



Earls Colne Allotment Association

Constitution

V1.3 April 2020

1. Aims & Objectives

- To promote and encourage the cultivation and enjoyment of allotment gardening and develop gardening skills and knowledge.
- To conduct negotiations with the Parish Council and Landowners on all matters relating to the allotments.
- To protect and promote the biodiversity, landscape value and amenity. To manage all common areas of the allotment such as the main pathways and orchard, for the benefit of the members, and to enhance the natural environment.
- Foster good relations with residential neighbours and local statutory and non-statutory bodies.
- Undertake projects to improve the facilities of the Allotments Association.
- To maintain good communications by means of noticeboards, newsletters, website and any other suitable means to encourage the Committee to be representative of the diversity of the gardeners.
- To take action to protect members and their plots against damage, trespass and theft.
- To secure the site from vandals, dog fouling and other anti-social activities.

2. Membership

Membership of the Association shall be open to:

- All persons 18 years old and over who are allotment holders at the Newhouse Road Allotment site.
- Each plot holder (*whether full, half or double*) will be considered to have one vote in any decision making.

Termination of Membership

- The General Committee shall have the right for good and sufficient reason (as detailed in “the rules”) to terminate a membership, provided that the individual member shall have the right to be heard by the General Committee before a decision is made.

3. Powers and Duties of The Committee

A Management Committee will conduct the affairs of the Association. It shall consist of a Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson, Treasurer and Secretary and up to four other general members. All members of the Committee must be members of ECAA.

- The Committee must retire at the Annual General Meeting and will be eligible for re-election. Committee members that have not attended the minimum number of meetings in the preceding year, shall not be eligible for re-election.
- The Committee may fill any vacancies when necessary and such members will hold office until the next AGM.
- A quorum will be four members.
- The Committee will meet at least four times a year. Committee members should attend at least $\frac{2}{3}$ of all planned meetings.
- The Committee will be responsible for:
 - I. Conducting negotiations with the Parish Council for the use of the Allotments
 - II. Entering into an allotment site letting agreement with the Parish Council- "the lease".
 - III. Ensuring compliance with the terms of the lease.
 - IV. The letting of individual plots, the setting and collection of rents and any other levies which may be necessary from time to time.
 - V. Promoting and commitment to the Aims and Objectives of the Constitution.
- The General Committee may determine the powers and terms of reference of any Sub committee and duration of its activities (*such as Social or Fund-raising Events, organizing Bulk Purchases / deliveries, representation or arrangement of Horticulture Shows*).
- The Committee may authorize payments for works or materials necessary for the maintenance of the site. Approval by the ECAA members is required before incurring any **major*** expenditure. This approval may be sought via a General meeting or via formal communication (letter or email) as deemed appropriate by the Committee. 14 days notice will be given for either a meeting, or response to communication. Decision to proceed will be based on the majority response, with the Chairman having the final say if necessary.

** Major expenditure means a sum of £500 or more, or such other figure as shall be agreed by the Association at a General meeting.*

4. General Meetings

- The Annual General Meeting will be held each April.

At this meeting;

- The Chairpersons report for the previous year ending shall be presented.
- Audited accounts will be presented. A person who is not a Committee member will be appointed to audit the accounts.
- Honorary Officers and other members of the General Committee shall be elected.
- Proposals to amend this Constitution to be considered if and when necessary.
- Other business, of which due notice has been received, to be considered.
- A quorum shall consist of those attending the meeting.
- Special General Meetings may be called by the General Committee, or upon a request in writing to the Secretary, from at least 6 members.
- Members shall have a minimum of fourteen days notice, in writing, of all general meetings.

5. Rules of Procedure

Quorum: Four members of the committee will form a quorum at regular Committee meetings. At General Meetings the quorum shall simply consist of those present.

Voting: All questions arising at any meeting shall be decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote thereat. No member shall exercise more than one vote, but in the case of an equality of votes the chair shall have a second and casting vote. Postal and Proxy votes will not be allowed unless there is a proposed major change to the Constitution of the Association.

Minutes: Minutes shall be kept by the General Committee and any sub-committee's which may have been established, and the appropriate Secretary shall enter therein a record of all proceedings and resolutions.

6. Finances

The Committee shall maintain a bank account in the name of the Association. The signatories shall be the Treasurer and the Chairperson, and both must sign. All monies raised by or on behalf of the Association shall be applied to further the aims & objects of the Association and for no other purpose.

7. Allotment Rules for members

The Rules are designed to enhance the gardening experience of all members of the Association. It is a condition of the Tenancy Agreement that they are complied with by the members. Every member will be given a copy of the Constitution and the Rules together with the Letting Agreement.

8. Amendment to the Constitution and Rules

The Constitution and Rules may be varied from time to time by resolution of the members at a General Meeting. However, no change may be proposed for consideration which would be contrary to terms of the lease as agreed with the Parish Council.

9. Termination of the Association.

On cessation of the Association, for whatever reason, any monies remaining after payment of all expenses, outstanding debts and claims, shall be distributed equally amongst the current Members who have held plot rental Agreements for at least one year, and whose rental is not in arrears.