

# SHEET & TILMORE ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

## Constitution

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The following apply unless events outside the control of the Committee make it impossible to hold meetings and meet all requirements of this Constitution. The Committee will return to complying with this Constitution at the earliest agreed time.

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### 1. Aims & Objectives

- a. To promote and encourage the cultivation and enjoyment of allotment gardening and develop gardening skills and knowledge.
- b. To maintain good communications by means of notice-boards, newsletters, e-mails, web-site and any other suitable means to encourage the Committee to be representative of all STAA members.
- c. To conduct negotiations with the Councils on matters that affect members and their allotments.
- d. To liaise with the relevant council to take appropriate actions that help to ensure:
  - i. The health & safety of allotment holders.
  - ii. The management of all common areas of the allotments, such as the main pathways, for the benefit of the members.
  - iii. Appropriate measures are in place to limit damage, trespass, theft, vandalism and other anti-social activities.

### 2. Membership

Membership of the Association is open to:

- a. All allotment holders at the Sheet and Tilmore Allotment sites.
  - i. An allotment holder is the signatory on the allotment tenancy agreement with the relevant council.
- b. The Committee may decide to have associate members who are not allotment holders or are allotment holders at other sites.
- c. The annual membership fee is decided by the Committee and agreed at the AGM.

### 3. Termination of Membership

- a. The Committee shall have the right for good and sufficient reason to terminate a membership.
- b. The member concerned has the right to be heard by the Committee before a decision is made.
- c. If necessary the remaining proportion of their membership fee is reimbursed.

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### 4. The STAA Committee

A Management Committee conducts the affairs of the Association.

- a. The Committee consists of up to 10 members:
  - i. The primary positions are Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and Trading Secretary. In addition there are Committee members with responsibilities for:
    - Doing the seed order paper forms for members not using on-line ordering
    - Maintaining the membership database
    - Maintaining the website
    - Representing each site<sup>1</sup>
  - ii. Temporary members may be co-opted for special projects.
- b. All members of the Committee must be a member of STAA and if unable to attend a Committee meeting should delegate their input to a fellow Committee member.
- c. The Committee may fill any vacancies when necessary and such new Committee members will hold office until the next AGM.
- d. A quorum is four Committee members.
- e. The Committee meets at least four times a year unless prevented from doing so by extraordinary events. Currently Committee meetings and the AGM are held at the Half Moon, Sheet, with no charge for use of the room.
- f. The Committee's duties & responsibilities are:
  - i. Acting as a point of contact for all allotmenters.
  - ii. Determining the appropriateness of the annual membership fee: currently £5.00. This is in addition to the annual rent paid by allotment holders directly to the council responsible for their site.
  - iii. Working and negotiating with Petersfield Town Council and Sheet Parish Council to ensure the smooth running of the allotments.
  - iv. Acting as a trading resource to provide allotment holders with potatoes and sundries.
  - v. Running an annual competition for the best kept allotments and best newcomers.
  - vi. Providing social activities.
  - vii. Promoting the Aims and Objectives of the Constitution.
  - viii. Determining 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)
  - ix. Gain approval from STAA members before incurring any major<sup>2</sup> 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 is given for either a meeting, or response to communication. Decision to proceed is based on a majority, with the Chair having the final say if necessary.

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<sup>1</sup> There needs to be at least one representative for each site to make sure that there is balance and fairness between the needs and priorities of the members at both sites.

<sup>2</sup> Major expenditure is £500 or more, or such other figure as shall be agreed at an AGM.

### **5. Annual General Meeting (AGM)**

The AGM is held each November:

- a. A quorum consists of those attending the AGM.
- b. At least fourteen days notice of an AGM should be provided. This should be from the respective councils to notify all plot holders not just STAA members.
- c. Existing members may renew their annual membership and new members may join.
- d. All points to be voted on are decided by a simple majority of those present and entitled to vote. No member may exercise more than one vote, but in the case of an equality of votes the Chair has a second and casting vote.

NOTE: The Chair ensures that the meeting runs smoothly and, with the agreement of the rest of the Committee, may take any action that is required to ensure that the aims & objectives of the association and the Constitution continue to be met.

- e. Minutes are kept by the Secretary.
- f. Postal/proxy votes may be used if the Committee considers it appropriate for anything that members need to vote on.
- g. Seed catalogues are made available. Currently these are from Kings Seeds and members are entitled to a 50% discount on seeds.

Committee reports are then provided:

- h. The Chair and Treasurer present their reports; the latter being the audited accounts for the year just ended.
- i. Committee members for Trading, Seed orders, Membership, Website, may also provide the meeting with updates for their areas of responsibility.

The re-election/election of the Committee is carried out:

- j. All the Committee members, apart from the Chair, resign. The Chair asks the meeting to either re-elect the Committee members who wish to be re-elected or asks for nominations with proposers and seconders for their replacement. The meeting votes for the nominations, a simple majority deciding the winner.

NOTE:

- i. If the Chair does not wish to be re-elected at the AGM or resigns during the course of the year, the Committee, not the members, elect a new Chair; the new Chair should have been on the Committee for at least a year and attended most Committee meetings. If the Chair resigns at the AGM, the newly elected Chair takes over their duties and responsibilities at the end of the meeting.
- ii. If a Committee member resigns during the course of the year, the vacancy is notified to members and the Committee decide who should fill the vacancy.
- iii. The Committee may decide to remove the Chair or a Committee member at any time if they have brought the STAA into disrepute, conflict with a council or otherwise acted in any way that the Committee decide is not in the best interests of the STAA.

Other items may then be considered:

- k. Allotment competition prizes are presented.
- l. If needed, the meeting is asked to vote on proposals to amend this Constitution.
- m. The meeting is opened up to discuss any other business.

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### **6. Extraordinary General Meeting (EGM)**

- a. An EGM may be called by the Committee, or upon a request in writing to the Secretary, from at least 6 members.
  - i. The EGM follows an agenda
  - ii. A quorum consists of those attending the EGM.
  - iii. Postal/proxy votes may be used if the Committee considers it appropriate for anything that members need to vote on.

### **7. Finances**

- a. The Committee maintains a bank account in the name of the Association. A current and a deposit account may be used.
- b. The signatories for cheques must be Committee members as decided by the Committee.
- c. All monies raised by or on behalf of the Association are used to further the aims & objects of the Association and for any other purpose as agreed by the Committee.
- d. Accounts are maintained to current standards. An appropriately qualified person, who need not be a Committee member or allotment holder, is appointed to audit the accounts.
- e. The STAA financial year end is 30<sup>th</sup> September.

### **8. Allotment Rules for members**

The Committee undertakes, by liaising with the relevant council, to help ensure that members comply with the requirements of the Tenancy Agreement which they sign when taking on an allotment.

### **9. Termination of the Association**

- a. On cessation of the Association, for whatever reason, any monies remaining after payment of all expenses, outstanding debts and claims, are distributed amongst the current Members.
- b. To be fair, the distribution should be in approximate proportion to the number of years each plot holder has been a member.

### **10. Constitution Review**

This constitution is reviewed annually at the Committee meeting before the AGM.

- a. The Constitution may be varied from time to time by resolution of the members at the AGM.
- b. No change may be proposed for consideration which would be contrary to terms of the agreements with the Councils.