

THINGS TO CONSIDER WHEN TAKING ON AN ALLOTMENT

Location:

How far away is the allotment?

How do I get there?

Do I have means of transportation for myself and tools/plants/seed/compost?

How is the plot situated? Sunlight, shade, wind, water close by?

Plot:

How big is the plot?

Has it been worked on before?

Was the previous holder a digger?

Did the previous owner use chemical fertiliser or weed killer.

Is a shed on the plot? If not: can one be built? What are the costs and who would build it with what?

What is the quality of the ground?

Is there rubbish or weed that needs to be removed? Who can help?

Greenhouse, yes or no?

Does the plot have a fence? Do I need to put one up? (BRTC you cannot fence your plot)

Are kids allowed? (BRTC say yes but can only stay on your plot)

Can I bring my pet? (Dog) (BRTC say yes, on a lead and only on your plot)

Are chickens, bees or rabbits allowed? (not on BRTC allotments)

Speak to the neighbours or the previous owner about soil quality, previous use, drainage and water situation.

Is there a limit on how much water can be used in summer? Are there special days for pumps to be turned on? (BRTC water is turned on in Spring and off in winter)

Is there a compost heap? Are they allowed? Is there room for one on the plot? (BRTC says yes on your own plot)

Time:

What is my timeframe? Which season am I in?

When does it need to be done?

Are there regulations by what time the plot has to be ready to plant?

How much time can I REALISTICALLY spend working on the plot?

Who can work with me when time is an issue through work/family/illness etc?

Style:

What kind of gardening style do I want to do?

Where do I get more information? (Courses, facebook group, youtube channels, etc)

What kind of layout do I want? What kind of layout was there before? (Crop rotation)

Does the allotment have any special rules concerning crop rotation?

What is the soil like? Do I need to improve soil? How?

Do I want to make chemical companies rich or do I go the natural way? (BRTC do not allow chemical weedkillers or pesticides)

Money:

How are my finances?

What does the plot cost?

Do I need insurance? (BRTC advise you do as you may be liable for any harm coming to anyone from something on your plot)

Tools:

What do I have?

What can I borrow?

Rent?

What do I need to buy and where?

Do I have appropriate clothing?

What does compost cost?

Seed and plant costs?

Can I exchange plants?

Do I want strictly non-GMO/organically grown? (tip: only grow what you will really eat!)

Do I do this for fun or because I need to feed myself/family?

Will I miss the money I spent on this if the crop fails?

Human Resources:

How fit am I to do all the lifting, shovelling, bending over, kneeling?

Do I have support? Childminder? Emergency helper? Enough mouths for the masses of zucchini?

Social:

Am I expected to join a club/Allotment Association? (BRTC says no, but we have a Facebook Group and recommend joining an Allotment Association as they often provide insurance in the fee)

Will there be meetings? (BRTC have one tenants meeting a year)

Is it allowed to sleep over/bbq/have a birthday party in the shed? (BBQs yes, the rest, no!)

Is the plot guarded?

How safe is it to get there and be there?

Are there shops/petrol station/pubs nearby? (You might need to get drinks & food on long days)

Do I have internet and/or phone connection for emergencies?

Is there a toilet close by?

Personal:

Am I still having fun?

Is this negative stress?

Can I still sleep?

Do I spend enough time with family?

(Lola De Milo)