



CONSTITUTION AND RULES of the ASHFORD ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

Issue 1 - January 2016

Affiliated to:

The National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Ltd
O'Dell House
Hunters Road, CORBY
Northamptonshire, NN17 5JE



Contents

1. Name
2. Official Communications
3. Aims and Objectives
4. Powers
5. Use of Name
6. Membership of the Society
7. Subscriptions
8. Allotment Rental Charges
9. Officers of the Society
10. Voting
11. Mid Term Vacancies
12. Co-Option
13. Powers of Committee, Governance and day-to-day Management
14. Attendance at Meetings
15. Removal from the Committee
16. Committee Meetings of the Society
17. Working Party
18. Financial Matters
19. Changes to the Rules
20. Membership of the NASLG
21. Arbitration
22. Dissolution of the Society

Appendix 1 – Current Post Holders and Roles & Responsibilities

Appendix 2 – Sample Agenda

Appendix 3 – Working Party Membership

1. Name

1.1 The name of the Society shall be the **ASHFORD ALLOTMENT SOCIETY**.

2. Official Communications

2.1 Official communications shall normally be received and signed on behalf of the Society by the Secretary or as appropriate by the Chair or Treasurer or Bulk Buying Manager or Membership Secretary or other Committee Member as delegated by the Chair.

3. Aims and Objectives of the Society

3.1 The Society shall exist as a non-profit making organisation which assists all members to promote allotment gardening as a leisure pursuit which encourages health, wellbeing and community.

3.2 To promote allotment gardening in the Ashford Borough area.

3.3 To enable allotment sites within the Borough of Ashford to co-operate with each other and with Ashford Borough Council (ABC) on matters of mutual interest.

3.4 To advise Ashford Borough Council on improvements and enhancements that may be made to allotments in their ownership.

3.5 To arrange visits and excursions to gardens and places of interest, including lectures and speakers, competitions and other events.

3.6 To obtain supplies of seeds, fertilisers, potatoes and other goods as available (bulk buying scheme).

3.7 To establish and maintain a working relationship with Ashford Borough Council with respect to all allotment matters and to improve standards and facilities to ensure ongoing availability of plots to meet demand.

3.8 To help new tenants cultivate an allotment and develop skills to maintain a plot to a high standard.

4. Powers

4.1 The Society shall have full powers to do all things necessary or expedient for the accomplishment of its objectives.

4.2 No sectarian or political questions shall be introduced to any meeting or on any media representing the Society. Any Member shall not propagate political or religious doctrines, racial or gender discrimination or take part in activities that could bring the Society into disrepute.

5. Use of Name

5.1 The use of the name 'Ashford Allotment Society' shall be used with the accompanying logo in all official communications and business letters, emails, publications, online activities, payments, or money for goods.

6. Membership

6.1 The Society shall consist of all allotment tenants within the Ashford Borough. Other allotment holders are eligible to be Members from private, parish, and community sites.

6.2 Tenants of Ashford Borough Council sites who sign a tenancy agreement are then bound by the Society's Rules.

6.3 The Membership Secretary shall keep a register of all Members including the following:-

- Name and address.
- Date of joining the Society.
- Email address.
- Phone number.
- Site and number of plot.

Note: Information held by the Society shall not be disclosed to any third party or used in any way that contravenes the Data Protection Act (1998), Chapter 29.

Any Member is entitled to see on request any such membership information and must notify any changes of contact details to the Membership Secretary.

6.4 Membership of the Society ceases if the Member is no longer an allotment tenant or the Member notifies the Membership Secretary in writing of their resignation from the Society.

7. Subscriptions

7.1 No subscription is necessary for membership of the Society.

7.2 A subscription is required for membership of the Bulk Buying Scheme, currently £4 annually, payable during February/March. A membership card will be issued and brings entitlement to purchase goods from the Trading Store.

8. Allotment Rental Charges

8.1 These will be sent out via Ashford Borough Council in September/October annually depending on current rates, size of plot and any relevant concessions (which will require appropriate evidence).

