

Stranton Relocation FAQs

Please note this information is correct at time of writing and may be subject to change as the project develops and new information becomes available visit www.hartlepool.gov.uk/allotments for up to date information.

1. Can I move now?

At the current time we are not accepting applications to move. We need to consult with all affected allotment holders to find out what their preferences are and to see if these can be matched against availability. Once we have consulted we will produce a timeline for managing the move.

2. When will I be given notice to leave my plot?

It is likely that notice will be issued in the spring/summer of 2017. You will be given at least a year's notice so you will have plenty of time to plan your move. This means that you can plan your planting for 2016 as you would normally do.

3. Will the council provide practical/financial help for me to move structures, etc.?

We are currently working through how the Council can assist tenants with the move. Once this is established, this will be communicated to tenants.

4. Can I choose which plot I would like to move to/how will new plots be allocated?

We will be consulting with affected tenants during May 2016 to identify where people want to move to, for example those who want to move to another plot on Stranton or those who want to take the opportunity to move elsewhere. Once we have an idea of your preferred location we can work out how many plots are available and how these will be allocated.

As not everyone can be accommodated on the remaining Stranton site we will ask you to choose your first, second and third choice plots.

5. What happens if more than one person wants the same plot, how will this be decided?

We are intending to work out a scoring matrix which will look at factors like how long you have been a tenant, what your history of cultivation has been like, what you intend to use the plot for (e.g. whether you intend to have livestock or pigeons) and what other options you have chosen.

Some plots will be more popular than others so not everyone will get their preferred plot.

6. What if I don't like the new plot I have been allocated?

You can choose to turn down the plot if you do not like it. You will be placed back on the waiting list until a more suitable one becomes available.

7. Will I be compensated for things that could not be relocated such as fruit trees, asparagus beds, etc.?

We are currently working this through. Once this is established, this will be communicated to tenants.

8. Will the council clear and re-fence the new plot for me?

We are currently working this through. Once this is established, this will be communicated to tenants.

9. It takes a long time to get an allotment going will the council provide materials such as soil improver to help me get my new crops established?

We are currently working this through. Once this is established, this will be communicated to tenants.

10. Will I have to pay two lots of rent if there is a transition between the old plot and the new one?

No, we will only charge you the rent for one plot during the transition period. You will also be given a special dispensation to have 2 tenancy agreements at the same time. This means that you can be secure in the knowledge that you are the official tenant of the new plot whilst still giving you time to plan your move off the old one.

11. I would like to move to a different site, is this possible?

Subject to availability, yes, you will be able to tell us which site you wish to move to during the consultation period. If more than one person wants to move to the same site then the scoring matrix system explained above will be used to allocate plots.

12. I would like to move to a different site but there are no plots available does this mean I can't have a new plot?

It does not mean that you cannot have a new plot but you may have to wait until one becomes available on your preferred site. This could be a long time if you choose a site with a small number of plots and low turnover. If you choose a site where there are no plots available we will put you at the top of the waiting list for that site. If there is more than one person wanting to move to the same site the scoring matrix will be used to determine your place on the waiting list.

We advise that you take plot availability and waiting times into consideration when deciding which alternative site you would like to move to.

13. I want to stay on the Stranton site but there are not enough plots available does this mean I can't have a new plot?

No, it does not mean that you cannot have a plot but if there are more people who want to stay on Stranton than there are vacant plots available then you may have to wait until another plot becomes available. The scoring matrix explained above will be used to allocate the available plots and if we are not able to match you to a vacant plot straight away you will be placed at the top of the waiting list. If there is more than one person in this position we will use the scoring matrix to work out each person's place on the waiting list.

14. What will happen to my old plot?

Once everyone has been moved the site will be handed over to the Parks and Countryside department who will start the process of clearing the site and turning it into cemetery. The land has to be left fallow for a period after being cleared so it can stabilise before graves can be dug so don't be surprised if it looks like nothing is happening with the old site for some time after you have moved.

15. I have been told I will have to wait for a new plot can I continue to garden my old one after the notice period expires?

Unfortunately this will not be possible. Once the deadline has passed the site will be handed over to the parks and countryside team who will start the process of turning it into cemetery. We will do our best to relocate everyone as quickly as possible and to their preferred plot/site but where there are lots of people wanting the same plot(s) some people will have to wait until an alternative becomes available.

16. I've had my plot a long time and I don't want to move, why can't I stay where I am?

The whole of the Stranton site is built on cemetery land and eventually the cemetery will expand all the way up to Catcote Road (although it may be many years before this happens). Until the land is needed for graves the cemetery team have kindly allowed it to be used for allotments but now the cemetery is getting full and needs to expand. This means that we have no option but to move the affected tenants. You will have the opportunity to say where you would like to be moved to and we will try and make the transition as smooth as possible.

17. I don't like the look of any of the available plots on Stranton, what alternatives are there?

You can request to move to a different site. You can see location maps of each site on the webpage at www.hartlepool.gov.uk/allotments. You will have the chance to discuss moving to a different site during the consultation period.

We advise that you take plot availability and waiting times into consideration when deciding which alternative site you would like to move to.

18. I am a registered partner on one of the plots that is to be closed how will this affect me?

We would suggest that you discuss this with the tenant to try and choose a mutually acceptable plot; however the final decision will be with the tenant. If the tenant chooses a plot you are both happy with and you both wish for the partnership to continue then the tenancy and partnership will transfer to the new plot and the partnership will continue as before.

If the tenant chooses a plot that you are not happy with and you cannot resolve this between yourselves then it may be best to dissolve the partnership. You may be able to find another tenant to partner up with or you may wish to go on the waiting list to get a plot of your own.

19. I am a partner and the tenant is saying they might give up their allotment altogether rather than move, will I be able to apply to move instead?

The usual rules relating to partnerships will apply i.e. if you have been a registered partner for a minimum of 3 years and the plot has been maintained to a consistently high standard then you can apply to move instead.

If you are not registered as a partner, the partnership has been of less than 3 years duration or the plot has not been maintained to a consistently high standard then you will not be eligible to apply.

20. I have been on the waiting list for a plot at Stranton for a long time and I'm nearly at the top of the list, there are not enough vacant plots for all the tenants being moved so does this mean I will have to wait longer for a plot?

We need to prioritise those people who already have plots ahead of those who are waiting for one. This means that those tenants who cannot be relocated straight away will be placed at the top of the waiting list for Stranton, or other site of their choice. This means there will be a knock-on effect on those already on the list who will have to wait a bit longer. We cannot say how long you will have to wait as it all depends on the turn-over of tenants on the site. If you can be flexible about which site(s) you are willing to accept a plot on it can help reduce the amount of time you have to wait to be offered a plot.