

BHAS Community Garden Area: Outline Management Plan

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to set out briefly the management plan for the BHAS community area. It will be developed and amended in the light of experience.

Management Group (MG)

Implementation of the design and build phase will be led by a dedicated working party. Once that phase is complete and the new facilities opened, it will be managed by a small BHAS management group, established by the BHAS committee.

The Management Group will be responsible for general oversight of the area, including (but not limited to) managing day-to-day use; ensuring the area remains tidy and in good condition throughout the year; liaising with the BHAS secretary over use by existing plot holders wishing to downsize and/or new plot holders using raised beds as a 'starter'; implementing and reviewing User Agreements with any external partners; liaising with external partners, and ensuring any concerns and complaints are properly handled and resolved. A member of the MG will act as the BHAS dedicated contact under any User Agreements.

General Use and Enjoyment of the Community Garden

Other than the raised beds, whose use is controlled and managed by the MG as specified in this plan, general use of the new facilities in the area, such as new benches on the Green and the new teaching/training platform, will be open to all plot holders and BHAS members at any time when these facilities are not already in use. One role for the MG will ensure that general area is available for open use in this way most of the time.

Raised Beds

Raised beds on the Community Garden, including allocation of space and management of expressions of interest, are managed solely by BHAS and operated outside of the Council's broader waiting list and inspection regime (although compliance with standard Terms and Conditions for allotments shall be a minimum requirement for continued cultivation of a raised bed). They exist to provide new opportunities to plot holders and selected local community partners. MG will, working closely with the BHAS secretary, manage access to the raised beds.

There are two circumstances in which **existing plot holders** may move onto a raised bed. First, plot holders with a good record of cultivation, may seek to downsize from an existing plot where mobility or other issues are impairing their ability to manage their existing plot effectively, in line with Council conditions. Such plot holders should in the first instance discuss the matter with their local site representative, who will then brief the BHAS secretary.

Second, local representatives and/or the BHAS Secretary may nominate plot holders with hitherto good records of cultivation for participation in a raised bed where their performance gives cause for concern such that there is a real possibility of their lease being terminated or not renewed by LBRUT. In such cases, which would normally apply to longstanding plot holders of good standing and follow formal inspection, the matter will be discussed with the plot holder directly by the local representative or the BHAS Secretary before progressing it further. If the case is strong, the BHAS Secretary will discuss the possibilities with the Chair of MG with a view to a positive decision.

If in either instance above, no space is available the named person may be added to the list of interested parties for raised beds on the area (which will be held by the BHAS secretary). Plot holders downsizing will be allocated space, where it is available, for one year, renewable (subject to performance standards laid down by BHAS). Renewal will not be automatic nor will it be unreasonably withheld. Any allocation will be confirmed in writing by email, along with outline terms.

New plot holders may be nominated by the BHAS Secretary for 'starter space' on a raised bed with the intention that they should progress onto an established plot once they have demonstrated sufficient commitment and application to cultivation suggesting that they will meet normal performance standards laid down in the Council's terms and conditions. In the event that the BHAS Secretary wishes to make a nomination, they will discuss the possibilities with the Chair of MG with a view to a positive decision. If space is available for starter use, it will normally be allocated for up to one year. Any allocation will be confirmed in writing by email, along with outline terms.

User Agreements with Partners

A fundamental feature of external partner use will be User Agreements. A template user agreement has been developed to govern use of the area by any partners. It covers location of the area, access to the area (including permitted routes for entry and exit), scheduling of visits (there will be no right to casual visits), expectations of supervision and behaviour (there will be no right to roam beyond the area), and a process for articulating and handling any concerns or complaints, together with key contact details. User agreements will last for one year, in line with normal tenancies on allotments. Signing up to a User Agreement will be a condition of external partner involvement. User Agreements may be amended in the light of experience and will not be automatically renewed nor will renewal be unreasonably withheld. The first year of all User Agreements will be a trial year with a review at the end to determine whether the parties wish to continue with the partnership and establish a new User Agreement.

Reporting lines

The MG will be appointed by and report to the BHAS Committee through the BHAS Chair. The remit of the MG will be periodically reviewed by the BHAS Committee, which may, at its discretion, change that remit.

RB

BHAS Chair

13-05-25