" vegetable plot, a Perry orchard, a community orchard, woodland, a willow coppice (Stonepit Copse) which contains a wildlife walk, community gardens, wildlife terraces and wildlife gardens.

It is an extremely large allotment site which has 32 miles of hedgerows and 47 avenues. There is a small visitor car park at the visitor centre and six (including Gorse) plot holder car parks on site. Key infrastructure includes the electric gates and the borehole which feeds the gardens across Hungerhills and Stonepit Coppice (Gorse Gardens is fed by mains water). The site maintenance team operate from the site team workshop located on plots C52 and C53 and the depot is currently located on plot C78, this plot also used to be used as a reclamation yard however this activity has since ceased. The allotments boast over 80 built heritage assets which are varied in their classification, period and condition, some have been restored whilst other are at risk and require urgent repair. In addition to built assets, the site also hosts a large array of fruit trees, with 1,426 currently recorded.

An annual programme of events are organised and managed by STAA, a tenanted community charitable organisation, supported by HDL and other key stakeholders. Such groups aim to enable wider public access, albeit closely managed, on what is an actively worked allotment site.

### 2.1.2 Site Access and Transport Links

The map overleaf details the walking distances to the allotments from the City and the road and public transport network. It shows that the site falls within a 25 minute walking distance from Nottingham Train Station and has a number of connecting roads and bus routes.

## TRAM, ROAD & WALKING CIRCULATION



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### 2.1.3 Legal Issues and Designations

The gardens are classified as Grade II\* on the English Heritage 'Register of Parks and Gardens of National Historic Importance'. The placing of the site on the Register has some impact on the planning framework itself, although it does not have the same status as a Listed Building. Applications for development on the site have to be referred for comment to English Heritage and the Garden History Society as part of the application process, and the land owner is expected to protect the overall status of the site.

There is one Grade II Listed Building on the site - a wooden building which might be described as a 'Victorian flat pack' on plot B305.

#### 2.1.3.1 Ownership and Covenants

St Ann's Allotments is owned by Nottingham City Council (NCC) and managed by HDL. HDL hold a 30 year lease with Nottingham City Council, this commenced on 16 June 2008.

# HERITAGE LOCATION BY DATE

HUNGERHILL DEVELOPMENTS LTD  
St Ann's Allotments



### 2.1.3.2 Licences

HDL have a Borehole extraction licence with Environment Agency. The extraction licence permits a maximum of 120 m<sup>3</sup> per day and 25,680 m<sup>3</sup> per annum.

### 2.1.4 Historical Significance

The gardens are classified as Grade II\* on the English Heritage Register, which places them in the top 30% of all registered parks and gardens which are considered to be of 'exceptional historic interest'.

The description of the site by English Heritage defines the allotments as '*Three related groups of detached urban pleasure gardens retaining many 19<sup>th</sup> century summerhouses and associated structures*' and noted only three other remaining garden sites in the country. '*The survival rate for this type is extremely low, with most examples having disappeared under built development. Where they do survive, it is generally as allotment sites with hedges and buildings removed. In area, the group of sites at Nottingham represents the most extensive surviving detached garden site in England.*'

The physical heritage of the site is a collection of features made up of:

- The size, location and boundaries of the overall site;
- The layout of the site and the individual plots (defined by the roads, avenues, paths and hedges);
- The overall pattern of the landscape within the surrounding area;
- Retaining walls and terracing;
- Sheds, summerhouses, glasshouses and buildings (particularly from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century);
- Wells and reservoirs and remaining 19<sup>th</sup> century features within the plots (such as paths);
- Mature fruit trees and other significant plants and the hedges.

### 2.1.5 Landscape, Geology and History

The landscape is derived from Triassic mudstones, sandstones and clays that have been eroded by springs and watercourses over thousands of years to form a central plateau (now occupied by Stonepit Coppice Gardens and Hungerhills Gardens) with small valleys on the east and west flanks. Before the development of the Victorian pleasure gardens in the mid-1800's the site was dominated by 'pasture and coppice-land' with the current allotment areas thought to have been dominated by pasture, with woodland and scrub surviving in the valleys. During this time an area of coppice existed immediately to the east of the site 'which was almost certainly ancient woodland' (Urban Nature, 2006).

