

Dorrington Road Allotments Plot and Site Management Practices (amended 2026)

The aim of these rules is to ensure all members comply with the terms and conditions of the site lease, service level agreement, Society constitution and tenancy agreements.

They have been developed over many years and provide a means to clear up misunderstandings about what you can and can't do on the site. If at any time you are unsure whether your actions will break a rule, please ask a committee member before acting.

All members must agree to abide by the rules. If you do not agree to abide by the rules you cannot be a member of the Society and will be given notice to quit. It's your responsibility to ensure anyone using your plot reads, understands and abides by these rules. Anyone breaking any of the rules will receive a first warning letter. Failure to comply (without good reason) will result in a second letter followed by a notice to quit. There are a number of rules which will attract immediate notice to quit. These are indicated in the list.

Any additions or amendments to the rules will be processed in line with the Rules (ie the legal constitution) and noted below.

Amendments & Additions Date & Rule:

2008 AGM Section 7.O Weeds on plots (new rule)

2008 AGM Section 7.P New member probation period (new rule) 1st April 2009

Section 7.Q Obligatory Working (new rule)

1st November 2010 Format of rule list changed to improve clarity (rule content remains unchanged)

16th March 2011 Section 8. Fruiting & Non Fruiting Tree Rule (new rule) Section 9. Bee Keeping Rules (new rule)

2018 AGM Section 7.O Plot care and maintenance (replaces 7.O Weeds on plot)

2024 AGM Section 1- items B and C and Section 6 item H- rewording to simplify.

2025 AGM Section 7.F enhanced limiting glyphosate use

2025 AGM Section 7.S added to facilitate plot moves for existing members

2025 AGM Section 7.P had a 3 month test added for probationers

2026 Title changed from "DRAA Rules" to "DRA Site and Plot Management Practices" as required by the new Co-operative Society Rules. All references to Association changed to Society.

1. SECURITY:

- A. The gate must be kept locked at all times: Leaving it unlocked enables people to find out what the number is.
- B. The numbers for the gate must not be given to anyone who is not a member of the Society unless they are legitimately assisting you e.g. watering greenhouse plants while you are away. Occasional guests or people helping out should be let in by you, not given the number. When leaving or entering the site, ensure people don't see the number on the 'open' lock. Ensure you have locked and bolted the gate when you enter or leave the site.
- C. Vandalism and theft should be reported to the police as a crime: If you see anyone acting suspiciously on the site, or suffer acts of vandalism or theft from the plots please inform the Committee of the incident.
- D. If you find a place where people are getting over or through the fence, report it to a committee member, or try to block the gap yourself.

2. SITE BOUNDARIES: The boundary hedge offers the best long term solution to the security problem that we can get. To be effective however, it needs to be looked after.

- A. If your plot is next to the boundary hedge you must weed it: Twice a year (about May and August) pull the weeds out of it. It will only take about 20 minutes to do.
- B. Don't prune or cut the hedge - unless you are asked to do so
- C. Don't damage the hedge in any way – anyone who does so will get immediate notice
- D. Don't deposit anything in the base of the hedge: This includes weeds, rubbish, stones etc.
- E. Sheds must not be built against the hedge: It needs sunlight to thrive. F. If

your plot is next to the boundary fence you must patch or shore it up if

necessary: Some help and/or materials may be available.

- G. You must not damage or remove any part of the boundary fence without express permission – anyone who does so will get immediate notice.
- H. Do not obstruct the boundary fences or hedge: Access to them could be needed at any time. A path must be left alongside the boundary and kept clear so that it is accessible.
- I. If you lock your plot up, you must give a key to a committee member - So we can gain access for boundary maintenance when required.

3. FENCES AND BUILDINGS:

- A. If you want a fence between you and your neighbour, it is up to you to build it: Please make it tidy and attractive, and keep it properly maintained.
- B. Fences beside the track must be kept in good repair, sheds should also be kept looking as nice as possible

4. WATER SUPPLY:

- A. Use water sensibly: Our water supply is metered and it is expensive so you must use the tap water sensibly.
- B. If you have a shed or greenhouse you must attach guttering and collect rainwater: Rainwater is much better for your plants anyway as tap water is too cold and full of chlorine.
- C. If you find a leak or dripping tap tell a committee member.
- D. Don't leave hosepipes attached to taps – detach the hose as soon as you have finished with it: If the tap is turned on or even just dribbling while the hose is still attached we can lose a LOT of water before the leak is discovered.

- E. Don't use sprinklers: they are very wasteful.
- F. If the water board issues a hosepipe ban we must abide by it.
- G. If you use a hosepipe, don't waste water on areas where crops are not growing (e.g. paths).
- H. You must not water fruit bushes, cane fruits, trees, rhubarb or any other perennial plant - unless it has only recently been planted. They don't need it and it is very wasteful.
- I. Don't wash vegetables or tools under a running tap.

