

Surveyors Guidance for Summer Survey 15 August to 15 September 2025

The RAA Byelaws (2025) have been updated to include all necessary information about survey criteria. The byelaws quoted below are a subset relevant to surveys for members who have passed probation.

Notes for surveyors to include season-specific expectations are shown below in *italics*

CULTIVATION

8. Appearance and management of Plots

a. Each Plot must display its number clearly at the side of the lower end of the Plot nearest to the Community Building.

b(i) The Plot must be properly cultivated and show clear evidence that it is being regularly looked after and maintained. 75% of the plot must be under cultivation and weeds kept under control. *In Aug/Sept we would expect to see plants and crops growing and areas weed free ready for further planting or evidence that produce has recently been harvested. If an area is covered for weed control it will not count as cultivation and especially if it has been covered for more than one season. Now in peak season all plots should be showing 75% cultivation!*

(ii) 'Cultivation' means (a) that the ground is planted with vegetables, fruit and nut trees, fruit bushes, herbs and/or flowers; and/or (b) that the ground has been prepared ready to grow vegetables, fruit and nut trees, fruit bushes, herbs and/or flowers.

(iii) The following count towards the 75% cultivation calculation: greenhouses and polytunnels provided the area inside them is being used for cultivation; pollinator planting; bug hotels; green manures; ponds; up to 5% of the Plot in use for composting and/ or storage of manure.

(iv) Sheds, other forms of storage, grass areas, seating areas and woodpiles do not count as 'cultivation'.

c. There must be no accumulation of rubbish on the Plot. All rubbish should be taken away by the Plotholder.

d(i) Any new fruit and nut trees and fruit bushes must be planted at least 0.5m (20in) in from any path. *Surveyors will note the position of any trees growing closer than 0.5m from the path.*

(iii) All fruit and nut trees must be kept well pruned and with a height of up to 3m (10ft) so that they do not shade and disadvantage neighbouring plots and so that unharvested fallen fruit does not render the surrounding paths dangerous. *Surveyors*

will note trees that appear not to have been pruned earlier this year and fallen fruit which has been left to rot.

(iv) Suitable growing spaces between fruit and nut trees and under non-mature fruit and nut trees should be cultivated.

(v) Trees which are not fruit or nut trees must not be planted or allowed to grow if self-seeded. *A small number of plots have ancient oak trees at the border of their plots. These are maintained by the Dulwich Estate. Areas under those trees are not expected to be cultivated.*

9. Paths

a. The main paths should be a minimum of 1.2 meters (4ft) wide and the smaller interplot paths must be a minimum of 60cm (2ft) wide.

b. Members must keep the paths around their Plot in a safe condition so that other Members, RAA employees and contractors and visitors can walk around the Allotment Site without risk of injury by:-

- i) keeping the grass on the interplot paths around their Plot regularly trimmed and the edges neat. *In Aug/Sept we would expect all paths to be strimmed, mowed or cut back.*
- ii) not using weed killer on any main or interplot paths.
- iii) not removing the top growth on any path down to the roots, leaving the path bare.
- iv) not encroaching onto, damaging or cutting into any path, whether, or not this increases the size of their Plot.
- v) not obstructing any path or using paths for burning rubbish or for storage.
- vi) not allowing trees, bushes or vegetation to overhang any path. The Committee is entitled to cut back any overhanging trees, bushes or vegetation if it is a trip hazard or risks causing other injury.
- vii) Not allowing any sharp edges, branch ends, nails, screws, sharp sticks or supports close to any path.

10. Fences

No fences or hedges are allowed on the Allotment Site, which should maintain an overall open appearance. However, windbreaks are permitted, provided they are no

taller than 90cm (3ft) high, built in a safe way and are placed in such a way so as not to give the plot a fenced-in appearance.

11. Communal trees and boundaries

- a. Members must not cut or destroy any trees, except fruit and nut trees, on the Allotment Site.
- b. Members must not block, damage or encroach on any ditch or any open space provided for general use.
- c. Where a plot borders a boundary fence, the Plotholder must leave a strip of land 60cm (2ft) wide free from weeds or rubbish but uncultivated next to the fence.

12. Sheds, greenhouses and other structures

(1) Permanent structures

- a. 'Permanent structures' are sheds, greenhouses, pergolas and other built structures.
- b. Members may only have one shed or greenhouse (but not both) on their Plot.
- c. Members must not build a shed, greenhouse or other permanent structure on their Plot, or alter or replace any existing shed, greenhouse or other permanent structure without prior written permission from the Committee. A plan drawing and details of construction materials must be submitted to the Committee with the request for permission. If permission is given, the Committee will draw up an agreement which may contain conditions for the construction. Members must sign and date the agreement before proceeding with the construction.
- d. Permanent structures must not exceed 2.14m (7ft) in height (including roof area), 1.83m (6ft) in width and 2.44m (8ft) in length or 4.46 sq metres (48 sq ft). Half plots are now permitted to have a permanent structure 2.23 sq metres (24 sq ft)
- e. If a permanent structure is painted or stained, it must be in one of the following approved colours: green, grey, brown/natural, black.

Surveyors will note where a structure appears to exceed the dimensions and/or is not using approved colours

(2) Temporary structures

- a. 'Temporary structures' are polytunnels, storage boxes, cold frames and compost and manure bins.

- b. Temporary structures may be built without permission, but storage boxes must not be higher than 75cm (2ft 6in) and if painted or stained, must be in one of the following approved colours: green, grey, brown/natural, black.
- c. Members may have one storage box and up to two cold frames on their Plot in addition to a shed or greenhouse.

Surveyors will note where a temporary structure appears to exceed the dimensions and/or is not using approved colours, or where the number exceeds the limit shown above in 12 (2) c.

(3) All structures

- a. All new structures, whether temporary or permanent, must be set back at least 50cm (20in) from any path.
- b. No concrete is to be used in any part of the construction of any structure.

Surveyors will note where structures are closer than 50cm from the path, or where concrete has been used.

14. Ponds

- a. All new ponds must be set back at least 50cm (20in) from any path.
- b. Ponds must not be larger than 1m x 1m and 60 cm in depth.
- c. As ponds are intended to support wildlife, they must have a sloping beach-like edge created with rocks or stones to allow small animals or birds to get out easily.
- d. Ponds which are not set back at least 50cm (20in) from any path must have a low fence-like structure (such as a small dead hedge) on the side facing any path to prevent people (especially small children) falling in.

Although Ponds have been removed from the Summer Survey Form Surveyors should still note where ponds do not meet the specified size, location or fence requirements.

August 2025