The site is a mosaic of pioneer and mature habitats including woodland, hedgerow, grassland, scrub and ruderal communities surrounded on all sides by urban housing and gardens and other built structures. The current landscape pattern is a patchwork of allotment plots inherited from its historical use as Victorian pleasure gardens utilised for a range of purposes including growing vegetables, gardening, a community orchard and nature conservation (Landscape Science Consultancy, 2006). The boundary hedges and avenues within approximately 32 acres of allotments creates a large network of well connected habitat, that in association with rough grassland, tall herb, scrub and woodland communities, forms a valuable mosaic. (Hilary Taylor Landscape Associates Ltd, 2002).

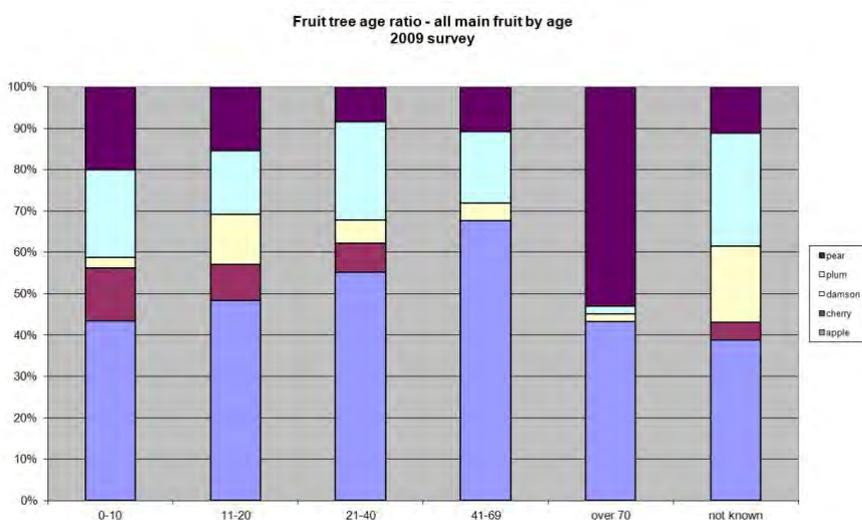
### 2.1.6 Built Heritage Assets

The allotments boast over 80 built heritage assets ranging from summerhouses, glasshouses, a Strawbale building, a shed show house, retaining walls, wells, compost toilets, a pond and the Rag Bec Stream, a clay oven and an industrial stove and decorated and mosaic doors. The heritage types and locations can be seen in the plan overleaf. Those resorted under the previous NLHF project are also shown and are labelled with an 'R'. These assets are varied in their classification and period and range from 19th Century to 21st Century as shown on the plan overleaf. The condition of the features are also varied as some have been restored, whilst others require minor works e.g. repairs and ivy removal, those at risk require major restoration and others require demolition as are now unfortunately beyond repair - the heritage assessment carried out in 2019/20/21 has enabled these works to be identified and the outcomes are presented in section 3.6.5.

## 2.1.7 Trees and Vegetation

There are no TPO's within the boundary of the allotments. The site has however, received recognition for its huge diversity of fruit trees, mostly in tenanted plots but some in communal or conservation areas. Mature fruit trees such as apple and pear are regarded as special trees not only in that they provide habitat diversity to the site but also that they are an important element of the heritage of the allotments. There are a significant number of mature fruit trees on site (1,426 currently recorded covering cherry, apple, pear, damson plum, apricot, mulberry, fig, greengage, crab apple, kiwi, medlar, olive, quince and walnut) that should be preserved.

A tree survey has not been carried with exception to the fruit trees which were audited as part of the NLHF project in 2009 - this identified 120 varieties of apple and 50 pear, many of Victorian origin. Results of the fruit tree age ratio for all main fruit tree species is presented in the chart.



The site is also host to the fairly rare Midland Hawthorn hedgerow plant and it has been noted on site that this is hybridizing with other hawthorn varieties.

The most prominent feature of the allotments is the network of hedges dominated by hawthorn but composed of a range of species, structures and ages. These hedges are important for nesting birds and invertebrates. There are also numerous wildlife plots which have been colonised by vegetation in varying stages of succession from grasses and ruderals through to mature scrub and secondary woodland. The plots with well established vegetation provide sheltering and foraging resources for a wide range of animal species.

