

ELM VILLAGE GARDEN SOCIETY



Elm Village Garden Society Constitution

Article 1: Name of the Society

The name of the Society shall be the Elm Village Garden Society, hereinafter referred to as EVGS or the Society.

Article 2: Aims of EVGS

The overall aim of EVGS is to manage the allotments, greenhouse and communal green spaces in Elm Village by allocating plots in response to applications made by tenants and residents of Elm Village.

In conjunction with Mike Jackson, to assist amateur gardeners in Elm Village in all aspects of gardening through advice, practical demonstrations, workshops and instruction.

Article 3: Membership

Membership of EVGS is open to all tenants and residents in Elm Village of eighteen years and over.

All members of EVGS are eligible to request a plot and/or use of the Greenhouse on payment to the Society of the appropriate fee, the amount of which shall be determined annually by the Committee of the Society.

Article 4: Subscriptions

Subscriptions become due on 1st January; receipts will be given, and an up-to-date account of subscriptions paid will be kept. Any member who has not paid the subscription by 21st February shall lose his/her plot and/or use of the Greenhouse.

Article 5: The Committee

There shall be a Committee comprising two co-chairmen of EVGS, and a Treasurer/Secretary. These are honorary positions tenable for a period that shall be determined from time to time by the Committee.

All members of EVGS over the age of 18 may volunteer for the Committee, usually by giving notice to the existing Committee members, and applications will be discussed during the Annual General Meeting. If more than one person has volunteered, then the decision will be made by a majority vote of all members present.

Article 6: Conduct of Business

The Committee members may act severally or together, and have full responsibility for all decisions relating to the management and running of the Society, as well as authority to sign cheques drawn on the Society's account for expenses incurred in behalf of the Society.

Article 7: Committee Meetings

The Committee shall meet as necessary and not less than 6 times in each year.

Article 8: General Meetings

There will be no fewer than 4 general meetings in each year. Any member of the Society may call a general meeting on application to the Committee.

An Annual General Meeting will be held, usually in the autumn (October to December). At this Meeting, the Committee will present the accounts, together with a report on the activities of the year.

Committee Members will be elected or existing Members of the Committee will be reconfirmed at the AGM.

Article 9: Notice of Meetings

Notice of all General Meetings, and any other Special General Meeting, shall be sent to each member's home either in printed form or by email and shall include the date, time and place of the meeting, and an agenda of matters to be discussed.

Amended July 2018

Rossendale Way, Bergholt Mews, Blakeney Close and 11-111 Barker Drive

General Rules for Use of Green Spaces

The following rules apply to all Elm Village Green Space users:

1. Security

- a. All users must act responsibly and maintain a high level of security.
- b. The gates must be kept locked at all times and opened only for legitimate access. Do not leave an unattended gate open.
- c. Access for gardening is restricted to between sunrise (or 7am if later) and dusk (or 8pm if earlier).

2. Allocation and Tenure of Green Spaces

- a. Allocation of plots and/or use of the greenhouse is at the discretion of the Committee. The following criteria are applied:
 - i) there will be a waiting list
 - ii) preference will be given to eligible tenants and residents without a garden
- b. When a plot is relinquished, control of the plot reverts to the Society. Plots and keys to the green spaces do not transfer with the plot-holders' address.
- c. Sub-letting is not allowed (but you can share your plot with friends & helpers).

3. Subscriptions, Fees & Payments

a. Annual fees and subscriptions are set by the Committee and cover the following items of expenditure:

- i) annual Garden Society membership
- ii) allocated space(s)
- iii) repairs and maintenance (primarily to the greenhouse and gates)
- iv) annual membership fees to the National Society of Allotments & Leisure Gardeners
- v) Shield Insurance Policy premium
- vi) annual water consumption

Year starting 1st January 2019, subscriptions are as follows:

Membership only: £5.00. Use of Greenhouse only: £10.00.

Use of Plot only: £20.00. Use of Plot + Greenhouse: £30.00.

Please note that all fees & subscriptions must be paid in advance.

4. Good Housekeeping

- a. Gardeners must tidy-up after every visit as well as at the end of every season and when the plot and/or space in the greenhouse is relinquished.
- b. Tools must be tidied away after use and not left out overnight.
- c. No blocking of paths or shared spaces or other plots.
- d. No animals (chickens, rabbits, pigs, goats, etc.)
- e. No dogs allowed unless on a lead.
- f. Anyone under 16 must be vouched for by an adult who takes responsibility for their actions.
- g. No radios or loud noises.
- h. No fires.
- i. No smoking in the greenhouse.

NB if you are a smoker, please wash your hands before entering the greenhouse. This is an absolute prohibition to prevent contamination by tobacco mosaic virus.

