Worcester City Council – Parks Section

Allotment Bonfires – Nuisance Advice

Worcester City Council accepts that allotment tenants, on occasion, will want to dispose of allotment generated waste by means of a bonfire. If used sensitively, the occasional bonfire should not be a major issue. There are no specific laws against having a bonfire, or when you can have one, but there are Acts that can deal with the nuisances they can cause. If you are having a bonfire, the smoke and smell created by it can annoy your neighbours. Smoke can stop people enjoying their gardens, opening windows or hanging washing out.

It is accepted in some circumstance a bonfire may be the only way of disposing of garden waste that shouldn’t be composted, like diseased wood. If there is no alternative means of disposal and you have a bonfire, please follow these simple guidelines:

- Where possible, warn neighbours beforehand - they are much less likely to complain
- Light the bonfire at a time least likely to affect your neighbours, e.g. not on a warm day when people will be in their garden
- Where possible only burn dry material not damp, which causes more smoke
- Avoid lighting a bonfire when air pollution in your area is high – check the weather forecast.
- Consider checking with Worcestershire Regulatory Services for advice
- Don’t use accelerants

If a neighbour has a complaint about bonfires they will be directed to the Worcestershire Hub on 01905 722233 to officially log the details and initiate an investigation.

The Details of the complaint will be forwarded to and be investigated by Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (as amended), Environmental Health has a statutory duty to investigate potential statutory nuisances, including bonfire complaints.

If it is determined that a statutory nuisance exists, is likely to occur or has previously existed and is likely to recur, then an abatement notice may be served.

Where such a notice is contravened or not complied with, enforcement action may follow which could result in prosecution and a fine at the current scale.

Should an abatement notice be served, your allotment tenancy will be reviewed and may be terminated.