Much of the existing woodland is classified as secondary, which in some cases is at a relatively early succession stage with young standard trees and scrub. The trees found on site are generally deciduous and secondary in character, comprising oak, elder, willow, hazel, hawthorn, blackthorn and sycamore. Stonepit Coppice Gardens has a broadleaved woodland

habitat towards the eastern boundary with other areas dominated by willow. Hungerhill Gardens contain two areas of woodland habitat, comprising secondary broadleaved woodland on the wildlife terraces and a small copse of coniferous plantation near Chandos Street which is dominated by cedar species. Woodland in Gorsey Gardens has developed on plots that occupy the sloping ground towards the eastern boundary of the gardens. Some very large sycamore trees grow along the Northern boundary and the northern boundary of Gorsey Gardens also has some very large trees.

Some areas of the site are also suffering from the invasion of Japanese Knotweed, this is being managed. There are also large areas of ivy around the site and sycamore scrub including large bramble patches dominating unlet and overgrown gardens providing an important nectar source for bees, butterflies, moths and other insects.

#### 2.1.8 Ecology

Over 550 individual allotment tenants have voluntarily maintained and continue to improve the biodiversity of St Ann's Allotments. The site's status as Grade 2\* with English Heritage is predominantly because of the tenants' maintenance of 32 miles of hedgerow for nearly 200 years. Similarly, their planting and maintenance of fruit bushes indirectly lead to the whole site being designated by Nottingham City Council as a Site of Interest for Nature Conservation (SINC).

There are strict criteria for designating a site as a SINC and it is usually done because there is at least one rare species (of at least county importance) or in some cases because of an outstanding assemblage of a particular group of organisms. In the case of St Ann's Allotments, designation was because of the presence of a very scarce moth - the Currant Clearwing, which is predominantly found around currant and other fruit bushes. Up until its rediscovery at the site in 2002, the species had not been seen in Nottinghamshire for approximately 100 years.

St Ann's green space has persisted in a lightly managed state for centuries providing an abundance of shelter, food and nesting opportunities and, as a result, it's an oasis for wildlife. Habitats include gardens, woodland, wildflower meadows, ponds, scrub and coppices. 13 acres of the site is managed as wildlife areas and uncultivated buffer zones around the periphery of the site enable a diverse range of wildlife to thrive in an otherwise urban area. A full ecological assessment was carried out by the Landscape Science Consultancy in October 2006. Volunteers run a number of surveys each year including moth counts. Through these surveys the allotments have been shown to be particularly important for wildlife, not just for

rarities such as the Currant Clearwing moth, but for a diverse range of fauna and flora. It should be noted there are large areas of wild garlic in the North East corner of Stonepit Coppice and orchids on plots currently tenanted by STAA.

As at 2017, 59 bird species were identified, 18 species of butterfly, 104 moth species and 9 damselfly and dragonfly species. In 2019 birdwatchers recorded 32 species, including buzzards, sparrowhawks and kestrels, as well as woodpeckers and finches. In particular a number of birds have been sited on the allotments that are included on the RSPB Red and Amber species lists. The high density of fruit trees on the site has encouraged and supported this variety of birds and insects. Bats have been seen feeding on the site and although to date, no roosts have been found or reported it is likely that the built heritage assets provide ideal environments for roosts. The hedgerow layout is important for bats as they use the hedges to navigate. The site is also known to host lots of amphibians, like frogs, toads and smooth newts. The watercourse within the allotments, 'Rag Beck', which rises from a small pond in Community Orchard creates a haven for such fauna. Other fauna on the site include badgers (regularly sited in the North East corner of Stonepit Coppice and on Goosey Gardens), foxes and muntjac deer.

The key to ensuring the survival of wildlife is to manage the whole site's biodiversity in harmony with the individual plot holders and, particularly in relation to the designated conservation areas, to maintain that aim in the long-term to provide the continuity and stability that wildlife requires.

## **2.2 The Community**

### **2.2.1 Current Plot Holders**

There are currently over 550 gardeners from the local area working on plots across the three sites at St Ann's Allotments. The number of new applications received in 2017-2018 was 87 and in 2019 HDL welcomed 55 new gardeners to the allotments. It is thought that the lower figure seen in 2019 is as a result of STAA not promoting the allotments for potential plot holders and hosting less open day activities.

