



Andover Town Council

Item No.

To **approve** a request from the Drove Allotment Association.
To **instruct** Officers on how to proceed.

Produced for: Allotments Committee

By: Allotment
Officer

Date of Report: 8th January 2026

Background:

Please find to follow a business case for The Drove Allotment Association (TDAA) to acquire an additional storage solution for the Drove Allotment site and its tenants.

Business Case:



The Drove Allotment Association c/o
Steve Gill (secretary)
Andover, Hants

FAO: Andover Town Council
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Business Case for an Additional Storage Container at The Drove Allotment Site

1. Executive Summary

The Drove Allotment Association is requesting approval and for the installation of an additional storage container on-site. This will support the continued growth of our allotment shop, enable better stock management, and free the existing Hut for use as a dedicated communal space for meetings, workshops, and community allotment engagement activities. The proposal aligns with the wider mission of allotment associations as recognised by the National Allotment Society (NAS), which emphasises the social, environmental, and wellbeing benefits of well-run allotment communities.

2. Current Situation at The Drove Allotments

2.1 Growth of the Allotment Shop

The Drove Allotment shop has grown significantly in recent years, becoming a valued resource for plot holders. It provides:

- Affordable gardening supplies
- Seeds scheme run by Kings Seeds, compost, tools, and seasonal stock
- A friendly point of contact for new and existing members
- A safe space for members to discuss and be open about issues they are facing not just focused on gardening e.g many members stop by the shop for a chat, even when they don't buy purchase anything, they also open up about issues they are facing and not all are gardening related.

This success has created increased demand for storage capacity. Current storage is no longer sufficient to hold bulk stock, seasonal items, and equipment. Overstocking the Hut then restricts its use and creates operational inefficiencies.

2.2 Need for Additional Storage

An additional storage container would:

- Sit alongside the existing container and hut
- Provide secure, weather-resistant space for shop stock
- Allow bulk purchasing, reducing costs and improving availability
- Improve organisation and safety by separating retail stock from communal areas
- Support future expansion of the shop's offerings

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3. Repurposing the Existing Hut as a Communal Space

The Drove Allotment Association aims to enhance community engagement by transforming the Hut into a dedicated meeting and activity space. This aligns with NAS guidance, which emphasises the role of allotment associations in fostering community, providing training, and supporting wellbeing.

3.1. Proposed Uses for the Hut:

- Allotment talks and workshops (e.g., composting, seed sowing, pest management)
- Committee meetings
- Social gatherings and seasonal events e.g. our annual Spring and Autumn BBQ's
- A welcoming space for new plot holders
- Mental-health-supportive activities such as gardening clubs and informal meet-ups

Freeing the Hut from storage duties is essential to unlocking its full potential as a community hub.

4. Benefits of Installing an Additional Storage Container

4.1. Operational Benefits

- Improved stock management and shop efficiency
- Ability to buy in bulk, reducing costs for members
- Better organisation and safer working conditions

4.2. Community Benefits

- A dedicated communal space strengthens community bonds
- More opportunities for education, training, and wellbeing activities
- Supports the long-term sustainability of the allotment site

4.3. Strategic Benefits

- Aligns with NAS priorities around sustainability, community, and site improvement
- Enhances the reputation and resilience of The Drove Allotment Association
- Future-proofs the site as membership and activity levels continue to grow

5. Consideration of Alternatives

As part of our due diligence, The Drove Allotment Association explored several alternative options for increasing storage capacity before proposing the installation of a new container. These alternatives were carefully assessed for practicality, longevity, cost-effectiveness, and suitability for the available space on site.

5.2. Timber Shed (approximate cost £1000 to £1600 + annual maintenance)

A large timber shed was initially considered as a potential solution. However, this option was discounted for several reasons:

- High maintenance requirements: Timber structures require regular treatment, repairs, and weatherproofing to remain secure and functional. This would create an ongoing maintenance burden for the association.

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- Limited durability: Compared with steel containers, wooden sheds have a significantly shorter lifespan, especially in exposed outdoor environments.
- Security concerns: Timber sheds are more vulnerable to break-ins and weather damage, making them less suitable for storing valuable shop stock.

Given these drawbacks, a shed was deemed neither cost-effective nor sustainable as a long-term storage solution.

5.3. 20ft Storage Container (approximate cost £2500 + delivery)

A standard 20ft steel container was also evaluated. While this option would have provided ample storage capacity and excellent durability, it was ultimately ruled out due to:

- Insufficient space on site: The available footprint at the Drove Allotments cannot accommodate a full-size 20ft container without obstructing access or encroaching on communal areas.
- Visual and spatial impact: A container of this size would dominate the area and reduce flexibility for future site improvements.

For these reasons, a 20ft container was considered impractical for the specific constraints of our site.

5.4. Preferred Option: Smaller 8ft x 10ft Storage Container (approximate cost £2010 + delivery)

The proposed smaller container offers the best balance of:

- Durability and low maintenance
- Security for shop stock
- Weather proof – this is a sealed ocean going container
- Efficient use of limited space
- Minimal disruption to existing site layout
- Moveable - the container is not a permanent fixture and can be removed at any time and are resalable should it become obsolete.
- Space utilization - the proposed space where the container will be located does not take up any allocated allotment plot or impinge on same or roadways.

This option meets our operational needs while respecting the physical constraints of the allotment site.

6. Financial Considerations

The cost of the new container including purchase, delivery and installation would be met by the Drove Allotment Association with no requirement from ATC.

The cost, if required, of removal at a later date, would not fall to ATC. Any cost incurred would be met by the Drove Allotment Association.

7. Conclusion

The installation of an additional storage container is a practical, cost-effective, and strategically important investment for The Drove Allotment Association. It directly supports

The Drove Allotment Association

the continued success of the allotment shop and enables the transformation of the Hut into a vibrant community space, strengthening the social, environmental, and wellbeing benefits that allotments provide, as recognised by the National Allotment Society. This proposal ensures that The Drove Allotments remain a thriving, forward-looking, and inclusive community resource for years to come.

8. Appendix

a) Photo of existing Hut and container and proposed site of new container

This is our current set up with a container alongside the hut.



This is a mock-up of how it would look with an additional container alongside the existing container.



There would be a 2200mm gap between the side of the new container and Plot 42B

There would be a 2000mm gap between the back of the container and Plot 43A, this is the same as with the existing container as shown in the picture below



b) Photo of storage issues

This stock would be relocated to the existing and new container. This space would be repurposed into a communal space



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Recommendation:

To **approve** a request from the Drove Allotment Association.
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