

## **Appendix 5 – Membership policy and procedures**

### **1. Membership Policy**

#### **1.1 Membership Categories**

As described in the Constitution there will be two membership categories; 'Key holder' and 'Community or Growing Plot holder' – (hereafter referred to as 'Plot holder'). Key holder and Plot holder members have equal status and each have a single vote at members' meetings. Applications for Key holder and Plot holder membership must be made following the application process set out below in section 3 and must be renewed annually. Membership renewal each year is not automatic, see section 3 below.

#### **1.2 Garden Fees**

Garden Fees for Key holders and Plot holders are set annually at the members' AGM on recommendation of the Committee. Garden Fees must be paid in cash, online bank transfer or by cheque upon applying for membership and each year thereafter as a condition of membership renewal. Garden Fees are a minimum sum; contributions above this amount towards the cost of running the garden are welcome. Garden Fees will be reduced by two-thirds for members who join in the last quarter of the membership year. If a Key holder or Plot holder membership is forfeited for any reason other than non-payment of fees, as described by the KHWG constitution and appendices, fees paid for that year will be retained by the Committee.

#### **1.3 Non-payment of Fees**

If a new applicant or member's fees are not paid within three weeks of an offer of membership or renewal of membership a reminder letter will be sent. If payment is not received within two weeks of the date of this letter then the membership will not be granted or renewed, and for Plot holders, their growing plot will be forfeited and reallocated.

#### **1.4 Membership Year**

The membership year runs from 2<sup>nd</sup> March to 1<sup>st</sup> March the following year. Applications for membership will be accepted at any point during the year. Within reason, applications for membership will be considered by the membership secretary who will make a recommendation to the next Committee meeting. Renewal of applications will take place in February each year. The gate number will change with each membership year and a new number will be issued to all members.

#### **1.5 Member's Responsibilities**

Member's rules are set out in the KHWG constitution and appendices. By accepting a membership, members and their family/ household using KHWG agree to abide by the constitution, appendices and garden rules.

Members will not give the gate number to access the gardens to anyone else. Members will not 'hold the gate open' to anyone, including known members.

All members must enter the gardens using the keypad access. Members found to have given the gate number to anyone else will be issued a warning letter, followed by withdrawal of their membership and, for Plot holders, growing plots forfeited and reallocated. If members wish to arrange for a friend who is not a garden member to tend their plot while they are away, they must arrange for the friend to take out keyholder membership.

Members found to be in breach of any of the garden rules will be issued with a warning letter, which may followed by forfeiture of membership and plot, depending on the severity of the breach as assessed by the committee. Breaches of an extremely serious nature, for example involving violence or criminal behaviour, may be liable to immediate forfeiture of membership and plot and denial of future access to the garden.

## **1.6 Membership Communications and Data Protection**

Members can choose if they wish to receive membership communications, notice of meetings, newsletters, etc. by post or by email. All general membership communications, newsletters and circulars will also be displayed in the garden building. It is a member's responsibility to ensure that their contact details held on the membership database are up to date. Members may request a print-out of their details held on the database by contacting the membership secretary. Member's details will be held on the membership database which may be used by any member of the Committee for KHWG business only. Members' addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses may be circulated to other members as part of the efficient running of the garden, for example, in organising garden duties. Member's details will not be sold or passed onto third parties.

## **1.7 Catchment Area**

The catchment area for the garden is as described on the map published by the Committee on the KHWG website and displayed in the garden building. Priority for membership will be given to residents in the catchment area.

## **2. Membership Eligibility**

### **2.1 Key Holder Membership**

It is the intention of the Committee for as many local residents as possible to benefit from, and contribute to, the general amenity and facilities provided by KHWG, subject to limits on the capacity and safe working of the garden. For this reason, the Committee may, from time to time, limit the number of Key holder memberships. Initially, priority will be given to applicants resident in the catchment area; however it is the intention of the committee to broaden eligibility to residents living outside the catchment area who can demonstrate a commitment to the development and running of the garden once the garden is established. In addition to local residents, local organisations and head teachers of schools in the catchment area may apply for key holder membership. The Committee will issue separate guidance on the use of the gardens for these organisations to ensure the tranquillity and safe working of

the garden. All Key holder members are expected to contribute to the communal nature of the garden as described in the constitution and appendices. Key holder members may apply for Plot holder membership following the process outlined in section 3. Plot holder members who wish to surrender their growing plot may do so at any time and may continue as Key holder members, provided they meet the conditions of Key holder membership.