Plot holders are the most important market category in terms of the use and heritage of the site, and can be individuals or groups. It should be noted that they play a significant role as part of the 'in kind' finances of maintaining the site by maintaining their own plots. This can be estimated at £1.5 million per year (figure based on 300 gardeners working one day a week on

their plots at a semi-skilled rate of £100 per day), significantly more than the income generated through plot rentals. Without this contribution it is difficult to see any other way in which the landscape and heritage of the site could be maintained.

The majority of St Ann's Allotment holders (56%) come from the most deprived areas around Nottingham City Centre where access to green space is limited. 79% of plot holders said that health and exercise is the main reason for having an allotment.

Plot holder postcode analysis has been carried out since 2009 and the results are provided below.

- **2009 & 2016** - In 2019 there was a high concentration of tenants in close proximity to St Ann's Allotments with a scattering of postcodes further afield. In 2016, there was an increase in the concentration of tenants close to the perimeter of St Anns Allotments and a reduction of those further afield.
- **2017 & 2019** - The 2017 data showed that almost all plot holders were local, with 94.7% living within 3km of St Anns Allotments and two thirds (63.4%) within 1km. The furthest travelled by a plot holder was around ten miles, from Papplewick (NG15 8FB). In 2019, the proportion of plot holders within 3km and 1km of St Anns Allotments had decreased slightly since 2017 to 89.1% and 58.8% respectively. In 2017, over half (55.3%) of the plot holders lived in areas within the top 40% most deprived in England. This decreased slightly in 2019, with only 46.9% living in areas within the 40% most deprived. However, it is worth noting that in both years, a minority of plot holders were from less deprived areas. In 2017 a fifth (19.0%) of plot holders were from areas classified as the top 40% least deprived, increasing slightly to around a quarter (26.7%) in 2019.

### 2.2.2 Key Stakeholders

HDL work closely with a number of key stakeholder organisations that currently rent plots at the site and use their plots to deliver training, learning and volunteering opportunities as well as hosting events. The stakeholders are part of the recently developed Site Partnership Forum and in the future will be committed under a Joint Working Agreement to meeting quarterly to share planning and ideas, and working together on specific projects and events as the opportunities arise.

There are currently six groups with tenancies on site, holding a total of 46 plots and working within the framework of the existing plot layout. This has been a very successful development within the allotments in recent years. A considerable amount of resource comes into the site via the work of key stakeholders and their projects and much of their work benefits the St Anns and wider Nottingham community. The stakeholders are; STAA, Ecoworks, Nature in Mind Framework, Nottingham Refugee Forum, Autism East Midlands, Emmanuel House and the Nottingham Open Spaces Forum.

### 2.2.3 Current Events, Visitors & Volunteers

Since 2017 events and activities have played a large role in encouraging members of the local community, Nottingham residents and visitors from across the UK visit the allotments. Many of the events are run by STAA with support from other key stakeholder groups.

The STAA 2019/2020 winter event programme has comprised:

- Workshops, all of which start from the visitor centre:
  - December: Christmas Willow Wreath Making in the Strawbale building - £10-15 pp
  - January: Heritage Talk in the Strawbale building - £3-5 pp
  - Mondays January - March: Writing for Wellbeing Classes - £35-45 pp
  - February: Winter Pruning Fruit Trees in Oliver's Display Garden - £15-20 pp
  - March: Make a Willow Obelisk for Sweet Peas in Oliver's Display Garden - £20-25 pp
  - March: Guided Heritage Tour - £5 pp
  
- Activity Days - Free family activity days in the Community Orchard for residents of St Ann's take place on the third Saturday of every month and run between noon and 4pm.
  
- Talks and Tours - STAA offer private talks for groups which include a presentation and talk about the site's unique history and heritage varieties.

In November 2019 STAA hosted Gardner's Question Time from the allotments.

Permaculture courses are regularly run from the visitor centre organised by the manager of Ecoworks, these take place over several weekends on the Ecoworks Community Garden. In

December 2018 the Renewal Trust also ran a film screening in the visitor centre as part of the St Ann's 50:10 project.

