



Constitution and rules

1. The name of the association shall be **The Stevenage Gardens & Allotments Association.**

2. Objects:

- a. To promote the interests of allotment holders and gardeners and to take joint action for the benefit of members
- b. To co-operate with any Committee set up by the Government, local authorities and other bodies to further the interests of allotment holders and gardeners.
- c. To set up a Trading Organisation available to members only for supplying lime, fertilizers, composts, seeds, etc at concessionary prices. To enter into contracts with associations and wholesale suppliers for the supply of these items, and to collect and bank any monies due and keep proper records of transactions.
- d. To conduct negotiations in respect of land including leasing and the management of that land.
- e. To take such steps as may be required by the local authority or our own Association for the good management and cultivation of allotments.
- f. To take all reasonable steps to protect members from damage, trespass and theft and to secure the co-operation of the authorities and the Police to achieve those aims.
- g. To arrange for the instruction and demonstrations in horticulture; also lectures, discussions, exhibitions and competitions and to distribute literature.
- h. To promote gardening as a leisure pursuit and the growing of vegetables, fruit, flowers and herbs and co-operate with other organisations interested in the same.

3. Members

The Association shall consist of allotment holders and gardeners who accept the Constitution and Rules. Members who have given long distinguished service to the objectives of the Association can be rewarded by a General Meeting with appointment as Honorary Life President or Honorary Life Vice-President or Honorary Life Membership with no further payments of subscriptions during their life-time. Site Agents who have been in office for three years or more shall be appointed Honorary Life Members with no further payments of subscription.

4. Entrance fees and subscriptions

Every member shall pay an annual subscription of £4.00 or such other sum that may be determined by a General Meeting. Senior Citizens and members over 60 years of age but unwaged and also registered disabled members shall pay an annual subscription of half the full subscription. Subscriptions shall be the calendar year and payable in advance to the Membership Secretary. It is the responsibility of the individual member to see that their subscription is paid. Except for the Honorary Members appointed by Rule 3. only members who have paid their subscriptions shall be allowed to use any of the facilities offered by the Association.

5. Arrears

Any member who is in arrears with their subscription shall be held to have ceased to be a member, unless there are special circumstances accepted by the Committee. Anyone who has ceased to be a member under this rule shall be immediately removed from the list of members.

6. Officers

- a. The Officers shall be the Hon. Life President and Hon. Life Vice-Presidents, Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary, Membership Secretary, Trading Secretary and Show Secretary who shall be ex-officio members of the Committee. An Auditor shall be appointed who shall not be an officer or member of the Committee. See Rule 11.
- b. Any two of the Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer may enter the Association into a contractual agreement that has been agreed and authorised by the Executive Committee.
- c. Ex-officio members of the Committee should stand for re-election after serving for a maximum of three years. These elections should take place progressively to maintain continuity and elections to begin at the 2013 AGM. Those standing for re-election in 2013 will be the Treasurer and Trading Secretary. In 2014 the Chair and Show Secretary will stand for re-election and finally the Secretary, Membership Secretary and Vice Chair will stand for re-election in 2014. The three year cycle will be continued thereafter.

7. Committee

- a. A Committee of Management of not less than ten members shall conduct the affairs of the Association. Unless otherwise determined a quorum at Committee Meetings, which shall be held at regular intervals during the year, shall be not less than five members. Casual vacancies shall be filled by the Committee who shall also have the power to co-opt additional members and the members so appointed shall hold office to the next Annual General Meeting following.
- b. Representation of Sites shall be one representative to 50 active plots with a maximum of two representatives for any site.

8. General meetings

The Annual General Meeting, at which the audited Accounts and Secretary's Report shall be presented and the Officers and Committee for the ensuing year to be elected, shall be held annually in the first quarter of the following financial year or, in emergency, when the Committee shall determine. Other General Meetings shall be called by a decision of a General Meeting or by a two-thirds majority of the Committee. Special General Meetings shall be called on the request in writing specifying the subject from at least fifteen members. Ten members shall form a quorum at a General Meeting. In case of a tied vote the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

9. Discussions at meetings

No Party political or sectarian discussions shall be raised or resolutions proposed, either at any Committee or General Meeting of the Association.

10. Funds

- a. The Association will operate to a Financial Period (normally twelve months) ending on the 31st December. The Committee shall open Banking Accounts in the name of the Association with such bank as the Committee may select and approve. The Treasurer shall pay in all monies. The Treasurer using cheques signed by two signatories out of the three authorised by the Committee and arranged with the Association's Bank shall make all payments. Officer's expenses may be reimbursed in cash at the discretion of the Treasurer. The Treasurer who shall agree an investment policy shall report surplus cash to the Committee.
- b. Items purchased by the Association should be deemed as Fixed Assets if the original cost is at least £200, expected to last for at least five years and is not a consumable. Fixed Assets will be depreciated over a period of five years at 20% of original cost per annum commencing with the year of purchase, the date of purchase notwithstanding.

11. Audit

There shall be appointed by the Annual General Meeting an Auditor who is not a member of the Committee to audit the accounts and his report shall be submitted to the Annual General Meeting by the Treasurer.

12. Affiliation to the n.S.A.L.G. Ltd, etc.

The Association may join the National Chrysanthemum Society, The National Dahlia Society, The National Vegetable Society and The Royal Horticultural Society, subject to the agreement of the Executive Committee.

13. Offences

The Committee may terminate the membership of a member whose conduct is proved to the Committee's satisfaction to be detrimental to the interests of his/her fellow members. Any charge against a member must be communicated in writing. An appeal against a decision of the Committee may be made to a Special General Meeting on the requisition in writing of ten members.

14. Conversion, dissolution, etc.

The Association may be converted into a registered society, or may be dissolved, or these rules may be amended by a two-thirds majority at a Special General Meeting of which twenty eight days notice shall be given. The objects for which the meeting is called shall be stated in the notice convening the meeting. In the event of the Association ceasing Cups, Trophies, etc. shall be vested in the Stevenage Borough Council until the Association re-forms. Funds will be disbursed to members at the time of ceasing by equal shares

15. Matters not provided for

The Committee at their discretion shall deal with any matters not provided for in these Rules.

As agreed at the AGM on 8th February 2012