5. Responsible Persons and Allocated Plots

a. The Garden Society member named as the holder of any given plot is responsible for the plot, its upkeep, and maintenance. He/she is also responsible for ensuring that Society rules are abided by and for maintaining amicable relations with others.

6. Dispute Resolution and Complaints & Grievances

- a. Disputes are resolved by the Committee together with members of EVGS as necessary and appropriate. (see appendix 2: Complaints Procedure)
- b. All complaints and grievances will be logged by the Secretary. They should be addressed to the Committee and can be made either formally or informally. (see appendix 2: Complaints Procedure)

7. Miscellaneous

- a. The area surrounding the greenhouse known as the Triangle, comprising cold frames, borders, shallow propagation beds and the raised bed is under the control of Mike Jackson.
- b. The compost in the communal compost bins is under the control of Mike Jackson and will be distributed as he sees fit.
- c. Gardeners and other users of the green spaces are expected to be considerate to others at all times.

8. Site Specific Rules for each of the Green Areas

South Canal Site (with the platform)

- a. Gardeners must put away tools after use; if personal equipment is used, it must be taken home.
- b. Weeds and detritus after gardening must be cleared away.
- c. No plastic or other contaminants to be put on the compost heap.

Outline: It is 4m x 7m with removable benches installed on both sides. Underneath the removable benches are 600mm wide soil trenches and the central area is paved. It is made from polycarbonate sheeting and is much safer than glass.

- a. The Committee may take unilateral action on any matter they feel affects the overall health of the greenhouse – especially pest control and neglected plantings.
- b. Planting in the trenches within the greenhouse will be shared use, not allocated to specific individuals. Exactly what is planted in the trenches will be a shared decision agreed by all greenhouse users.
- c. The available bench space will be divided equally between all users.
- d. Plants may be grown in pots or grow-bags on the paved area in the greenhouse at the Committee's discretion.

The warm, moist climate in a greenhouse benefits plants but also means that pests and diseases breed and spread faster.

Prevention is always better than cure!

Always inspect plants before bringing them into the greenhouse to ensure they are not introducing pests or diseases. It may help with cuttings to wash them in water with a few drops of washing-up liquid.

Seeds are not a problem.

Seed, cutting and potting composts must be clean and fresh; opened bags should be wrapped up to prevent weeds, pests and diseases from getting inside the bag. Tools, pots, containers etc. should also be clean.

Tobacco products can contain Tobacco Mosaic Virus (TMV), a serious disease which affects a wide range of plants particularly tomatoes. **PLEASE DO NOT SMOKE IN THE GREENHOUSE.** Ideally smokers should wash their hands before entering.

Plants which are adequately fed, watered and with sufficient light are more resistant to attack than neglected plants.

Weeds act as hosts for pests and diseases, and are a source of infection.

Weeding, particularly under benches or between paving stones or on the surfaces of compost in pots, is an ongoing operation!

Despite all the above precautions, pests, diseases and weeds will always find their way into any greenhouse. Keen observation and early intervention are important here. We will endeavour to use organic methods of control whenever possible.

Pests particularly found in greenhouses are red spider mite, whitefly, mealy bug and scale insect. Fortunately there are two very effective natural predators we can use against the first two mentioned.

Diseases include powdery mildew, grey mould and the so-called damping-off diseases of seedlings.

Birds and mammals, such as squirrels, dogs, cats, mice and rats, can be destructive and also need to be excluded.

Floors in greenhouses can get slimy from algal growth so we need to keep the floors swept.

In consideration of fellow users please tidy up your own mess, and take your personal tools etc home with you. The greenhouse should not be used as your own personal store.

Take care that hose pipes are not a trip hazard. Always reel-in the hose pipe after use and put it back.

Appendix 2 – Complaints procedure

- a. Any tenant or resident in Elm Village may bring a complaint or grievance concerning Garden Society activities to the attention of the Committee.
- b. Complaints may be made informally, or formally, either by email or by letter; all complaints will be logged.
- c. EVGS members have a right to make a formal approach to the Committee on any matter concerning the activities of the Society, its members and the Committee. Such a request must be discussed by the Committee and a summary of its decision must be provided.
- d. Non-members do not have this right though they may request that a matter be addressed by the Committee, who may decline to do so.
- e. Where the Committee agrees that a non-member may raise a complaint with the Society, he/she must present the complaint in person at a meeting.
- f. In the event of a failure to resolve the issue, members may raise the matter in an AGM or they may request that an Emergency General Meeting be called. A motion may be put and a vote taken.
- g. In order to be eligible for (c) above, the person bringing the complaint or grievance must be an existing and fully-paid-up member of Elm Village Garden Society at the time of making the complaint.
- h. At all times, the Committee will act in the best interest of the Society and its members.