

Trap Ground Allotment Association Rules (updated April 2011)

The current rules (revised as agreed at the 2011 AGM) are designed to protect the site, maintain standards and define the powers and duties of the committee. These are set out below:

1 The Title of Association is Trap Grounds Allotment Association (TGAA).

2 The Trustees The Association shall appoint three Trustees and all land occupied by the members is held under licence from the Trustees. On death or retirement of a Trustee, the vacancy shall be filled at the next Annual General Meeting.

3 The Committee shall consist of the Chair, Treasurer, Secretary, Letting Secretary(ies) and at least three other members.

Duties and powers of the committee

i) The committee shall hold an Annual General Meeting (AGM) giving due notice to members of the time and place. At this meeting, committee members shall be elected and an auditor appointed. The rules of the Association may be changed only at the AGM and by majority vote. The quorum for the AGM shall be five.

ii) The committee shall have the power to appoint a member to fill any vacancy that may occur between AGMs.

iii) The committee will let plots in accordance with the **Code of practice for lettings**.

iv) The committee is responsible for fixing the amount of fees and any other levies that may be necessary, also for the letting of plots and the collection of fees.

v) The committee may authorise payments for work or materials necessary for maintenance of the Association's property.

vi) Should the committee need to give any member notice to quit, two months warning notice of this will be given to that member.

vii) Holders of plots which are neglected or falling below a standard acceptable to the committee in any other way will receive a warning letter giving them two months – but only one month in the growing season (March to October) – in which to bring the plot up to standard. If little or no progress has been made within that time, the committee will either ask members to give up part of their plot or issue a notice to quit. New members will be issued with a notice to quit if after two months – one month in the growing season – of the plot being let, little or no progress has been made in clearing and/or cultivating the plot. When issued with a notice to quit, members will be given two weeks to remove their belongings from the plot. After that two week period, the plot will be re-let and any of the previous plot holder's belongings remaining on the plot will be considered to be part of the plot to be let.

viii) In the case of a persistent breach of any of the Rules for members listed below, the committee may dispossess a member of his/her allotment after issuing a seven-day notice in writing, giving reasons for the dispossession.

ix) The Committee may expel immediately any member found guilty of theft of produce from another member.

x) The quorum for a meeting of the committee shall be three.

Rules for use of plots and members' responsibilities

a) **Fees** Members must pay their plot and membership fees within a reasonable period of the AGM, which is when they become due. Fees should be paid at a time and in a manner directed by the Treasurer. Failure to pay by the 1st of April in any year will be taken to mean that the person concerned no longer wishes to be a member of the Association and their plot will be offered for re-letting. In paying their fees, members are assumed to agree to abide by these rules.

b) **Changes in circumstances** Any change of address or other contact details must be notified to the Secretary. Any written communication from the committee will be delivered by hand to the plot holder's last known postal address. If the committee is not kept informed of a change of address, any communication sent to an old and out-of-date address will still be deemed to have been delivered to the plot holder.

Members who are unable to work their plot as a result of illness or other reason for a long absence must keep the committee informed. Failure to do this may result in a plot appearing to be neglected and so being re-let.

c) **Plot boundaries** Plots are not a uniform size so new members must accept their plot boundaries as defined at the time of letting. Members are responsible for making sure that plots are clearly numbered.

d) **Care of plots** Members must keep their plots in a reasonable state of cultivation and cultivated to at least 75% of the potential in a proper and husband-like manner. This is taken to mean that a minimum of 75% of the plot (by area) is either in readiness for growing, well stocked with produce (relevant to the time of the year) or being made ready for crops or being prepared for the following season.

e) **Care of pathways** Members must co-operate to ensure that adjoining pathways giving access to plots are kept tended and clear to a width of one metre.

f) **Willows** Any construction on a plot made from live willow must be kept pruned and trimmed at all times. The committee may instruct plot holders to remove willows from plots and/or adjoining pathways and arrange to up-root any thought to be at risk of becoming a nuisance.