NOSF in collaboration with a wide range of organisations were planning to run the City Nature Challenge 2020 at St Ann's Allotments which aims to involve the community in recording wildlife using a Bioblitz type concept. As part of the City Nature Challenge campaign, users will be able to download an 'i Naturalist' phone app) and are supporting the Friends of the Forest in marking the route of the Inclosure Walk - this will involve a historic, 165-year-old greenway through and round the city centre of Nottingham into a Town Trail.

Additionally, the site team brought the allotment competition back in 2020 which ran between June and August with a celebration event in September 2020. Categories included; the most improved garden, most productive, most wildlife friendly, best in show, for the younger growers and be creative - art inspired by the allotments.

Visitor numbers recorded by STAA in 2018/19 are as follows:

- Community Orchard - 4,000 participants took part in the following sessions:
  - Schools: 60 sessions
  - Activity Days: 12
  - Play sessions: 11
  - Children in Need: 52 sessions
  - Pretty Windows: 46 sessions
  - Parties: 8 sessions = 80 participants
  - Other activities involving 200 adults and young people.
  
- Heritage Activities - 1275 visitors - Monthly tours take place involving up to 25 visitors (March - September) The tour includes a talk about the history and heritage of the site. These tours are conducted by volunteers who also go out to local groups to talk about the allotments at their own meetings. Private tours are also provided solely for local group's own members. Two Open days were held attended by 900 visitors most of whom were from the Nottingham area. This year's numbers will be in line with outputs provided in TNL Gateway to the Gardens Project Application.

The audiences STAA see at the orchard are much younger than those attending Heritage Walks and Talks, the latter tend to be older, retired and those with a particular interest in heritage and gardening. Users of the orchard in direct comparison tend to be families with younger children. In addition to use by local schools, the orchard also sees 25 sessions of

moms and tots groups per year. Play sessions are free, allow open access and are grant funded therefore attract local families across a wide demographic.

Up until 2021 volunteering was not arranged by HDL, except one off CSR events and a visitor centre entrance gardener. The site team do have a volunteering policy and induction procedure that goes through the Renewal Trust. The purpose of the policy is to provide overall guidance and direction to staff and volunteers and it sets out the general minimum standards for the involvement of volunteers.

All volunteers are covered by The Renewal Trust & its Subsidiaries' insurance policies whilst they are on the premises or engaged in any work on The Renewal Trust and its Subsidiaries behalf. The volunteer application form gathers contact details and the volunteer's experience of gardening. Volunteer expenses are paid and all activities are risk assessed.

Volunteering is currently being marketed through NCVS.

Volunteers of previous projects on the site have experienced a range of benefits from such activities were: "exercising and feeling healthier", "learned new skills", "made new friends", "increased confidence and motivation", "reduced stress and anxiety", "a better quality of life". Volunteers also reported that they enjoyed being outdoors, helping to protect nature, feeling a sense of achievement and giving something back to the local community.

#### 2.2.4 The Local Population

Demographic analysis covering Nottingham and the 1km catchment around the allotments has been carried out. Audience Funder analysis suggests that the residential market is extremely varied with low engagement and spend levels through to high levels of both. Additionally, the communication tools used cover a broad spectrum from social media to word of mouth and print. Similarities across the audiences are that they engage with music, arts, heritage, wildlife and culture and enjoy events.

#### 2.2.5 Consultation and Engagement

Consultation carried out since 2017 has shown that there is significant support from key stakeholders and plot holders to continue to protect, restore and improve the allotments encouraging more people to take up unlet plots, improve maintenance across the site and resolve key infrastructure issues, increase use of the visitor centre and enhance toilet provision, develop a comprehensive events and activities programme, improve access and

egress and car parking, improved signage and interpretation and for establishing a volunteer base and feedback on the proposals has been positive. Consultation with regard to rents has also shown that ploholders wish to be further consulted on future rent increased and that such increases should consider affordability for the local community.

#### 2.2.6 Marketing & Communications

St Ann's Allotments has benefitted from a lot of media coverage in 2019/20; firstly with the funding announcement from the National Lottery Heritage Fund and secondly with the site being shortlisted for a National Lottery Award in summer 2019.

Current marketing for St Ann's Allotments is delivered through a number of mediums across HDL site staff, The Renewal Trust communications team, NCC and many of the key stakeholders. Although it is spread across a variety of platforms it is currently not co-ordinated or joined up.