9. Officers of the Society

9.1 The Society shall consist of the following officers

- Chair Person.
- Vice Chair.
- Minute Secretary.
- Membership Secretary.
- Show Secretary.
- Treasurer.
- Website Manager.
- Press and Publicity Officer.
- Bulk Buying Manager.
- Other Members of the Committee consist of the Site Representatives who are elected as one member from each allotment site within the Borough.

9.2 The members of the Society elect the Chair and Minute Secretary. The tenure for both posts is two years, elected at the Annual General Meeting; and if the current post holders are willing to stand unopposed both post-holders shall be duly elected for a further two years.

9.3 Ashford Borough Council will nominate an Allotment Officer or his/her representative to attend the Committee meetings and AGM as they consider necessary.

Note: See Appendix 1 for roles and responsibilities of Committee members.

9.4 If there are other nominations for the Chair, the Minute Secretary shall first declare the names of those willing to stand and a vote is taken of those present at the AGM and a simple majority shall uphold the decision on a show of hands with the proposed candidates out of the room at time of voting. The Chair is then able to confirm his/her appointment and will then continue with the official business of the meeting and if relevant, to elect the Minute Secretary.

9.5 The position of Site Representative shall be held for two years.

9.6 Each site can propose and second an individual tenant as their Site Representative.

9.7 Should more than one individual be nominated as Site Representative there shall be a ballot of tenants by email or via the site notice boards.

9.8 Membership shall cease in the following circumstances:-

- The Member's death.
- The Members' resignation in writing or by email.
- Non-payment of annual rental charge if after a period of three months elapses after it has become due and remains unpaid.
- Expulsion of a Member (see below Rule 9.9).
- Any termination of tenancy for poor cultivation automatically will revoke membership.

9.9 A Member may be expelled from the Society for any conduct detrimental to the Society, ie, failure to comply with the Rules. A notice specifying poor conduct shall be received by the Member at least one calendar month prior to the expulsion and if no appeal is received by the Committee or its representative.

10. Voting

10.1 With the exception of the Minute Secretary who shall not vote, and except for a casting vote from the Chair, each Member of the Committee shall be eligible to vote on any proposed and seconded motions as presented at the Committee Meetings.

10.1 A simple majority will carry a motion.

11. Midterm Vacancies

11.1 The Committee shall fill any vacancy that arises during the year and any Member thus appointed shall have full voting powers.

12. Co-option

12.1 The Committee may co-opt any other Member of the Society to assist in its work. These member(s) shall not have voting powers.

13. Powers of Committee, Governance and Day to Day Management

13.1 Governance of the Society shall be invested in the Committee and its officers.

13.2 The Chair and a representative number of Committee Members shall have full power to supervise and manage the day to day work of the Committee according to its objectives and Rules for its purpose.

14. Attendance at meetings

14.1 It is expected that members of the Society's Committee shall not miss any more than two meetings per year and that if unable to attend, the Minute Secretary should be notified prior to the meeting date.

15. Removal from the Committee

15.1 The Committee may remove any officer or committee member from the said committee by a simple majority vote following an open discussion of the relevant issues, during which time the individual member will have an opportunity to put his/her point of view. If required the vote may be 'in camera' but the voting numbers shall be recorded in the minutes.

16. Society Committee Meetings

16.1 Meetings are held each year usually in January, April, June and September, with the meeting in January being designated as an AGM. Meetings may be held more frequently or at other times as required.

The Annual General Meeting will be held in prior to the normal Committee meeting with the date being arranged by the Minute Secretary with an Agenda and venue/time to be distributed at least two weeks in advance.

16.2 Members of the Society who are not Committee members are welcome to attend any meeting as observers. They may not vote or take part in discussions unless in exceptional circumstance and agreed by the Chair.

16.3 If a site representative is unable to attend any meeting he/she is able to nominate a replacement for that meeting.

16.4 If the Chair is unable to attend a meeting, an acting Chair is elected at the start of the meeting and he/she shall preside at that meeting. Usually the Vice Chair will be nominated.

