Version 11 Issued February 2025 @the AGM 2023
SGAA GROWERS (Formerly Stevenage Gardens and Allotments Association)
CONSTITUTION AND RULES

1) The name of the association shall be SGAA GROWERS.

2) OBJECTS

i. To promote the interests of allotment holders and gardeners and to take joint action for the benefit of Members.

ii. To co-operate with any Committee set up by the Government, local authorities, and other bodies to further the interests of allotment holders and gardeners.

iii. To set up a Trading Organisation available to Members only for supplying lime, fertilizers, composts, seeds, and so on, at concessionary prices. To enter into contracts with associations and wholesale suppliers for the supply of these items, and to collect and bank any moneys due and to keep proper records of transactions.

iv. To conduct negotiations in respect of land including leasing and the management of that land.

v. To arrange for the instruction and demonstrations in horticulture, lectures, discussions, exhibitions, and competitions and to distribute literature.

vi. To promote gardening as a leisure pursuit and the growing of vegetables, fruit, flowers and herbs and to co-operate with other organisations interested in the same.

vii. To organise social events for the benefit of members.

3) MEMBERS

i. SGAA Growers shall consist of allotment holders and gardeners who accept this Constitution and Rules.

ii. Members who have given long distinguished service to the objectives of the Association can be rewarded at a General Meeting with appointment as Honorary Life President or Honorary Life Vice-President. There shall be only one of each at any one time and appointment will be for life or until voluntary retirement.

4) MEMBERSHIP FEES and SUBSCRIPTIONS

i. Subscriptions shall be for the calendar year and payable in advance to the Membership Secretary. It is the responsibility of the individual member to ensure that their subscription is paid. Except for the Honorary Members appointed under Rule 3 only members who have paid their subscriptions shall be allowed to use any of the facilities offered by the Association. Every member shall pay an annual subscription that has been determined at the Annual General Meeting held in the previous year.

ii. Any members who held 6 years for the price of 5 memberships prior to 2020 shall have these honoured, with an automatic extension of one year as they did not benefit from the free membership in 2021. Those members who previously purchased or earned life membership shall also have this honoured. Members serving on the committee shall have free membership as a token for the work they do.

There will be no other concessions for members.
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iii. A list of members shall be maintained for records purposes and may be used to comply with shop regulations and to circulate details of any events and discounts available to members. Only members will be able to vote at General Meetings.

5) OFFICERS

i. The Officers shall be the Chair, Vice-Chair, Executive Secretary, Treasurer, and Membership Secretary, Trading Secretary, Show Secretary and Newsletter Secretary, who shall be ex-officio members of the Executive Committee.
ii. Any two of the Chair, Executive Secretary and Treasurer may enter the Association into a contractual agreement that has been agreed and authorised by the Executive Committee.

6) EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

i. An Executive Committee of not less than eight members shall conduct the affairs of SGAA Growers.
ii. Unless otherwise determined, a quorum at Committee Meetings, which shall be held at regular intervals during the year, shall be not less than four members.
iii. Casual vacancies may be filled by the Executive Committee who shall also have the power to co-opt additional members and the members so appointed shall hold office until the Annual General Meeting following their appointment.
iv. The Executive Committee shall comprise the Officers listed in Article 5 plus site representatives.
v. Representation of Sites shall be a maximum of one representative for each site.
vi. All decisions in Executive Committee meetings shall be made by show of hands. vii. Each member of the Executive Committee shall have a vote in committee meetings.
viii. If multiple roles are held by one person, that person will have only one vote in total. ix. In case of a tied vote the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

7) SUB-COMMITTEES AND VOLUNTEERS

i. Sub-secretaries may co-opt volunteers or sub-committees to assist in executing the business of their office.
ii. Any person co-opted in this manner may continue in their role without re-appointment until such time as they resign.

8) GENERAL MEETINGS

i. The Annual General Meeting, at which the Accounts and Secretary's Report shall be presented and the Officers and Committee for the ensuing year to be elected, shall be held annually in the first quarter of the following financial year or, in emergency, when the Executive Committee shall determine.
ii. Other General Meetings shall be called by a decision of a General Meeting or by a two-thirds majority of the Committee. Special General Meetings shall be called on the request of at least fifteen Members, in writing, specifying the purpose of the requested meeting.

iii. The notice period for any General Meeting shall be no less than 21 days unless an Emergency SGM is being called.

iv. The objects for which the meeting is called shall be stated in the notice convening the meeting.
v. Eight Members shall form a quorum at a General Meeting. vi. In case of a tied vote the Chairman shall have the casting vote.

9) DISCUSSIONS AT MEETINGS

i. No Party political or sectarian discussions shall be raised, or resolutions proposed, either at any Executive Committee or General Meeting of the Association.

10) FINANCE

i. The Association will operate to a Financial Period (normally twelve months) ending on the 31st December. The Committee shall open Banking Accounts in the name of the Association with such bank as the Committee may select and approve. The Treasurer shall pay in all monies. The Treasurer using cheques signed by two signatories out of the three authorised by the Committee and arranged with the Association's Bank shall make all payments. In addition, the payments may also be made using internet banking. Officer's expenses may be reimbursed in cash at the discretion of the Treasurer. The Treasurer who shall agree an investment policy shall report surplus cash to the Committee.
ii. Items purchased by the Association should be deemed as Fixed Assets if the original cost is at least £200, expected to last for at least five years and is not a consumable. Fixed Assets will be depreciated over a period of five years at 20% of original cost each year commencing with the year of purchase, the date of purchase notwithstanding.
iii. Financial records for each financial year shall be kept for a period not less than six years after the end of the financial year.

11) AFFILIATION TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS

SGAA Growers may affiliate to any other organisation deemed appropriate, subject to the agreement of the Executive Committee. This may include, but is not limited to, The National Dahlia Society, The National Vegetable Society, The National Chrysanthemum Society and the Royal Horticultural Society.

12) OFFENCES

The Executive Committee may terminate the membership of a member whose conduct is proved to the Committee's satisfaction to be detrimental to the interests of his or her fellow members. Any charge against a member must be communicated in writing. An appeal against a decision of the Executive Committee may be made to a Special General Meeting on the requisition in writing of ten Members.

13) UPDATE, CONVERSION or DISSOLUTION

i. Updates to the Constitution and Rules may be agreed only by a two-thirds majority at a properly constituted General Meeting of the Association (see Article 8).
ii. SGAA Growers may be converted into a registered society, or may be dissolved, only by a two-thirds majority at a properly constituted General Meeting of the Association (see Article 8).

In the event of the SGAA Growers ceasing, Cups, Trophies, and so on, shall be vested in Stevenage Borough Council until SGAA Growers re-forms. Funds will be disbursed to members at the time of ceasing in equal shares.

14) MATTERS NOT PROVIDED FOR - The Executive Committee may at their discretion deal with any matters not provided for in these Rules.