

SCHEDULE 6¹

Cash Handling Guidance Note

Collection And Banking of Rent

This note sets out recommended practice for the safe and secure collection of allotment rents. It should be read and adopted by all Allotment Association committee members with responsibility for these functions. Any new members carrying out these functions will be expected to attend a training workshop with Allotment Officers.

Most sites now encourage BACs transfer or have debit card reading which improves record-keeping and reduces the risk to committee members of carrying cash. BCC strongly supports and encourages cashless payment wherever possible.

The remainder of these recommendations aim to minimise the risk to individuals and to the security of rents where cash handling is required. These are more specific to the main rent collection period, but the principles also apply to cash handling at other times of the year.

Pre-Collection

Notices advertising rent collection arrangements setting out dates and times should not be on public view (e.g. on site gates or fences).

Collection days and times should be kept to the minimum considered necessary to provide a fair and reasonable timescale for tenants to pay. Tenants should, wherever possible, pay by cheque or postal order as the preferred method and should receive clear guidance on whether payment is to the Association or the City Council.

Rents paid directly into the association account must be notified in full to the Allotment Services.

Site gates should be kept locked during collection times to prevent casual access to site.

Collection

At least two people (one of whom must be a Committee Officer) should be present to administer collection. If other Association business is being conducted at the same time this should be assigned to other committee members and kept separate from the rent process.

¹ The original text is fine but reflects (early) 20th century conditions

A record should be kept of cheque payments indicating name, sort code, cheque number and value. In the event of loss, this will help identify which cheques have been lost.

Plot holders should be excluded when cash and cheques are being counted and reconciled.

During the rent period receipts should be submitted on a weekly basis to the Allotment office including when payments are via BACS transfer.

Storage

Cash /cheques should NOT be left on site unless it is in a safe that meets the Council's audit specification.

If rent has to be kept at home overnight, every precaution should be taken to ensure that it is secure (e.g. locked away and/or hidden from view). Avoid keeping large amounts and bank monies as soon after collection as possible.

Keep receipt books separate to cash / cheques.

Cash In Transit

Where cash/cheques cannot be banked immediately they should be deposited on the next working day.

When cash/ cheques are taken from site or taken to the bank (or Post Office) it should be taken by two people and, ideally, transported by vehicle rather than on foot or by public transport. Car doors should be kept locked, and cash/cheques kept out of sight.

The routes used should be varied and, where possible, different branches or post offices used. Areas of known crime, quiet streets and alleyways should be avoided.

Keep to busier areas.

Park as close to the Bank or Post Office as you can. Do not use bags that would obviously indicate the contents and carry a mobile phone that can be used to contact the Police in the event of attempted or actual robbery.

If there is any suspicion that the vehicle is being followed, drive to the nearest police station, or busy area, and report the incident.

Theft, Loss

In the event of robbery, Association members are not expected to resist but should endeavour to note any details of the person that might help subsequent police enquiries.

Report any incident to the police immediately and obtain a crime number. Notify the Allotments Team with details of the incident, the crime number and details of the payments involved. Contact tenants whose cheques have been stolen.

Training

- Those committee members involved in rent collection and banking functions must attend a training workshop with Allotment Officers