16.5 If in the event of an urgent situation or if an emergency arises then the Chair and/or the Minute Secretary and/or Treasurer may take any executive emergency action and this must be reported to the Chair at the earliest opportunity and recorded at the next Committee Meeting.

16.6 Agenda Items /Minutes.

At least 7 days' notice shall be given for any Committee meeting and an agenda published by the Minutes Secretary. Minutes of meetings will be circulated to all members.

Note: See Appendix 2 for a sample Agenda.

16.7 Agenda items other than those agreed in the sample agenda may be added at the discretion of the Chair under AOB.

Note: It would be appreciated if such issues were brought to the attention of the Chair in advance of the meeting.

16.8 Extraordinary Meetings or Special Meetings.

Special Meetings can be held if and when required, usually to discuss a specific issue of interest to all Committee Members and which would directly affect Members and their allotments. No other business other than that stated in the notice will be transacted. Notices of such meetings will be circulated via email and posted on site notice boards and resulting Minutes made available to all members.

Special Meetings may also be held if the Committee feels it expedient, or if the Minutes Secretary receives a written request signed by at least 5 Members of the Society.

16.9 From time to time the Committee may nominate Sub Committees of three or more Members of the Society to advise the Committee on various specific matters.

17. The Working Party

17.1 A joint working party chaired by the Head of Environmental & Customer Services, Ashford Borough Council, meets with members of the Society on the first Wednesday of each month to discuss and decide on issues pertaining to changes in the charging policy and other important matters as decided by the Agenda. Items include an action plan to ensure that progress and developments continue for the mutual benefit of Ashford Borough Council and all allotment tenants.

Note: See Appendix 3 for current membership of the Working Party.

18 Financial Matters

18.1 Financial records. The Treasurer shall keep a formal record of all income and expenditure related to the Society's financial transactions. All expenditure must be supported by a receipt or appropriate evidence which shows the date, amount and purpose of the purchase.

18.2 A membership card will be issued and will act as a receipt for the annual fee for the Bulk Buying Scheme and Trading Store membership and a record kept of these Members.

18.3 The Bulk Buying Manager shall keep a record of all transactions pertaining to the Trading Store including membership fees in conjunction with the Treasurer and Membership Secretary.

18.4 Banking. The Treasurer shall open a cheque book account and an online account with a Bank or Building Society. Any access to these accounts shall only be made by the Treasurer alone, or in the case of the cheque book used for payments, two authorised signatures are required.

18.5 Expenses/petty cash. The Treasurer may make payments of expenses such as postage or printing costs from a cash float of £25. Amounts above this should be withdrawn from the main account by the Treasurer.

18.6 Annual Accounts. A simple income and expenditure account and a balance sheet shall be prepared for each meeting and annually. Other activities involving expenditure shall be presented separately.

18.7 Audits. The accounts should be annually audited by any person/s who is not an Officer of the Committee.

18.8 Committee members may make a request to see the accounts of both the main account and the Bulk Buying account.

18.9 Reports. The Treasurer shall make a verbal report at each meeting and this report shall be recorded in the Minutes.

18.10 Special expenditure. When special projects are to be considered they shall be costed as far as possible and the Treasurer will then advise the Committee on possible funding. No Member can make purchases on behalf of the Society without prior permission from the Treasurer.

19 Amendments to the Constitution and Rules

19.1 Amendments to the Constitution and Rules may be made by resolution at the AGM. If a Special General Meeting is called specifically for this purpose any changes must be proposed and seconded and are subject to a two thirds majority vote by those members present.

19.2 Voting at General Meetings. Every Member present shall have one vote apart from those ineligible. If the votes cast are equal, then the Chair shall have the casting vote.

20 Membership of the NASALG

20.1 The Ashford Allotment Society shall be a member of the above Society.

21 Arbitration

21.1 In cases where a dispute arises between the Society and any Member of the Committee, or in the case of any complaint against any member, an application shall be made to the Committee for redress.

21.2 Should the Committee be unable bring the matter to a conclusion, or if the parties fail to agree on the matter in dispute, then the matter shall be brought to Arbitration.

