

RED HOUSE FARM ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

RHFAS – Constitution

1. Name

The name of the group shall be **Red House Farm Allotments Society**

2. Objects

The objects of **Red House Farm Allotments Society** are:

- To promote the interest, enjoyment and education related to the benefits of allotment gardening without distinction of age, sex, ability, political, religious or other opinions.
- To provide a Society where allotment holders and gardeners can work together and share knowledge and good practice
- To manage and maintain an allotment site in an environmentally and ecologically friendly way for the benefit of the borough of North Tyneside

3. Area of benefit

Whitley Bay, Monkseaton and surrounding areas within North Tyneside.

4. Tenancy

- 4.1 Plots may only be offered to residents of North Tyneside, however in keeping with Council policy, in the event of a plot holder moving outside North Tyneside and depending on circumstances, the Committee may exercise its discretion as to whether or not the said plot holder may retain his or her tenancy.
- 4.2 No member may assign, sub-let or otherwise dispose of their plot or any part of it.
- 4.3 Any tenant who delegates the majority of the cultivation of the plot to an associate will be deemed to be sub-letting.

5. Powers

To further the objects, Red House farm Allotments Society has the power to

- 5.1 Recruit volunteers and contract persons to carry out work for the benefit of the Society.
- 5.2 Work in partnership with other organisations
- 5.3 Invest funds in any lawful way. Professional advice should be taken when necessary
- 5.4 Raise funds by any lawful means except permanent trading
- 5.5 Accept gifts either for the general purposes of **Red House Farm Allotments Society** or for a specific purpose within or connected with the objects
- 5.6 Do anything else within the law which promotes the objects.

6. Membership

- 6.1 Any persons working on the sites on a regular basis must be members of the Society.
- 6.2 Membership is open to any individual, resident in North Tyneside aged 18 or over, or organization that agrees with the objects. Each member has one vote.
- 6.3 The Society may set up a youth membership and any other types of membership that they decide and agree the level of membership fees at the AGM.
- 6.4 Associate Membership is open to anyone nominated by a tenant to help with working the plot on a regular basis. Associate membership is not a licence to take over the tenancy of the plot with which he/she is associated. It is at the discretion of the Committee as to whether an associate is eligible to become the tenant of the said plot. Factors influencing this decision are:
- the length of time the Associate has been a member of the Society; and
 - the extent of participation in the maintenance of the plot.

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The Committee's decision is final. An Associate member may register his or her interest to take over the tenancy of the plot in the event that the existing tenant relinquishes the tenancy.

- 6.5 The Committee must keep an up to date list of the members of **Red House Farm Allotments Society**.
- 6.6 A member may resign by written notice to the Society.
- 6.7 If the Committee considers that a member's conduct is harmful to the Society and in contravention of clause 7 of the Tenancy Agreement:
 - 6.7.1 The Committee should ask the member concerned, or someone on behalf of the member concerned, to put his or her case to a Committee meeting
 - 6.7.2 If after hearing the member's case the Committee decides that the member should leave the group, they may terminate the membership by written notice. That notice is final.

7. The Committee

- 7.1 The group shall be managed by a Committee of not less than five and not more than twelve members. All Committee members must be members of the Society.
- 7.2 One third (or the number nearest one third) of the elected Committee members must retire at each A.G.M., those longest in office retiring first and the choice between any of equal service being made by drawing lots, but they may be re-elected or re-appointed.
- 7.3 The Committee's officers shall include
 - 7.3.1 a chairperson – elected at the AGM
 - 7.3.2 a secretary – elected or co-opted by the Committee at a Committee meeting
 - 7.3.3 a treasurer – elected or co-opted by the Committee at a Committee meeting
 - 7.3.4 any other officers that the Committee decides
- 7.4 A Committee member can only fill one position
- 7.5 The Committee shall meet a minimum of four times a year, and must keep a formal record of all meetings.
- 7.6 The quorum for a management Committee meeting is four members.
- 7.7 Each member has one vote, and if the vote is tied, the chairperson has a second casting vote.
- 7.8 The Committee has the power to co-opt up to three members on to the Committee to fill vacant places until the next annual general meeting. Each co-opted member has one vote.
- 7.9 A Committee member automatically ceases to be a member of the Committee after 3 consecutive absences without prior explanation or apology.
- 7.10 All Committee members must be notified in advance of Committee meetings.
- 7.11 If the position of Chairperson becomes vacant within a term of office then it should be filled from within the Committee.

8. General Society meetings – Annual and Special

- 8.1 The secretary must give 21 days' notice of a general meeting to all members.
- 8.2 All members are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.
- 8.3 The quorum for a meeting is five members, or a tenth of the membership, whichever is the greater.
- 8.4 A formal record of a general meeting shall be kept.

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8.5 The annual general meeting (AGM) shall be held in February each year, or as soon as possible afterwards.

8.6 The AGM will

- Receive a report of the year's activities
- Receive the year's accounts
- Receive nominations for the chairperson and other Committee members up to 7 days prior to the A.G.M.
- Elect the chairperson and other Committee members.

8.7 The chairperson and other Committee members will be elected according to the number of nominations either by a secret ballot or on a show of hands and serve from the end of the AGM for 3 years.

8.8 The Committee or membership can call a special general meeting (SGM) for a specific purpose at any time. If 10% of members request a SGM in writing, the secretary must call one. The Chairperson of the Committee, or in their absence a member of the Committee, takes the chair

9. Finance

9.1 All funds belonging to or raised for Red House Farm Allotments Society must be used in furthering the objects.

9.2 The treasurer shall keep an account of all income and expenditure and shall present examined accounts at the AGM.

9.3 An independent examiner, who is not a member of the group, shall be appointed to examine the accounts.

9.4 There shall be one or more bank or building society accounts in the name of the group. Cheques must be signed by two Committee members, who must not be related.

9.5 Committee members may claim reasonable out-of-pocket expenses on terms approved by the Committee. No other payments can be made to members of the group.

10. Changes to the constitution

This constitution can only be changed at a general meeting. The secretary must give 21 days' notice of the meeting to all the members, along with details of the proposed changes to the constitution. For the constitution to be changed over half of the members present at the meeting must agree.

11. Dissolution

11.1 **Red House Farm Allotment Society** can only be dissolved at a general meeting. The secretary must give 21 days' notice of the meeting to all the members, along with details of the proposed dissolution. For the group to be dissolved over half of the members present at the meeting must agree.

11.2 If the members agree that the group should be dissolved, any assets remaining after the clearing of all debts and liabilities shall be given to a group with similar objects, or, if this cannot be done, to any charitable purpose.

A copy of this constitution shall be available to all members.

This constitution was approved at a general meeting of Red House Farm Allotments Society 18TH February 2009 and revised with amendments approved at the AGM on 17th February 2016