

Frequently Asked Questions

Possible developments

[KH Q1. What profit will be made out of the sale of the land?](#)

[KH Q2. How high will the buildings be?](#)

[KH Q3. Will it be flats or houses?](#)

[KH Q4. What is the density of dwellings?](#)

[KH Q5. Why are you building on the allotments?](#)

[KH Q6. Why aren't the allotments open space for all? Surely they should not be built on?](#)

[KH Q7. Will you ever build on the actual allotments?](#)

[KH Q8. Will surveys be carried out to see what wildlife is there?](#)

[KH Q9. Why not turn the scrubland next to Victoria Recreation Ground into a car park instead of building houses on it?](#)

[KH Q10. Why not turn the spare land at Kentwood Hill into allotments?](#)

[KH Q11. Who says we need more houses anyway?](#)

Finance

[F Q13. If you didn't build on the land you own what would become of the Charity?](#)

[F Q14. Why can't the Charity get its income by some other means instead of selling land for building on?](#)

[F Q15. What happens to the money you make from the sale of land?](#)

[F Q16. Do the Trustees and their officers benefit financially from the Charity?](#)

[F Q17. Is the Charity bound by any financial rules?](#)

About the Charity

[C Q18. The Charity is nearly 200 years old, surely the definition of poor then doesn't apply today?](#)

[C Q19. The poor now have government support so why is a poor charity needed today?](#)

[C Q20. What land do you own?](#)

[C Q21. What is the purpose of the Charity?](#)

[C Q22. How can people obtain financial help?](#)

[C Q23. Who are the trustees of the Charity?](#)

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[C Q25. Where can we find out more about the Charity and its work?](#)

Allotment Matters

[D Q26. What legal arrangement is there between the Charity and the allotment holder?](#)

[D Q27. Why have allotment holders in Chapel Hill had their agreements terminated?](#)

[D Q28. Some allotment holders have been tenants for many years and will lose their fruit trees if their agreement is terminated.](#)

[D Q29. What compensation is there for allotment holders if their agreement is cancelled?](#)

[D Q30. Surely an allotment is an allotment is an allotment and should stay that way?](#)

Answers to Frequently Asked Questions

Click on the start to each answer to return to the questions. E.G A1, A4 etc.

Possible developments

- [A1.](#) Actually none, as all moneys are reinvested to provide income from which grants to the poor may be paid in the future.
- [A2.](#) That depends on what RBC approves but it's not envisaged that they will be any higher than any other conventional housing in the area.
- [A3.](#) This is not known at this time but could be a combination of both.
- [A4.](#) This is not known at this time and much will depend on what the government/RBC approve but it is not our intention to put forward inner-city density housing.
- [A5.](#) Land has always been the basis of the Charity's income, whether from rent or sale proceeds. The Trustees have a duty to make the best possible use of the Charity's assets and, subject to a long-term view, to maximise its income. Consequently, the use of the Charity's land has long been under review. Sales of land for residential development have allowed the Trustees to build up a financial investment, the interest from which has formed a major part of the income in recent years.
- [A6.](#) The allotments are actually privately owned and are closed once a year to the public to preserve that right. They have been allotments for so long that it is naturally assumed that they are public space.
- [A7.](#) The Trustees will seek permission to build on allotment land as and when needed as this is the charter of the Charity.
- [A8.](#) This will be part of the planning process.
- [A9.](#) If we did this then there would have to be a charge for parking and it is unlikely that it would bring in enough money for the charity's needs. We could sell the land for use as a car park or indeed lease it for use as a car park but is unlikely to bring in the required funds to make the investment viable. The change of use would require planning permission.
- [A10.](#) That is technically possible but the cost to make it usable would take very many years of allotment rent to repay it. This would be at the expense of moneys that would otherwise be available for use by the Charity to help those in need.
- [A11.](#) Both the Government and Reading Borough Council have identified a need for more housing within the borough. We also need to raise funds so land has to be put to good use. However, we are not insensitive to the environment so we have refrained from making it office space and we think that sensible housing is the better choice.

Finance

- [A13.](#) In time it would have to be wound up or absorbed by another charity as it would not be able to fulfil its function without income, irrespective of how much land it owned. Land on its own doesn't bring in any money, only what you do with it. A massive donation by a lottery winner would probably change that.
- [A14.](#) The charity's original assets were land and any other assets or investments that it now has have come from the sale of land in the past. However, we can accept donations but this is not a reliable source of income.
- [A15.](#) It is invested with banks and investment managers that specialise in charities. These low risk banks are not your High Street banks so their names will probably be unfamiliar to you. These banks provide a tax free interest rate which is used to supplement the charity's spending on the poor.

[A16](#). No. This is forbidden under the "Scheme", which is the governing document of the Charity. Day to day running expenses is reimbursed.

[A17](#). Under the rules of the Charity Commission, the Trustees have a duty to maximise their income to allow the maximum of financial help for those in need. They have to weigh up the income from the rent of the land on one hand with the income received the sale of the land. The annual accounts are subject to an independent inspection.

About the Charity

[A18](#). It is probably more relevant today as the poor 200 years ago could partly support themselves by growing food on the land. Today we have to buy it.

[A19](#). The government won't replace the broken fridge, the faulty cooker, a bed for a child.

[A20](#). Polsted Road, Victoria Recreation Ground and a small allotment site at Chapel Hill.

[A21](#). The purpose of the Charity is to provide financial support to those "in need, hardship or distress" within the ancient Parish of Tilehurst (West Reading and the Parishes of Tilehurst, Theale and Holybrook).

[A22](#). An application form may be downloaded from the website, or obtained on request. Applications are then considered by the Trustees. Most applications are supported by a letter from a professional person from a caring agency. Such letters should add any further information which might help the Trustees to have a fuller picture of the applicant's family, financial and other needs.

[A23](#). The Rector of Tilehurst St. Michael, nominees of Reading Borough Council, Tilehurst and Theale Parish Councils, together with three co-opted Trustees.

[A24](#). The Trustees are bound by rules set by the Charity Commission, both generally and in the "Scheme" for the Charity. Annual reports and accounts are prepared and sent to the Commission. Copies are available on the Charity's website. The Trustees nominated by Tilehurst and Theale Parish Councils report back each year to their Annual Parish Meeting.

[A25](#). Copies of the Annual Reports and Accounts are filed on the website, as is a history of the Charity. These documents have also been lodged in the Tilehurst Library.

Allotment Matters

[A26](#). The agreement term is for one year. Normally this is renewable but can be cancelled by either party. The Allotment holder is under no obligation to continue the following year.

[A27](#). The Charity needs to raise funds and is looking at raising the income from this site which is beyond the acceptable limit for allotment rents.

[A28](#). This is true but the agreement clearly states that it is for a one year lease and therefore is at the allotment holders risk if they wish to plant, what are essentially, long term crops.

[A29](#). Technically, the agreement ends after one year and no compensation is necessary. However, we are not unsympathetic and in the recent termination of agreements at Chapel Hill we offered alternative plots at Kentwood Hill to run concurrently with the last year of their agreement at Chapel Hill without charge.

[A30](#). In public Allotments this may be the case but this is privately owned land and has only been offered as allotments to bring in some income to the Charity until better use can be made of it. Offering it as allotments prevents it from becoming a wilderness and does at least provide some use to the community but it should not be regarded as permanent allotments and that is why the agreements are only for one year.

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