21.3 One Arbiter shall be nominated by each of the parties concerned and one from the National Society.

21.4 The judgement of these Arbiters shall be final.

21.5 Any costs incurred shall be settled with the arbiters.

23 Dissolution of the Society

23.1 The Society may at any time be dissolved by at least three quarters of the membership, as testified by their signatures on an Instrument of Dissolution.

APPENDIX 1

ASHFORD ALLOTMENT SOCIETY COMMITTEE **CURRENT POSTS AND POST-HOLDERS**

Note: xxx denotes date of election unknown at the time of writing.

Chair Person – Penny Winston

Elected for two years tenure Last election: February 2015

Vice Chair Person – Sue Haste

Elected for two years tenure Last election: xxx

Minutes Secretary – Carol Ridings

Elected for two years tenure Last election: xxx

Show Secretary – Alex Fraser

Elected for two years tenure Last election: January 2016

Treasurer – Brian Stamp

Elected for two years tenure Last election: March 2015

Website Manager – Jonathan Goodwin

Elected for two years tenure Last election: January 2016

Publicity Manager – Vacancy

Elected for two years tenure Last election: September 2013

Trading Store Manager – Geoff Button

Elected for two years tenure Last election: xxx

Membership Secretary – Alex Fraser

Elected for two years tenure Last election: June 2015

Site Reps

Site Reps are elected initially for 2 years. If no other nominations or registrations, then Reps to stand until such occurs.

Beaver	June 2015	Colin Leek
Burton	xxx	Mark Chandler
Bybrook	xxx	Penny Winston
Cryol Road	xxx	Tony Fagg
Gas House Fields	xxx	Stefan Heathfield
Henwood	2014	Christine Green
Musgrove	xxx	Sue Haste
Orion	xxx	Roy Taylor
Repton	xxx	Bill Shrubshole
Westrees	xxx	Brenda Raggett
Christchurch/Jemmett	2015	Mark Cooper
Musgrove New/William Road	2015	Mark Cooper
Wye	No Rep	

OUTLINE OF ROLES

Chair

In conjunction with the Secretary, to arrange meetings – 4 per year (January, April, June, September), including the AGM.

Chair meetings.

Liaise with all members of Committee.

Be a contact for all Tenants/Site Reps.

Assist in smooth running of the Trading Store.

Co-operate with other Garden Societies in the local area.

Liaise with the South East rep for NALSG.

To promote allotment gardening.

To encourage local Schools to grow flowers, fruit and vegetables.

Assist the Show Secretary as required.

To oversee and agree all press releases and content in conjunction with one other Committee member where possible.

To oversee and agree all content of the website, Facebook, Instagram, & Twitter accounts as required.

Liaise with Ashford Borough Council.

Organise/manage visits to gardens and local places of interest.

Produce the annual newsletter.

Organise visiting speakers.

Judge plots for the Summer Show and arrange/award Certificates and produce the results for distribution.

Arrange produce for charities.

Vice-Chair

Deputise and support the Chair in all matters relating to Committee, and roles outlined above.

Secretary

Take Minutes for meetings.

Print/distribute such Minutes to all Committee members and the Website Manager.

Arrange meetings for the committee in conjunction with the Chair.

Show Secretary

Arrange date for the annual Produce Show (summer).

Arrange date for the Pumpkin Show (autumn).

Book the venue for the Summer Show.

Arrange and organise Judges.

Produce all paperwork (inc. show schedule, entry cards, prize cards, etc.) for the Summer Show.

To arrange prizes, raffle and associated matters.

To liaise with the Press Officer to produce a press report for local publications and publicity for forthcoming shows.

To arrange commercial exhibitors and trade stalls as required.

Produce a Show Report.

Treasurer

Responsible for all Bank accounts and petty cash.

Manage cheque books and accounts.

Produce a report for Committee meetings.

Pay expenses.

Make payments for the Bulk Buying Scheme.

Keep a record of all income and expenditure.

Trading Store Manager (Bulk Buying Manager)

Manage all orders (including potatoes, composts, sundries, etc. to provide members with competitively priced supplies).