## **2.2 Plot Holder Membership and Community or Growing Plot Allocation**

It is the intention of the Committee to establish community or growing plots for use by local residents; 'Plot holder membership'. Plot holder membership is restricted to residents living in the catchment area at the start of each membership year. Only one growing plot will be allocated per membership/ household. All Plot holder members are expected to contribute to the communal nature of the garden as described in the constitution and appendices. As the number of growing plots is restricted, priority will be given to applicants for Plot holder membership in the following order:

- a. the applicant has already made a significant and continuing contribution to the development and/or running of the garden;
- b. the applicant has special needs/disability which mean that he or she would benefit particularly from access to the garden (supporting documentation may be required);
- c. the applicant has no access to any private, communal or other outside space, including allotments elsewhere;
- d. the applicant has access to minimal private, communal or other outside space (but not allotments elsewhere), such as a balcony, patio, yard, terrace, small garden or basement area, or combination thereof. In all cases this should not exceed 40sq m in total;
- e. the applicant has access to a communal or private garden exceeding 40sqm (but not allotments elsewhere);
- f. the applicant has an allotment elsewhere.

If a Plot holder member moves out of the catchment area during the membership year they may either surrender their growing plot immediately or at the end of the membership year in which they move, or sooner if they wish. Head teachers of schools, or local organisations, in the catchment area may apply for a single growing plot on behalf of their organisation if they agree to contribute to the communal nature of the garden. The Committee will issue separate guidance on the use of the gardens by local schools and organisations to ensure the tranquillity and safe working of the garden. If there are more applicants in a category than plots available, applications will be considered within that category on a first come first served basis, according to item 3.3 below.

## **3. Membership Application Process**

### **3.1 How to apply for Key Holder and Plot Holder Membership**

Applications for membership can be made at any point during the membership year. Application forms will be available on the KHWG website, in the garden building or directly from the membership secretary. Completed application forms should be returned directly to the membership secretary. Applicants will be asked to provide proof of address (copy of council tax bill or mains current utility bill) and the garden fee with their form. If an applicant's circumstances change during the course of their application, or whilst on the waiting list, they must notify the membership secretary immediately.

### **3.2 Consideration of Applications for Membership**

On receipt of applications the membership secretary will first check all applications for completeness, requesting further information if necessary. Applicants' details will be entered onto the membership database and recommendations for membership will be made by the membership secretary to the next full Committee meeting. Applications from individual over the age of 18 will be considered irrespective of gender, age, race, religion or sexual orientation. Applicants will be notified as soon as possible after the Committee meeting if their application has been successful. Applicants will have three weeks from the date of the offer to accept a membership. If a membership is not accepted within three weeks of the offer, the membership will be reallocated.

### **3.3 Waiting List**

If there are more applicants than Key holder or Plot holder memberships available, a waiting list will be established. Priority on the waiting list will be given according to section 2, above, not to how long the applicant has been on the list. It is therefore possible for an applicant's position on the waiting list to vary according to the relative priority of their application. If a waiting list is in operation, or the application is unsuccessful, the garden fee will be returned to the applicant. An offer of membership to an applicant on the waiting list is dependent on payment of the garden fee and verification of the applicant's address (copy of council tax bill or mains current utility bill). If an applicant is on the waiting list for more than two years the membership secretary will contact the applicant to see if they are still interested and application details correct.

### **3.4 Membership Renewal**

Members will be offered an opportunity to renew their membership in February of each year. Members will be required to provide proof of address (copy of council tax bill or mains current utility bill) and the garden fee to the membership secretary to renew their membership. Membership renewal is not automatic and the Committee reserves the right not to renew the membership of a member who is not, in the opinion of the Committee, abiding by the constitution and appendices.

### **3.5 Appeal Process**

If an applicant or member disagrees with the Committee's decision to reject their application for membership they may appeal to the Chair in writing

within three weeks of notification of the Committee's decision. The Chair will reconsider the application with the assistance of two members not connected with the Committee or the appellant. If the decision is to grant a membership, the applicant shall be given the next available membership. The Chair's decision is final.

#### **4. Communal Activity**

##### **4.1 Membership Duties**

All members are expected to contribute to the communal nature of the garden by assisting in the maintenance of communal areas and undertaking practical activities to ensure the smooth running and ongoing development of the garden. Members will be asked to indicate on their application form what type of duties they would like to undertake. Members should be prepared to devote about 16 hours a year to communal activities in support of the garden. The membership secretary will prepare a duty list from information provided on the application form for the Committee to approve for circulation to all members.