St Ann's Allotments has its own page on the Renewal Trust website and this is the main page for the allotments that is where potential and current plot holders will be directed. It is the top website listed via a Google search for 'St Ann's Allotments', followed by STAA's website. The Renewal Trust page for the allotments hosts a wealth of information about the history and development of the site and its facilities and features and wildlife. The Allotment Holders Handbook is downloadable, as is the waiting list application form. Visitor Centre hire however is not promoted on this site nor is the facility to hire the space. There is also no information on volunteering opportunities or the annual events and activities programme. The Renewal Trust have a YouTube channel RT TV Extra which has showcased St Ann's Allotments on one of its programmes in April 2020. STAA's website also hosts a wealth of information about the site including promotion of events and activities, the community orchard and their education offer. STAA also have Facebook and Eventbrite pages which they use for promoting their activities. NCC website promotes all allotments sites across the City and direct potential plot holders for St Ann's Allotments directly to the Renewal Trust website.

Site based staff publicise the site via social media and manage a St Ann's Allotments Facebook page, Instagram account and a Twitter account - @stannsallotment (280 followers). There is also a private Facebook page for current ploholders/registered co-workers; this closed group has 131 members.

Other communication channels used by the site team include quarterly newsletters which are both sent electronically and posted to ploholders without access to the internet. Publicity channels also used include regular articles in the local press e.g. The Nottingham Post, national press including Gardeners Question Time on BBC Radio 4 and BBC news, and specialist allotment and gardening publications including the Garden News magazine. The site team also display posters and flyers in notice boards and on gates on site. There are a range of trail guides and leaflets, including a visitor map and an information leaflet that covered facilities on the site, access, taking up a plot and volunteering, that were produced during the restoration project but are no longer in print. The Renewal Trust is increasingly focusing on storytelling to show the impact of its work and share the voices of local people and communities.

## **2.3 The Organisation**

### **2.3.1 Policy and Strategic Context**

St Ann's Allotments is managed by HDL. The framework within which the site is managed is defined by the Lease Agreement held between HDL and NCC and the Management Agreement which sets out the Lessee's obligations, the Memorandum of Association of HDL, Legal Designations, Allotment Law, the Tenancy Agreements and the Allotments Handbook. It is also linked to a number of wider corporate strategies and plans relevant to the Renewal Trust and NCC.

#### **2.3.1.1 Memorandum of Association of HDL**

The Memorandum of Association states the constitution of HDL as Limited Liability Company. It introduces the company's internal affairs and sets out the name of the company, objects of the company, liability of the members, amount of share capital the company proposes and the share holders.

#### **2.3.1.2 Lease Agreement**

HDL hold a 30 year lease with Nottingham City Council, this commenced on 16 June 2008.

### 2.3.1.3 Management Agreement

The management agreement between HDL and NCC also dated 16 June 2008 states that the intention that 'The parties intend that the Lessee shall operate, develop and conserve St Ann's Allotments owned by the Council. Ensuring that the Lessee discharges the Council's responsibilities in respect of the sites Grade II\* listing status and helps promote and ensure quality allotment provision for Nottingham City residents'.

Monitoring of the agreement sets out the Lessee's responsibility of submitting the following documents each quarter; copies of allotment inspections, monitoring figures in relation to the allotments e.g. let/vacant/unfit to let plots, a breakdown of age, gender and ethnicity in the take up of allotments, visitor figures in relation to educational or open days/events, complaints received and copies of all monitoring reports to external funders in relation to grants secured to improve and develop the allotments. It also states that the following documents must be submitted annually; a copy of audited accounts for financial year end, an annual report on the development and management of the allotments (including how external funding bodies conditions have been met), details of key staff employed by the Lessee and copies of press and marketing materials in respect of the allotments.

The agreement also sets out the Council's obligations to pay the Lessee £98,093 plus VAT annually, to be drawn down as follows: 25% April, 25% July, 25% October and 25% January. This is now out of date and the revised annual payment is: £38,400.

### 2.3.1.4 Licence To Underlet relating to the Visitor Centre

NCC (Landlord) and HDL (Tenant) hold a licence to underlet in relation to the Visitor Centre. The licence is dated 23 April 2013 and is supplemental and collateral to the Lease and Underlease.

