

Littlewicks Allotment Association (LAA)

Allotment Rules

Plot rents and tenancies

All plot rents and Association subscriptions are set for each calendar year or part thereof and are due for renewal on 1st January of that year or payable on such date that membership commences if after the renewal date. There shall be no recompense for a part year membership. Any member whose rent and/or Association subscription shall be twenty-one days in arrears shall, in the absence of a reason satisfactory to the Committee, be served with a written notice terminating their tenancy with immediate effect.

All members are encouraged to use a standing order or on-line direct bank credit transfer with payment by 1st January. For those members whose monies are not received in the bank by 1st January they shall be levied a surcharge.

Payment of rent signifies acceptance of the Rules by the member of the Association.

Members shall not sub-let or assign any plot of land held by them except with the previous sanction of the Committee signified in writing under the hand of the Secretary.

Termination of members' tenancies shall be by mutually agreed notice on either side except where provided for in the Constitution and Allotment Rules.

Members will be held fully responsible for the conduct, health and safety of any guests, family (including minors) or helpers they invite on to the site. Any actions that are detrimental to the Association, the site or other Members shall, for the purposes of the rules of the Association, be regarded as though conducted by the Member concerned, which may result in the termination of the membership and tenancy of that Member.

Plot Inspections

Committee members will undertake regular plot inspections.

Members whose plots are found to be below a reasonable standard will be sent a letter by the Secretary detailing the committees concerns and a time period for these to be rectified. If a member receives three such letters in a 12 month period, the Committee have the right to disqualify the member from the Association subject to appeal by the member concerned. The member will be required to attend such an appeal. If attendance is not possible then the member should provide written notice of any extenuating circumstances they wish to be considered. Two members of LAA not party to the original decision will hear the appeal and their decision will be final.

LAA Plot Cultivation Standards and Guidance

In line with the agreement with Woking Borough Council, and for the pleasure of all our members, it is essential that plots are maintained to a reasonable standard of cultivation. This procedure states how and why plots that are not being cultivated will be managed by the LAA committee.

Why do we need to manage non-cultivation?

- **Council:** It is a requirement of the agreement between Woking Borough Council and LAA that reasonable standards of cultivation are to be maintained. It is also a

requirement of the tenancy agreement and local rules. Poorly cultivated plots may make the council think the site is not fully occupied. This may distort their view as to the necessity of current or new allotments in the district.

- **Existing members:** Poor cultivation results in the spread of weeds and diseases to neighbouring plots, hindering members who work hard to keep their plots well cultivated. Poorly cultivated plots reduce the enjoyment resulting from the natural beauty of the site.
- **Waiting list:** It is unfair on people on the waiting list if existing plots are not being cultivated, and fall below minimum standards set by the association. The length of the waiting list is directly related to the standard of cultivation expected of existing tenants, and the measures taken to enforce those standards.

Minimum standards of cultivation

In order to be fair to other tenants, all plots must be cultivated in a way that does not interfere with the enjoyment of neighbouring tenants throughout the growing season. In order to achieve this the following minimum standards apply, the time-frame and area of plot these apply to are identified in the next section:

- Removal of weed seed-heads before the seed has set
- Control of pernicious weeds, such as those that spread through the extension of roots, (eg. Couch grass, ground elder, bindweed and mares/horsetail) or by permitting the generation of new plants from growing tips in contact with the soil (eg. Brambles);
- Removal of long grass and detritus. Keeping paths free of hazards to allow free and unimpeded access and to ensure grass paths are trimmed and gravel paths are weed free.
- Removal of waste, noxious or hazardous material.
- Maintain fertility of soil
- Edible produce is being grown on at least $\frac{3}{4}$ of the plot during the growing season.

Plot holders are expected to maintain the above standards over 25% of the plot within three months of the start of the tenancy and 75% by the end of the first year and on all subsequent years unless the committee agrees otherwise when you take on your plot. If there are personal issues preventing you from maintaining these standards please inform the committee as soon as you are aware of the problem so that help and advice can be given.

As a rough guide, the amount of time that might be needed to cultivate a plot depends on many factors but members may expect to spend 5 hours per week in the growing season for each half plot in order to maintain cultivation.

General Site Rules

1. New huts will not be allowed unless of approved style (maximum of 6ft x 4ft generally of wooden construction, covered in preservative in a uniform colour, apex or flat roof) and placed on approved perimeter sites. Before installation sheds must be approved for position, size and material by a Committee member. Being temporary structures concrete bases are not allowed. Display your plot number on

your shed so that we can contact you in the event of a problem. A tenant who puts up a shed without first obtaining permission may be asked to take it down.

