

Berridale Allotments Association

Welcome

We are delighted to welcome you to allotment gardening at Berridale Allotments. We hope that you will take much pleasure from your hard work and endeavours; the rewards can be worth it. This leaflet contains some information that we hope will help you on your way.

How to get the most out of your plot



There are many benefits to allotment gardening. However, creating and maintaining a productive plot is not as easy as it might look - no matter what the weather, it requires regular work and visits all year round to prepare the ground for cultivation and to keep things ticking over, as well as additional input during the growing season from April - September. Getting your plot to a good condition can initially take quite a bit of effort, but thereafter regular maintenance will usually suffice. That said, weeds are fast growing and appear, seed and spread rapidly, especially during the Spring and Summer months. So keeping on top of things is the key to maintaining control over your growing space and maximising your successes!



Becoming a member and the Tenancy Agreement

To become a member you have to complete and sign a **Membership Application Form** and a **Tenancy Agreement**. This is because when renting an allotment you are effectively taking on responsibility for a piece of land which is entrusted to you to properly maintain and cultivate. The Association needs to ensure that you will manage the land in an appropriate way during your time as a plot holder and leave the land in a fit state to rent out again to another person if you decide to move on. Everyone renting an allotment needs to understand and agree to their responsibilities as laid out in the **Association's Constitution**; the Tenancy Agreement formalises this. Indeed, by signing the Tenancy Agreement you are agreeing to abide by the Constitution which lays out the Association rules and regulations. It is therefore important that you read and digest this document before signing the Agreement – it can be found on this website, and every prospective new member is given a hard copy as part of the process of joining the Association. Please note that new members are on probation for the period of one year.

The Constitution makes clear that you are required to keep your plot cultivated at all



times. Cultivation means the main area of the plot is actively used for the production of vegetables, fruit and/or flowers. We regularly inspect all members' plots to ensure that problems on one plot don't become an issue for adjacent plots, and that the site remains attractive and in a good state of repair. This is one of the roles of the Association Committee.

Please note that in signing up you are also agreeing to us

holding your details on a database for the purposes of sending you written and/or electronic information relating to the official business of the Association. Your details will not be made available to any third parties.

Participating in Association life

As a privately owned and operated Association we are entirely dependent on the goodwill and participation of members to ensure that the site remains in good shape and that the Association is able to sustain itself financially. This means that there is an expectation that all members



make a regular contribution to the upkeep and care of our communal services and spaces. There are a number of ways that members can pitch in:-

(i) Using and Maintaining our Communal Services and Spaces

Kitchen and Toilet Facilities



Berridale has a number of communal services which are open to our members and their friends and families. This includes a kitchen area and male & female toilets, all located in our big hut. These are kept clean and maintained by volunteers from our membership. Please consider signing up to the cleaning rota - the more people on the list the less frequently each member's work is called upon - and always make sure to leave these facilities in the condition you would want to find them.

Water

The Association pays for our water, which is a metered mains supply to a number of standing taps situated around the site. With 51 plots, in summer water usage can be very high. So we ask that hose pipes be used sparingly to fill watering cans or water butts where possible. If several standing taps are used simultaneously, the water supply to others will reduce to a trickle, so the use of butts is preferable, especially in busy periods.

Please note that the water supply is switched off to both the standing taps and the toilet/kitchen facilities inside the big hut in the winter months



and when frost is likely. This is at the discretion of the Groundsman and the Committee.

Communal Spaces and Buildings

In addition to the communal services offered by the Association, Berridale enjoys a wonderful aspect with some grassed areas, shared trees and shrubs, communal paths, spaces and buildings.



Because we are an Association we rely on members pitching in to maintain, make repairs to and improve the site and its buildings. Members are therefore encouraged to participate in working parties and in communal activities set up with a view to keeping the site safe, in a good state of repair and a pleasant place to sit and to garden. Members are asked to keep an eye on the noticeboards both inside and outside of the big hut for information about communal maintenance and repair activities, and to volunteer a little time and effort every year where they possibly can.

(ii) Raising Funds

We have an open day and flower and vegetable exhibition every September – the Berridale Annual Show. Everyone is encouraged to enter some of what they have grown to ensure a good display of diverse produce but also because most entries are sold following judging to raise money for the Association.



We also generate extra income by taking entrance donations on the gate, running a tearoom, and setting up a number of stalls all of which need to be organised and run, as well as stocked with goods to sell or use for raffles and tombolas. This means we need volunteers to work on preparing the site and clearing up after the show, as well as volunteers to populate the stalls and tearoom. We also do a roaring trade in the baking, pickles and preserves donated by our members for sale.

These activities help us to keep our annual membership fees at an affordable level, to the benefit of all members, as well as to ensure we have a contingency fund for maintaining and improving the site. Therefore, it is anticipated that all members will find some way to make a contribution of time and effort to make our annual show a success.