### 2.3.2 Organisational Context - Structure and Operation

Hungerhill Developments Ltd (HDL) was formed in 2008 to lease and manage St Ann's Allotments. Initial management of the site was sub-contracted to STAA via a Service Level Agreement but since 2017 HDL have managed the site directly.

Hungerhill Developments Ltd (HDL) hold a 30 year lease agreement with Nottingham City Council and manages the allotments in accordance with the lease. HDL is a Private Company

Limited by shares. It has a Share Capital of £1 divided into one ordinary share of £1 which is owned by the Renewal Trust. The Renewal Trust is a Private Company limited by Guarantee and a Registered Charity.

HDL carries out the following work roles and activities; office based work, manages the Allotment Visitor Centre, provide plots for individual tenants, manages and maintains the overall site (particularly areas which are accessible to ploholders or the public) and carries out some work on individual plots.

HDL is a limited company, with a Board of five Directors as follows:

- Cherry Underwood - CEO of The Renewal Trust
- Dave Liversidge – Local Councillor for St Ann’s
- Jon Collins – Private Sector – previously leader of Nottingham City Council – now Planning & Development Adviser - (resigned)
- Michael Peacock – Woodland Trust – Allotment holder (not on St Ann’s) and keen gardener
- Eddie Curry – Head of Public Realm – Nottingham City Council

The board meets quarterly to receive site and financial reports. The organisation has a positive cash flow as all rental income is usually received in the first 2 months of the financial year with quarterly grant payments from Nottingham City Council.

It currently employs 4 members of staff, mostly on a part time basis.

The Renewal Trust was formed in March 1997 utilising funds and investments made by the former Nottingham City Challenge, to ensure the continuation of regeneration activity within the inner city area of St Ann’s and Sneinton. Income from these property investments will provide the Renewal Trust with an assured core income for a period of 75 years. The primary objective of the Renewal Trust is the relief of poverty and the Trust aims to bring about improvements in the quality of life of the community of St Ann’s and Sneinton by supporting and promoting activities to renew the area socially, economically, environmentally and in spirit.

The Trust is a Registered Charity (no. 1077450) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (no. 3345194). The Renewal Trust Board has wide local representation and is made up of six members from the community, six from local businesses and six from the public sector plus three co-opted members. The Board agrees all major policy/strategic decisions and provides

advice and support to the Trust Executive. Board members include people with vast experience of project management, business support and actually running a business. The Board members also have a thorough knowledge of the area and local needs, and are fully committed to improving the area.