2. Key access to the sites is controlled, keys remain the property of LAA and should be returned when no longer required. The gates should be locked at all times and the locks should not be removed.
3. Motor vehicles are to be parked in the car park only and entry to the main paths is only permitted by arrangement through a Committee member for vehicles carrying or pulling trailers, containing significant loads such as manure or new sheds. Cars parked in the car park are at owners' risk, the Association can accept no responsibility.
4. Do not put your rubbish and weeds in other people's compost bins, on their plots or on the common grassed areas. It is your responsibility to dispose of rubbish and weeds from your plot by either using your own compost bin (on plot or at home) or disposing via the council dump or the municipal collection service. The common areas need to be mown/strimmed and access is required to the fence for maintenance.
5. In accordance with the Council guidelines, bonfires may only be lit during the period 1st October to 31st March. All material must be dry and due consideration is to be given to neighbours. Where possible, material should be composted rather than burnt. The plot-holder should not leave the fire unattended and water is to be on hand to extinguish the fire if required. The Committee have the power to extinguish any fires that do not conform to these or Council guidelines. (Transgression of this by-law can be dealt with by the Committee under the terms of the Constitution).
6. Plot holders are required to assist with site maintenance annually during the Autumn/Winter. The dates will be notified to all plot holders and representatives of the Committee will supervise the work. Plot holders should assemble at the respective huts with their own tools. Cultivation of plots is not permitted during the work period.
7. Ensure that any tools which are borrowed from the site hut are returned in a clean state. This includes the wheelbarrows. The use of the tools is at own risk, the association can accept no responsibility. Appropriate footwear, gloves and if necessary goggles and ear defenders should be worn and the sign sheets in the tool store must be completed.
8. Respect other plot holders' property, their plots and their produce. It is not permitted to walk across another plot, without the permission of the plot holder, or committee member. Other plots should not be used as a short cut.
9. Ensure that children are supervised at all times and do not go off wandering on other plots or in the tool stores. (Transgression of this by-law can be dealt with by the Committee under the terms of the Constitution).
10. Hedges, common grassed areas and made up paths will be the responsibility of adjoining plot holders to maintain, mow and keep weed free.
11. No dogs are allowed on site with the exception of guide and assistance dogs.
12. Permission for lopping trees must be obtained from the Committee Secretary
13. Plot holders should report any loss of produce, tools etc. to the Committee who will be empowered to take whatever action they deem necessary.

14. Replace your plot number post after digging etc. so that your plot is clearly displaying its number.
15. Water may only be obtained from water tanks by bailing out.
16. Do not wash vegetables, tools or anything in the water tanks, they will fill up with mud and silt. Fill and use a bucket.
17. If you drop mud or dirt in the site hut, please sweep up after you, do not leave it for others to clean up after you. Do not use the sink in the hut for washing vegetables or tools.
18. If you, your children or guests use the toilet facilities, please ensure they are left in a clean state.
19. In order to control club root disease ALL roots of brassicas, when lifted, must be burnt on individual plots or removed from site.
20. Glazed/polythene frames, storage boxes and the like must not exceed 2 feet (600mm) in height. Fruit cages, compost bins and temporary structures exceeding 600mm are permitted.
21. All structures/fruit cages etc. should be erected inside your plot boundary, with enough space for access all around the structure, without the need to walk on your neighbour's plot.
22. When planting anything, plot holders should be mindful of potential grown size of what they are planting, to ensure it will grow within their plot boundary and not grow over, or encroach on the neighbouring plot and its produce.
23. Ponds should not be constructed on your plot. However, you may use a small open water container on your plot away from its boundaries for the purpose of attracting beneficial wildlife provided it is portable, easily removed by one person at the end of the your tenancy and is sited so as to prevent accidents occurring. Please ensure that such a container does not stagnate. If you are in any doubt about as to how to conform to this rule, please check with a Committee member.
24. Carpet is not to be used on your plot as the chemicals used in the manufacture of carpets may leach into and contaminate the soil.
25. No trees or saplings shall be planted or allowed to grow on individual plots, but soft fruits, such as gooseberries, blackcurrants, raspberries, loganberries etc. are permitted and their appropriate supporting structures.
26. Fruit trees of certain root stocks will be permitted in the Orchard area under the guidelines contained in the Orchard Regulations.

Fruit Trees at LAA

Fruit trees may not be grown on individual plots (LAA General Rule 25), however, plot holders may request permission to grow a limited number of trees in a designated "orchard" area. The positioning of the container within the allotment orchard must be agreed with a committee member.

