

## **You and GGAA**

### **Rights & Responsibilities for ALL Golders Green Allotment Associations Plotters**

In becoming a plotter, you and Golders Green Allotment Association have entered into a mutual agreement. Both you and the GGAA must abide by the rules governing allotments (set up under the aegis of the National Federation of Allotment and/or your local authority). Allotments were originally created to provide a place for people without access to suitable land to grow their own produce, and the rules which govern allotments are based on the principle that their function is primarily for the growing of edible crops and also the flowers that help to nurture the insects that pollinate them. They are, not, however private pleasure gardens.

You, along with the other 160 plotters with GGAA, make up a community. You share with other plotters the right of access to water and light without which vegetables, herbs and fruit cannot grow properly. You need to respect other plotters' needs as well as your own. Failure to observe the following rules, or to show respect for other plotters' needs, or the committee members who represent the GGAA, will not be tolerated. In the first instance of any breach, the allotment committee may politely point out the issue and asking you to rectify it within a reasonable time frame. Unreasonable failure to comply will result in a process which can end with your plot agreement being terminated. Gross breaches of the rules (eg threatening another plotter or committee member or stealing other plotters produce) could result in summary eviction (see Right to Arbitration below).

#### **Structures: e.g. Sheds, Greenhouses, Polytunnels, Pergolas and Paving**

While plot holders need somewhere to store equipment or to nurture seedlings, the size and siting of structures are governed by allotment rules and the needs of neighbouring plotters have to be taken into account. It is therefore a rule of GGAA that no structures can be more than 2.4m in height, and no permanent structure or any accompanying hard surfacing can take up more than 20% of the plot. These have to be sited only at the end of the plot furthest from the main access walkway - you cannot choose which end of your plot to build or site a shed. The allotment committee has the right to ask you to take down any structure that does not comply. Equally, you cannot pave large areas of your plot and you cannot use concrete for the base of a shed – a dry cement foundation is fine as it is easily removed.

#### **Paths**

It is the job of the plotter to make sure the paths around their plot are accessible, wide enough for a wheelbarrow to pass easily and the grass cut regularly. Trees with overhanging branches must be cut back. Ideally you should negotiate with your neighbour over the maintenance of adjoining paths. If that fails, tell the committee.

#### **Trees**

While you can plant fruit trees on your allotment, they must be kept pruned to not more than 2.5m high so they do not cause shadow to fall on a neighbouring plot. Trees should be planted at least a metre away from the plot boundary. Trees that grow too vigorously are not a sensible choice. You can buy fruit trees on dwarf stock which are more suitable, or you can prune them to form an espalier. If you do not prune your trees regularly or maintain them properly, the committee can order you to do so to prevent them becoming a nuisance. There is also a limit to the number of fruit trees you can plant on your plot so talk to a member of the committee first.

### **Right to Peace**

Since the allotments are a community, plot holders are expected to treat other plot holders with respect and courtesy. That means not using phones or similar systems without headphones or to play music or programmes in a manner that interferes with neighbouring allotment holders' right to peace. In other words, if you do so when a neighbour or neighbours are working on their plots, they have the right to ask you to turn it off. While allotment holders' families are welcome, the allotments are not a playground for raucous children nor for parties of noisy guests. Dogs are allowed if they are quiet and well behaved, but they need to be kept on a lead on walkways and/or tethered on the plot. Dogs roaming around loose is strictly forbidden.

### **Right to Water**

All plot holders have the right to use the water tanks to irrigate their crops with a watering can. Every plot holder pays for water in their rent and using hosepipes needs to be done with respect for other plot holders needs. The maximum time spent watering at any one time should be curtailed to an hour if another plot holder is waiting their turn. At no time must hoses be left running while the plot holder is absent. In times of severe drought, a hosepipe ban may be in force.

### **Bonfires on the site are ONLY permitted at the following times of the year**

**1<sup>st</sup> May to 30<sup>th</sup> September:** 1st Wednesday **ONLY**

**1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> April:** Any time.

**ONLY** burn dry plant material and any old timber that might have accumulated on your plot. You are **NOT** allowed to burn other materials such as plastic or rubber which create toxic fumes and poison the soil.

**However**, always consider composting plot plant waste - it makes more sense to compost it in a bin or heap it up at the end of your plot.

**DO NOT** burn plant waste when it's too windy.

**REMEMBER** some plot holders might suffer from asthma.

We get more complaints from people who live around our site about bonfires than anything else.

**NEVER** leave a fire unattended on your plot.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 it is an offence to emit smoke, fumes or gases which are a nuisance. Allowing smoke to drift over the Hendon Way may also lead to prosecution under the Highways (amendment) Act 1986 if it endangers traffic and a fine.

**If you plot is on the perimeter of the Hendon Way, or on our Tretawn site you are not allowed to have a bonfire under any circumstance!**

### **Right to Arbitration**

If you feel that the GGAA has treated you unfairly, you have the right to appeal to the Barnet Federation (BAF) by emailing the current Chair Gordon Kerr [bafchair@gmail.com](mailto:bafchair@gmail.com)