

Ashtead Allotment Association

Constitution

This constitution, hereinafter the “Constitution”, is approved by the Members of the Association at the Annual General Meeting held on 17th March, 2025, and is in effect until changed by the Members at a subsequent General Meeting.

1. Name

The name of the association shall be **Ashtead Allotments Association** (hereinafter the “Association” or “AAA”)

2. Aims

Ashtead Allotments Association aims to foster a sense of community and responsibility among our members and that the Allotment site should be well-maintained, tidy, safe and environmentally-friendly. We seek to work effectively alongside Mole Valley District Council and their appointed Site Agent.

3. Membership

Membership is open to anyone who:

- Is a plot holder at Ashtead Allotments Gardens, Leatherhead Rd, Ashtead, KT21 2TP (the “Site”); and
- Supports the Aims of the Association.

Membership begins as soon as the membership form and first annual payment of the Membership Fee have been received.

There is no discount or pro-rata subscription for new Members who join part way through the membership year.

The price of the Annual Membership Fee will be agreed at the Annual General Meeting (AGM) and will be payable by all Members.

The membership year will run from 1st January to 31st December each year. A list of all Members will be kept by the Membership Secretary.

3.1. Ceasing to be a Member

Members may resign at any time in writing to the Secretary.

There is no refund or pro-rata subscription for Members who leave part way through the membership year.

Any Member who has not paid their Membership Fee for the current year by 1st September will be contacted by the Committee, which will then decide whether that Member is deemed to have resigned.

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Any offensive behaviour, including racist, sexist or inflammatory remarks, will not be permitted. Anyone behaving in an offensive way or breaking the AAA equal opportunities policy (item 4, below) may be asked not to attend further meetings or to resign from the Association if an apology is not given or the behaviour is repeated. The individual concerned shall have the right to be heard by the Committee, accompanied by a friend, before a final decision is made.

4. Equal Opportunities

Ashtead Allotments Association will not discriminate on the grounds of the protected characteristics as laid out in the Equal Opportunities Act 2010 as subsequently amended.

5. Officers and Committee

The business of the Association will be carried out by a Committee elected at the Annual General Meeting. The Committee will meet as necessary and not less than four times a year.

The Committee will consist of 4 Officers and up to 4 Committee members. During the year the Committee may co-opt up to 2 members who will stand for election at the next Annual General Meeting.

The Officers' roles are as follows:

- Chair, who shall chair both General and Committee meetings
- Secretary, who shall be responsible for the taking of minutes and the distribution of all papers
- Membership Secretary, who shall be responsible for keeping records of Members
- Treasurer who shall be responsible for maintaining accounts

In the event of an Officer standing down during the year the Committee will appoint a replacement who will serve until the next Annual General Meeting at which he/she will stand for election.

Any Committee member not attending a meeting without apology for six months will be contacted by the Committee and asked if they wish to resign.

The Committee meetings will be open to any Member of the Association wishing to attend, who may speak but not vote.

Any Member may be nominated to be elected to the Committee at an Annual General Meeting (AGM) by providing to the Secretary at least 14 days before the date of the AGM, their name and plot number, a brief summary of their background, and a supporting note signed by at least two other plotholders. The Secretary will circulate the details of their nomination to all Members at least 7 days before the AGM.

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6. Meetings

6.1. Annual General Meetings

An Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held each calendar year within fifteen months of the previous AGM.

All members will be notified in writing at least twenty-one days before the date of the AGM, giving the agenda, venue, date and time. Notice may be by email (including bulk email such as MailChimp) or post.

The quorum for the AGM will be ten per cent of the membership or 10 Members, whichever is the greater number.

At the AGM:-

- The Committee will present a report of the work of the Association over the year.
- The Committee will present the accounts of the Association for the previous year.
- The Officers and Committee for the next year will be elected.
- Any proposals given to the Secretary at least 7 days in advance of the meeting will be discussed.

6.2. Special General Meetings

The Secretary will call a Special General Meeting at the request of the majority of the Committee or at least eight Members giving a written request to the Chair or Secretary stating the reason for their request.

The meeting will take place within twenty-one days of the request.

All Members will be given fourteen days' notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda. Notice may be by email or post.

The quorum for the Special General Meeting will be ten per cent of the membership or 10 Members, whichever is the greater number.

6.3. General Meetings

General Meetings are open to all Members and will be held as decided by the Committee.

All Members will be given fourteen days' notice of such a meeting, giving the venue, date, time and agenda. Notice may be by telephone, email (including bulk email such as MailChimp) or post.

The quorum for a General Meeting shall be ten per cent of the membership or 10 members, whichever is the greater number.

6.4. Committee Meetings

Committee meetings may be called by the Chair or Secretary. Committee members must receive notice of meetings at least 7 days before the meeting.

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The quorum for Committee meetings is four Committee members of which at least one must be an Officer of the Committee.

6.5. Rules of Procedure for Meetings

All questions that arise at any meeting will be discussed openly and the meeting will seek to find general agreement.

If a consensus cannot be reached a vote will be taken and a decision will be made by a simple majority of Members present. If the number of votes cast on each side is equal, the Chair of the meeting shall have an additional casting vote.

7. Finances

An account will be maintained on behalf of the Association at a bank agreed by the Committee.

All payments will be signed by the Treasurer and one other Officer.

- For cheque payments, the Treasurer and one other Officer will sign the cheque.
- Other payments (such as BACS payments, cash withdrawals, debit card payments or cash payments) will be authorised by the Treasurer and approved by one other Officer.

Records of income and expenditure will be maintained by the Treasurer and a financial statement given at each Annual General Meeting.

All money raised by or on behalf of the Association is to be used only to further the aims of the Association specified in item 2 of this Constitution.

8. Amendments to the Constitution

Amendments to the Constitution may only be made at the Annual General Meeting or a Special General Meeting.

Any proposal to amend the Constitution must be given to the Secretary in writing. The proposal must then be circulated to all Members with the notice of the Meeting.

Any proposal to amend the Constitution will require a two-thirds majority of those present and entitled to vote.

9. Dissolution

If a meeting of Members, by simple majority, decides that it is necessary to dissolve the Association it may request that the Secretary call a Special General Meeting in accordance with Item 6.2 of this Constitution, the sole business of which will be to vote on dissolving the Association.

If a two-thirds majority of those present votes to dissolve the Association all remaining money and other assets, after outstanding debts have been paid, will be donated to a local charitable organization ("Charity"). The Charity will be agreed at the meeting which agrees the dissolution.