The following conditions must be complied with:-

1. All trees are to be grown in a suitable plastic or terracotta container with handles or having the means to be moved, having a maximum diameter of 50cm and height of 50 cm. All containers must be buried to between 50% and 75% of the containers height.
2. All fruit trees must be grown on dwarfing rootstock. Apples on M27, Pears on Quince C and Plums, Nectarines and Peaches on Pixy. Other fruits must be on a suitable rootstock for growing in a container. Trees must be purchased from a reputable supplier who can certify the rootstock and guarantee that the tree is suitable for growing in a container. Suitable trees may be described as super columns, minarettes or dwarf/miniature/midget patio trees.
3. Trees on dwarfing rootstock need a supporting stake which must be planted in the container. No stakes or the like are permitted in the surrounding ground.
4. Each tree can grow to a maximum height of 2.5m and width/diameter of 1m.
5. All trees must be clearly labelled with the plot number.
6. The cultivation and maintenance of each tree is the plot-holder's responsibility.
7. Summer pruning is recommended to control vigour and to encourage fruiting.
8. Plot-holders with fruit trees will be expected to help with the general maintenance of the orchard including regular grass cutting, besides keeping their tree plot tidy including edges to the pathways.
9. Trees will be included in regular plot inspections. If trees become too large or out of control, the committee will take action including the possible removal of the offending tree.
10. Plot-holders should arrange to remove their tree/s if they cease to have an allotment at Littlewicks. Alternatively, with the agreement of the committee, they may pass their trees on to another plot-holder who will assume responsibility, however, please note where due to demand there is a shortage of tree plots a maximum will be imposed which may not be exceeded.

Beekeeping

1. Acceptance of these rules is mandatory for all beekeepers, with, or applying to keep bees at Littlewicks. Anyone not complying with these rules will be told to remove their bees and equipment elsewhere or they will be disposed of.
2. All Beekeepers with bees at Littlewicks must be fully paid up members of a local Division of the Surrey Beekeepers Association, and must be adequately insured with BDI (Bee Diseases Insurance).
3. Only wooden hives are to be utilized (i.e. no polystyrene or plastic hives – these cannot be flame sterilized and are therefore less hygienic).
4. No bees (including swarms) or equipment are to be taken to Littlewicks until there is a site available in the Apiary. The site will only support a finite number of colonies. When this number is reached a waiting list will be started. Before any bees are transported onto the Littlewicks site, their brood must have been inspected by either a Bee Inspector or an appointed association adviser. Swarms must initially be hived off the Littlewicks site for a period of one month in order to see that the swarm is healthy and not carrying disease. A new swarm must be inspected at the end of the month before being brought onto the site.
5. At the discretion of the Apiary Manager, it may be necessary that all colonies at Littlewicks are "Shook Swarmed" in the Spring of each year and the brood destroyed. The

Bee Inspector / Apiary Manager will oversee this manipulation. This will only be necessary if Foul Brood becomes a problem.

6. Appropriate Varroa treatment (Apiguard or Api-Life Var) must be applied by hive owners in Aug / Sept. each year. Oxalic acid treatment in winter is recommended. Treatments should be done on the same day on all hives. This means that hive owners will need to agree with the Apiary Manager on a date for the treatment.

7. Any equipment not currently in use must be taken home and not left in the apiary where it could harbour disease. In the autumn of each year any redundant equipment found will be disposed of.

8. Apiary Hygiene – strict observance of the following basic rules is essential in any communal apiary for the benefit of all – neighbours and beekeepers alike:- Do not leave old comb, frames or hive scrapings lying on the ground - it can start robbing and also spread disease. Do not use leaky feeders or spill syrup on the ground – this can have a similar outcome. It is strongly recommended that a bucket containing a strong solution of washing soda be taken on every visit to the apiary and used to wash the hive tool and gloves between each hive being inspected. Bee suits and boots should also be washed regularly. Swarm control must be exercised to prevent inconvenience and alarm to neighbours.

9. Hive owners should make every 7 to 9 days inspections of their hives during the swarming season, April to September. This will enable potential swarming to be prevented or managed. If a hive owner is likely to be unable to make weekly inspections, for example because of being on holiday, then they should inform the Apiary Manager and make arrangements for the hives to be inspected by a competent person.

10. All infrastructure faults, e.g. fencing problems, should be reported as soon as they arise to the LAA Committee.

11. Mowing and strimming in the apiary and orchard during the summer months should be done by hive owners. This is to reduce the risk of non-owners getting stung during mowing.

12. All enquiries regarding these rules and/or putting bees at Littlewicks should in the first instance be addressed to the Apiary Manager