Arrange deliveries.

Produce price lists.

Takes responsibility for all cash/accounts, income and expenditure in conjunction with the Treasurer.

Stock take annually.

Attend all open sessions at the Trading Store.

Have responsibility for all day-to-day running of the Scheme.

In conjunction with the Membership Secretary, produce a list of members of the Scheme.

Produce a Report for Committee meetings.

Determine opening dates annually.

Membership Secretary

Keep contact details of all Tenants (inc. email addresses) as available.
Keep records of all members of Trading Store and income generated due to membership.

Produce reports as needed.

Keep, produce and issue membership cards as required.

Distribute information/news by e-mail to members, eg. Potato Orders.

Press and Publicity Manager

To produce all publicity/posters etc. to promote events run by the Committee.

Distribute the posters in the local area.

Make useful contacts with local newspapers/magazines/local publications

Promote allotment gardening in the Ashford Borough area.

To ensure that all press releases sent on the behalf of the Committee have been agreed by the Chair and at least one other Committee member prior to release and with Ashford Borough Council as appropriate.

To produce a Report for Committee meetings.

Website Manager

To manage the existing website and keep all information up to date.

To put articles and information on the website as requested by the Committee/ABC.

To promote allotment gardening in the Ashford Borough area and the Society.

To ensure that all content of the website is approved by the Chair in conjunction with one other Committee member and to ensure it shall not be used for personal ideology or commercial promotion.

To encourage new ideas and promote helpful tips for new and existing members.

To include posting of all minutes of meetings etc.

To develop new and innovative ways of communication with Society members, eg. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Snapchat, etc.

Site Reps

Regularly attend the site and be available to quickly resolve issues.

Provide appropriate contact details to the plot holders.

Attend all meetings and report on all issues pertaining to the site in a short report.

If unable to attend, send apologies and arrange a deputy.

Arrange site visits and inspections at mutually convenient times with Eileen Law (or nominated colleague), ABC.

Arrange to meet prospective Tenants and introduce them to the site

Oversee cultivation of plots.

Report any uncultivated or poorly cultivated plots to Eileen Law (or nominated colleague), ABC.

Help to keep the overall site tidy.

Encourage new Tenants with freely given help, knowledge and advice

Inform new Tenants of the Trading Store and member discount scheme.

Demonstrate good practice.

Implement the Water Policy for the site.

Oversee the use of water and encourage water conservation.

Check site security and report break-ins, vandalism, etc. to the Allotment Officer/Police, and other Tenants.

First line response to site issues, eg. implementation of water policy.

Maintain site notice boards with up-to-date information.

Oversee integrity of paths, fences and common areas.

APPENDIX 2

ASHFORD ALLOTMENT SOCIETY COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER 2015 at 18.30 hrs

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL OFFICES
COMMITTEE ROOM 1



AGENDA

1. Apologies
2. Chairman's opening remarks
3. Minutes of the last Meeting
4. Bulk Buying Manager's report
5. Treasurer's report
6. Show Secretary's report
7. Publicity Officer's report
8. Membership Secretary's report
9. Report of the Allotment Officer
10. Site Representative's reports
11. Report of the Working Party
12. Date of the next Meeting
13. AOB

APPENDIX 3

ASHFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL – ASHFORD ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

ALLOTMENT WORKING GROUP

LIST OF MEMBERS

Ashford Borough Council

Julie Rogers	Head of Environmental & Customer Services (Chair)
Tracey Butler	Environmental Contracts and Operations Manager
Eileen Law	Allotments Officer

Ashford Allotment Society

Penny Winston	Chair, Ashford Allotment Society
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Plot Holders

Brian Spencer	Musgrove Allotments
Jonathan Goodwin	Westrees Allotments
Andy Symonds	William & Jemmett Allotments
Stefan Heathfield	Gas House Fields Allotments
Mark Chandler	Burton Farm Allotments
Christine Green	Henwood Allotment
Lesley Bonarius	Orion Way
Jill Fuggle	Repton

National Allotment Society

Steve Clements	South East Rep - National Allotment Society
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