g) **What can be grown** Plot holders may grow any kind of vegetables, flowers, soft fruit or herbs. No wild brambles or new large trees or large shrubs are allowed on any allotment. Fruit trees may be planted only if they are of dwarf stock. This means: apples grown on rootstocks M27, M9 or M26; pears and quinces on rootstock Quince C; plums grown on rootstocks Pixy and Ferlenain; and compact peach cultivars. Fruit trees and bushes should be sited only where they will not create an obstacle or nuisance to others as they grow. No more than 30% of a plot holder's total land (by area) may be given over to fruit trees. If plot holders do decide to cultivate a number of trees they must ensure that the surrounding areas are kept weed free and neatly mown.

h) **Weeds** Plot holders must take steps to eradicate pernicious weeds - such as bindweed, thistles, ground elder, golden rod, michaelmas daisies and nettles – and ensure that they do not spread to other plots. Members must not cause a nuisance to other plot holders by allowing weeds to seed.

i) **Spraying** Plot holders must take care – and be considerate of others - when spraying herbicides and pesticides or other chemicals. Spraying should take place only when conditions are still and calm.

j) **Rubbish** No rubbish may be dumped on any part of the Association's land. Carpet is considered to be rubbish and its use is prohibited on the allotment site. Unwanted vegetable matter must be burnt or composted, and other rubbish kept and put in the skip provided from time to time. Kitchen waste that attracts vermin– eg cooked food, meat, cheese and egg shells – should not be composted and so must not be brought to the allotment site.

k) **Bonfires** Members must follow the **Code of practice for bonfires on allotment sites** laid down by Oxford City Council. If a communal bonfire has been lit, members should use that in preference to a bonfire on an individual plot.

l) **Wells** Plot holders who have a well on their plot are responsible for the safe maintenance of it and for providing and maintaining a strong, raised well surround and cover. New wells may be dug only with the permission of the committee. Members can apply to the committee for help with the cost of materials for building and maintaining wells. Well water is the common property of all so wells should not be locked and they should be readily accessible to all. Wells should not be left uncovered and members must take care to replace lids on wells after use.

m) **Plot inspections** Plots will be inspected by the lettings secretaries plus a minimum of two other members of the committee regularly throughout the year. This sub-committee will monitor cultivation level and general maintenance as well as noting any non conformance with any of these rules. The holder of a plot falling

below a standard acceptable to the committee shall be notified in writing that his or her plot must be brought up to standard within a specific period of time (depending on the time of year – less time will be given during the growing season. If no acceptable improvement has been made within that time, the plot holder may be notified that his or her right to occupy the plot has been terminated. The plots of new members will be inspected two months – one month in the growing season – after letting. If there is little or no progress in clearing and/or cultivating a newly acquired plot, the committee will issue a notice to quit.

- n) **Use of machinery** When using shared machinery, members must follow the guidelines for the safe use of machinery.
- o) **Children** are welcome on the allotments but must be carefully supervised by a responsible adult at all times.
- p) **Consideration of other members** Members must not cause any nuisance to other members, whether from obstruction of paths, encouragement of vermin, use of bad language, loud noise or any other misuse of land.
- q) **Dogs** All dogs must be kept under control at all times. When not on their owner's plot, dogs must be kept on a lead and must not be allowed to foul the allotments.
- r) **Gates** Members must close gates – and ensure that they are locked - on entering and leaving the allotments. Observance of this rule is vital to the security of the allotments to preserve them from unauthorised entrance, vandalism, pilfering and/or damage from straying animals.
- s) **Sub-letting** Members may not sub-let their plots or any part of them. If a plot becomes vacant, it will be let by the lettings secretaries in accordance with the 'Code of Practice for lettings' .
- t) **Shared plots** People may share a plot but sharers who want the right to take over the plot must be registered as joint plot holders on the association's database, become members of the association and pay the appropriate membership fee.
- u) **Sheds, greenhouses, fruit cages, polytunnels and other structures** Before erecting any structure on their plot, members must read and comply with the **Code of Practice for sheds and other structures** as agreed at the 2009 AGM.
- v) **Live stock** Any member wishing to keep live stock on his or her plot must first discuss their plans with the committee and must comply with guidance published by the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners. .
- w) **Other** Members must accept the ruling and directions of the committee in all matters (including disputes) affecting the land.

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