



## Guidelines for Sheds & Structures

### Background Information

Your allotment tenancy states that 'The Tenant shall not without the written consent of YACIO erect any building or structure on the Allotment Garden, and shall be responsible for the removal of any building or structure on or before the termination of the tenancy'.

Planning law does not give allotment tenants any automatic right to put up a shed, greenhouse or other structure on their plot. Technically all such structures need planning permission. To avoid the expense and delay of a formal planning application for each shed, local authority planning departments informally delegate control of small structures on allotment gardens to the body that manages the allotment sites, in this case YACIO.

You must fill in a Structure Permission Form and wait for permission before starting to put up a shed or other structure on your plot.

### Do You Need a Shed?

What do you need to store on your plot? Allotments are vulnerable to theft and vandalism so it's best not to keep valuable tools and equipment on your plot. If you only want to store a selection of basic garden tools, you may not need a traditional shed.

Possible alternatives to a shed include:

- a small, steel storage unit, securely fixed to a concrete base
- a home made wooden tool box, hidden behind a low fence, hedge or fruit bushes
- an empty, plastic compost bin or lidded water butt, partially sunk into the ground

You do not need to apply for permission for a structure less than 3 ft 6" or 1m high.

### Shed Size

The size of shed allowed depends on the size of your plot:

- On small plots (up to 75 sq yds) sheds should be no larger than 6 x 4ft (1.8 x 1.2m)
- On medium and large plots sheds may be up to 6 x 8ft (1.8 x 2.4m)

### Shed Design & Materials

A standard size doesn't mean that all sheds have to look the same. You may choose to buy a ready-made shed and paint it a distinctive colour, or to build one from re-used materials.

Suitable materials for shed walls and roofs include:

- new or reclaimed timber
- plywood and roofing felt
- galvanised steel

- durable plastics

Asbestos cement sheeting must not be used.

## The Right Place for Your Shed

Each allotment site has established rules for the positioning of sheds. The general rule is that the sheds on any row of plots are lined up at one end or the other of the plots.

The approved position for sheds on any site is chosen to:

- reduce the shading of gardens by sheds
- give easy access to sheds and plots
- take into account site features such as hedges and fences

The permission form asks for a plan to show the proposed location of your shed. On your plan please show:

- the boundaries of your plot and adjoining paths
- the position of any sheds on neighbouring plots

If in doubt, ask your site secretary's advice before filling in the form.

## Greenhouses & Polytunnels

If you want to raise early seedlings and to shelter tender crops, a greenhouse is an obvious choice. On the other hand, a greenhouse can be an expensive investment and may be damaged by vandals or winter storms.

Instead of a full-sized greenhouse you could consider:

- A cold frame made from scaffold boards and reclaimed window lights
- Low polythene crop tunnels
- A zip-up mini-greenhouse for seasonal use

You do not need to apply for permission for these small, temporary structures.

If you want to grow more exotic crops or winter salads and to have somewhere to garden out of the rain, possible options are:

- a polytunnel, maximum size 8 x 16ft (2.4 x 4.8m)
- an aluminium framed greenhouse with polycarbonate safety glazing, up to 8 x 10ft
- a combined shed/greenhouse using reclaimed timber and window units

If you plan to make a greenhouse out of reclaimed materials we may need to ask some extra questions before making a decision on your application.

## Arbours, Summerhouses & Playhouses

Shelter may be particularly important if you bring young children to the plot with you, or if a medical condition means you need to rest regularly. You can apply for permission to install an open-fronted shelter, a summer house with porch or a playhouse for your children.

Each application will be considered on its own merits but in general:

- the maximum sizes given for sheds apply to summerhouses and other structures
- you will not be given permission for an additional structure if you already have a shed and a greenhouse or polytunnel on your plot.

## Applying For Permission

Please fill in the Structure Permission Form to give full details of size, materials and location of your proposed structure. This form must be authorised by your site secretary.

Return the form to: York Allotments, Popeshead Court Offices, Peter Lane, York, YO1 8SU or

email a copy to [contact@yorkallotments.org](mailto:contact@yorkallotments.org)