(iii) Taking a turn in the administrative affairs of the Association

The Association is also dependent on the goodwill and effort of members to engage in the running of the allotments site. This is principally carried out through the constitution of an Association Committee with a general membership as well as office bearers (Treasurer, Secretary, Chair, Groundsperson).

It is hoped that all members will consider taking a turn on the Committee and hence make a contribution to the governance of the site. Newcomers getting involved ensures that we have a healthy turnover of Committee members, we have a Committee that reflects the broader membership and current members get a well-deserved break! Committee membership need not be onerous – meetings are monthly, lasting 1-1½ hours, and members can take on as much or as little as they wish, out with attending

the meetings. The normal period of membership is 3 years, but plot holders can elect to do shorter periods should their circumstances change.

Of course, being an office bearer is not for everyone, but we can all make a contribution to the general work of the Committee –and there are always those with more experience who can support and inform newcomers as required. So why not give it a go? Having a good level of participation and a diverse body of Committee members is what we strive for, not least in the interests of inclusion and democracy!

Please note that the Association has an Annual General Meeting which all plotholders are requested to attend. It is here where committee members are elected, the annual plot fees are agreed and set, and any special business including proposed changes to the Constitution are discussed and voted upon. Attending the AGM is an important way for every member to have a say in how things are run into the future.



Support

From time to time we all need a little help. First time allotment holders will discover a wealth of local knowledge by talking to some of our more experienced gardeners who will be able to advise and offer support. So, if in doubt, do please ask!

If for whatever reasons your circumstances change – for example, the time you have available to spend tending your plot is reduced or you have health issues - please inform the Secretary in writing or by email. The Committee would prefer to be kept informed by the plotholder, rather than discover an issue through a third-party complaint about a deterioration in the condition of an adjacent plot. We will do our best to accommodate and assist you where we can.





Being a respectful, community-minded Association member

As a community-based Association we seek to live in harmony with our neighbours and maintain cordial relations both with each other and those beyond the allotment gate. Our ethos is one which strives to ensure a friendly and mutually supportive environment. To that end we ask you to make every effort to accommodate others, make reasonable compromises and pay particular attention to the following conventions:-

Site Entrance and Road Use

The adjacent garage workshops at our site entrance have a legal right to park on the road leading down to the site gates. Please do not park where your car may obstruct access or make it difficult for cars to drive into or out of the garage workshops during normal business hours.



Responsibility for the Site Paths



There are a number of paths in our site:

- a) A main path runs around the allotments. Each member is responsible for maintaining and keeping weed free the blades between the slabs and the front of their plot.
- b) Other paths also run from the western boundary of our site to the standing taps and then to the main path which runs along the river side of the allotments. These paths are the responsibility of the plot holders on each side of the path where it passes their plot.
- c) Some plot holders have created paths between plots which do not lead to a standing tap. Unless the Secretary has written confirmation from the plottolders concerned that one plottolder is responsible, these are considered to be the responsibility of both adjacent plottolders.
- d) Some plottolders have created paths within their plots and these are the plottolder's responsibility.
- e) Paths between standing taps are generally the joint responsibility of the adjacent plottolders

Rents and Fees

The annual rent is decided each November by all members in attendance at our Annual General Meeting. It is therefore in the interest of each member to try and attend the AGM if they want a say in how much they pay for



their plot. In November 2020 the annual rent was set at £70 for 2020/21. When agreeing the fee level, members are asked to consider the cost of managing the site, providing site services and any special improvements or repairs that need to be done.

Please note that in addition to the annual rent, a refundable one-off fee is also payable by all new members for an entrance gate and big hut key.

Huts & Greenhouses

The hut and/or greenhouse on your plot is your property which we allow you to have on our land. You are responsible for keeping it in a decent, safe state of repair. When you take on a plot, you pay the vendor for any hut or greenhouse being left on the plot – the amount paid is negotiated by the new plot holder and the outgoing member and is not the business of the Committee.

If you want to erect or replace a hut or greenhouse on your plot you have to apply to the Committee which will consider your request. Providing that the size and position is acceptable and the proposed building does not shade your neighbours plot we can usually accommodate you.



Bonfires

Cathcart is a smokeless zone. While bonfires are not currently prohibited, we ask members to pay attention to our rules about when and where they are allowed. Please remember that we are surrounded by houses and if neighbours believe allotment smoke is affecting their washing or blowing into their property they may complain to the Authorities resulting in action being taken.



There is a nearby Civic Amenity site at Polmadie, and we would encourage members who have material which cannot be composted to take it there. Additionally, we hire a skip at least once per year to allow members to dispose of 'hard' waste on site.

Equal opportunities

Berridale Allotments operate in the spirit of equal opportunities and plots are rented out on a first come first-served basis, without preferential treatment.

Your gender, race, cultural background, social class, sexual orientation, religion or health are not a barrier to you joining us. Anyone interested can apply to rent an allotment online by filling out the Membership Application Form on this website and returning it to the current Membership Convenor. (berridaleaa@gmail.com)