

Disability Access Forum Banksfield Allotment Accessibility Audit 2026

On Tuesday 26th May 2026, Gareth Muir Hebden Royd Town Council Local Environment and Allotments Officer met with June Eaton from Hebden Bridge Disability Access Forum to assess accessibility issues on site. A site assessment was undertaken identifying issues which could result in barriers to accessibility for existing and potential site users. The following is a summary of the issues discussed with solutions to mitigate the identified issues.

- Information relating to the location of the site was missing from the HRTC website, it was suggested that this was added to the allotment webpage along with information regarding parking, which is on street. Bus times and routes were also suggested additions to the webpage. Information regarding the allotment site, such as parking and accessibility could be added to the website and given to prospective Tenants for them to assess as to whether an offered allotment plot would be suitable for them to take on. Information about the time it takes to walk from the nearest bus stop was also suggested.
- Due to the steep nature of the site and the steps already in situ, several plots were identified that would benefit from the installation of handrail(s). These plots are Plot numbers 3, 5 and 6A (two handrails).
- The lack of shade on site was identified as a factor which could negatively impact individuals with health conditions and it was suggested that Tenants be allowed to set up parasols to have shade in periods of intense heat.
- Several plots have sole access via steps. The quality and composition of these steps vary greatly. The installation of handrails would aid in using the existing steps and where needed replacing the existing steps with steps of equal distance and height would enable existing and future tenants to access the site. Existing stone steps have been identified as being slippery during the winter months and would benefit from regular cleaning including jet washing where possible.
- The lack of mains water onsite was identified as an issue whereby Tenants might struggle to move water on site. A suggestion of a communal water harvesting system being installed alongside encouraging existing Tenants with sheds to harvest rainwater. A

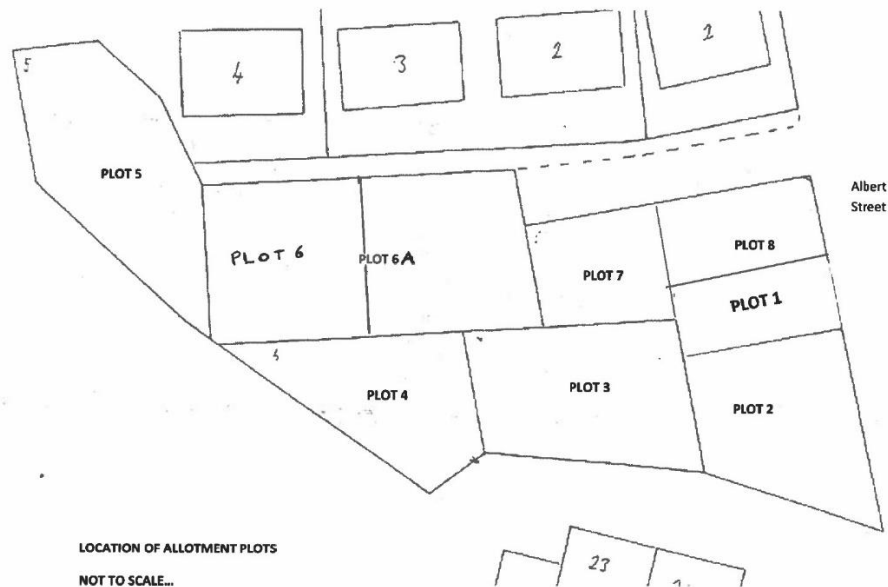
suggestion was made to contact Yorkshire Water regarding the possibility of a mains water connection.

- Existing fences panels when replaced could be replaced with gates such as on Plot 2, which is accessible by steps, could have a gate replacement to prevent the need to access the plot by steps.
- Accessible signage on site, such as black text on a white background was suggested, with information being in that format in the site noticeboard.

Suggested Actions going forward:

1. Update the website with information regarding, parking, bus routes and walking times.
2. Install handrails on plots which need them when identified by Tenants as an access requirement.
3. Allow Tenants to have parasols on site to provide shade when working.
4. Replace steps as and when necessary, with risers and treads conforming to accepted accessible design standards and dimensions.
5. Encourage Tenants to harvest rainwater and follow up with Yorkshire Water regarding the installation of a mains water point on site.
6. Replace decrepit fence panels with gate(s), where appropriate to improve access from the highway and reduce the need for steps.
7. Ensure onsite signage is accessible to those with visual impairments. Use plain English in text to aid in cognitive processing.

Banksfield Allotment Site plan.



Additional Comments from June Eaton

A few comments on your report actions:

1. Information - include that street parking is limited and mostly steep
2. handrails - good contrast against background for visibility
3. shade - for plots not near trees, important for everyone but particularly people with chronic health conditions, not only heart conditions
4. any step improvements to consider textured surface (whether stone or concrete) for better slip resistance, would need advice. Include contrast nosings.

Banksfield plots 1 and 2 are probably the most likely to be potentially accessible for people with mobility impairments, if plot 2 was accessed by gate from Aspinall Street rather than its current steps from Bank view. And maybe provide wider paths within the plots. Although the road and pavement there are steep which could exclude some people. (Maybe the allotment fence could accommodate a handrail if needed by tenants in the future?)

Some people with mobility impairments can manage good steps with handrails more easily than they can manage slopes. So, some people arriving by car might access plots 5, 6, 6a from Royd View which is level parking. Those are very large plots so some disabled people with limited capacity might manage half a plot more easily.