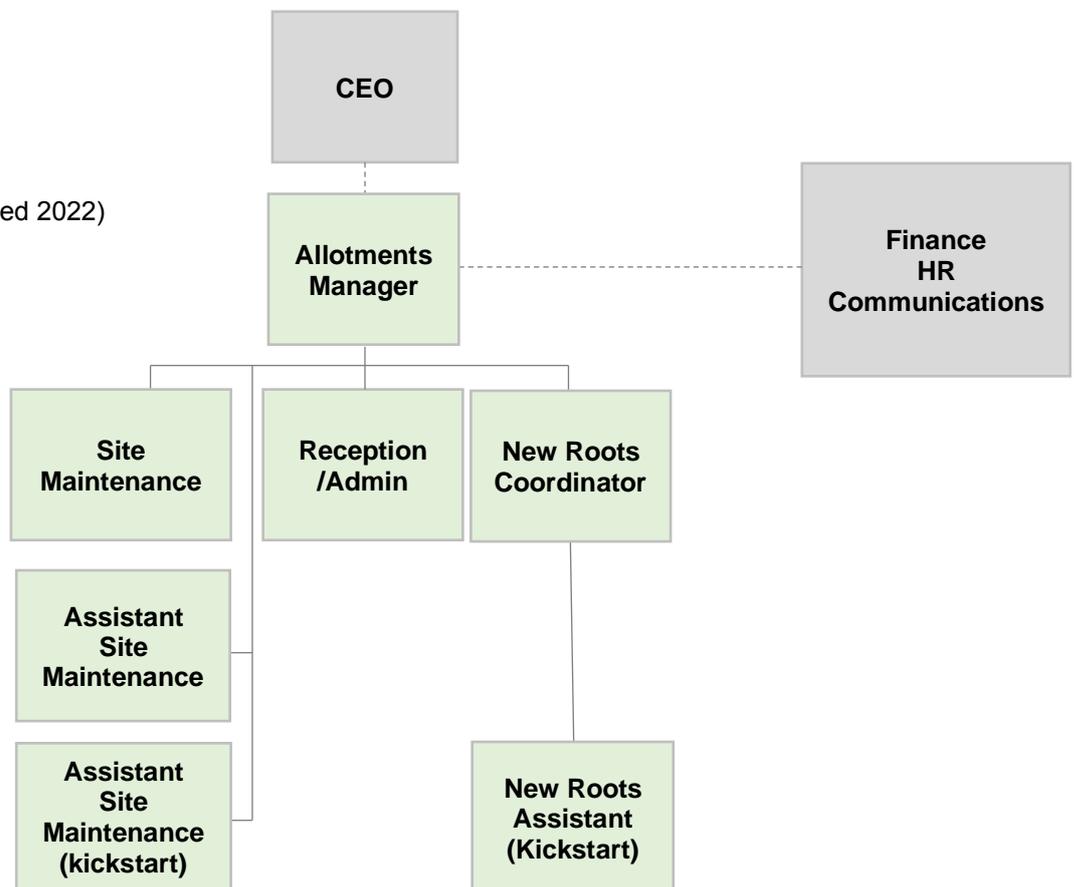
### 2.3.3 Staffing

There are currently four part time members of staff at the allotments who are employed by the Renewal Trust; the Allotments Manager (27 hours), Site Maintenance Officer (30 hours), Assistant Site Maintenance Officer (30 hours) and Receptionist/Administrator (19 hours). The Site Maintenance Officers and the Administrator report to the Allotments Manager. The Allotments Manager reports to the CEO of the Renewal Trust and is responsible for budgetary control supported by the Renewal Trust Finance Directorate.

The Allotment Manager has responsibility for:

- Tenancies – issuing tenancy agreements, receiving notice
- Maintaining records on the colony database
- Enforcement of tenancies (notice to cultivate, notice to quit due to non-payment of rent)
- Commissioning repair work
- Health and safety

staff structure (updated 2022)



## 2.4 Recent Improvements

In 2007 St Ann's Allotments was subject to a successful National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF) Heritage Grant and between this date and its completion in 2017, the site underwent a £4.5 million restoration. This project was delivered by HDL in partnership with STAA and was funded by NLHF, East Midlands Development Agency, ERDF and Nottingham City Council. The programme of capital works conserved many physical heritage elements of the site, led to improvements to the perimeter and entrances (gates), access (avenues and paths), retaining walls, hedges and trees and introduced new facilities including a new allotments centre, display plots and a borehole which now provides water to many plot holders. Nine structures of heritage significance were restored including the greenhouse and the brick house on plot B319 which was funded by NLHF and the English Heritage listed shed on B205. In a very small number of cases tenants have sympathetically restored their brick sheds with their own resources. Ecoworks also carried out work to the shed on their community garden and also some very large wells. The building training organisation, NECTA (liquidated in 2008) also built a significant number of brick sheds, possibly on the foundations of original sheds, providing replicas of the original brick structures on the site. Site interpretation was also added to plot B319 and the wider site to bring the allotment's unique history and heritage to life. The project also included the archiving of the site's heritage, developing partnership and volunteering activities and part funding of the Community Orchard.

Management and maintenance of the gardens has dramatically improved through the 30 year lease, securing additional revenue funding and creating facilities to increase use and access and strengthen links with the community. The delivery of a programme of events and activities has also encouraged people to take on plots at the allotments, visit and learn about the allotments and the knowledge and skills of staff, gardeners and volunteers has been improved. The project also included creating conservation areas around the site, providing a 'green reservoir' for nature in the heart of urban St Ann's, these designated to remain uncultivated and have been developed for wildlife.

More recent improvements implemented by the site maintenance team has included:

- Clearance of some overgrown plots
- The division of multiple use tenanted gardens restored back to single use x 12 between 2017-2019 - this comprised of new gated entrances and plot division with post and wire fencing.
- Site clearance of historic rubbish on gardens through a prearranged clearance arrangement with the tenant x 6 in 2018.

- The installation of fencing around the Borehole and Rag Bec in 2018.
- Improved site administration.
- Improved marketing.
- Development of a Site Partnership Forum.
- £16,000 was also invested in safety features to all vehicle gates 2019.