5. BONFIRES:

- A. Don't burn plastic or rubber, or anything containing plastic or rubber: (e.g. carpets, tyres, carrier bags, cushions) The black smoke produced is not just extremely antisocial, it is also poisonous. Burning this kind of material is against the law, and we could be prosecuted. Also, the council could stop us from having bonfires at all. Instant notice for anyone caught.
- B. Don't burn rubbish.
- C. Stuff that is safe to burn can be burnt on your plot - e.g. rotten wood, woody pruning's, weed roots.
- D. You must not light a bonfire on any of the communal areas or in the wildlife areas: Except for volunteers doing clearance work.

6. RUBBISH:

- A. Don't bury, burn or dump rubbish anywhere on the site
- B. Don't bring any asbestos to the allotment site: dispose of it properly, specially wrapped, at the tip. Instant notice for anyone caught.
- C. Don't place any bits of asbestos you find on the site in the skip: either dispose of it properly at the tip, or keep it on your plot and tell a committee

member that you have it.

- D. Don't bring any kind of rubbish to the allotment site to dump
- E. Rubbish produced on site (eg plastic, glass) must be taken home with you, taken to the tip, or kept on your plot until we get a skip.
- F. Green waste should be composted (on your plot).
- G. Don't deposit anything down the bank behind the manure pile by the gate:
This includes weed roots, soil, stones, and rubbish.
- H. Under no circumstances should rubbish or any other items be put on the railway embankment.
- I. Don't deposit any of the above stuff on any of the communal areas. **7.**

7. MISCELLANEOUS:

- A. Dogs must be kept under control and must not be allowed to foul the track: Dogs must not be allowed to wander onto other people's plots. If dog fouling becomes a problem again, we will insist that all dogs are kept on a lead, and if that does not solve the problem, we could ban all dogs from the site.
- B. Don't go onto anybody else's plot, or any vacant plots, unless you have permission or are on Society business.
- C. Don't take anything that does not belong to you.
- D. Don't bring firearms onto the site.
- E. Don't abuse any other member, or behave inappropriately in any way.
- F. Don't let chemical sprays drift onto any other plots. The use of glyphosate weedkillers must not be used except in exceptional circumstances after the approval of the committee.

- G. Don't leave stones etc. on the track: they cause damage to the mower blades.
- H. You must keep the weeds down - partly for overall tidiness, partly to prevent spread onto other plots. Cut down weeds regularly, or cover them up.
- I. We are not allowed any kind of livestock: (excluding bees, see section 9) on these allotments
- J. Please use the car park: If you are unloading or loading heavy stuff, by all means park next to your plot, but then please move it when you are done. If you leave your car at the turning point, please ensure that other vehicles can still turn round easily.
- K. Don't drive up the far end of the track when it is wet and muddy: If you do so without realising, please repair the damage to the track, don't leave it for someone else to sort out.
- L. Don't dig out any steep banks - as they might subside.
- M. Keep the secretary informed of changes of address and telephone number: it is your responsibility to ensure that we have your correct details
- N. Let us know if you want to give up all or part of your plot - as they are much easier to rent out if we get to know about them early on
- O. Plot care and maintenance - we have regular monthly plot inspections during the main growing season (from March to October) conducted by the Maintenance Officer and other committee members and plot holders. Any member, who fails a plot inspection will be provided a first notice and allowed 30 days to improve their plot. If they fail to do so, they will be given a second notice stating they have 14 days to improve their plot. If no improvements have been made then they will be given a final notice to quit. If for any reason you find that you can no longer work your plot or you cannot work it for a period of time (e.g. working away, illness etc) then please inform the General Secretary immediately. Failure of a plot inspection would be characterised by but not limited to: excessive weed

growth, lack of maintenance of structures, lack of cultivation or utilisation of growing areas and lack of maintenance of all plot boundaries. There is an expectation that most (at least 50%) of the plot be cultivated, not just a small part, as allotments are primarily fruit and vegetable growing spaces.

- P. **New member probation period** - as a new member you have a probation period to demonstrate suitable progress on your plot to the committee. There is a long waiting list for plots. It is important that once you have accepted a plot, it is essential to start work preparing or cultivating immediately (depending on the season). You must show work on at least a quarter of your plot within 3 months and on at least half of it within 6 months. or your lease will be terminated. We take the matter of unworked plots seriously and will issue notice to quit to members who do not fully work their plots. We expect most of the plot to be cultivated, not just a small part. If for any reason you find that you can no longer work your plot or you cannot work it for a period of time (e.g. working away, illness etc) then please inform the General Secretary immediately. We have regular monthly inspections and will take action.
- Q. **Obligatory Working** - as part of their commitment to the Society each member is required to carry out approximately 3 hours per year work on communal areas. This commitment can be carried out during working parties or via a pre arranged task list. The work will focus on maintaining and improving communal features benefiting the whole Society rather than individual plots.
- R. The committee will arrange and publicise working parties throughout the year. We have a number of improvements we wish to implement, so it is important that everyone helps out. If you can not attend the working parties, you can still show your commitment by volunteering for tasks on the pre arranged task list. People will only be expected to carry out tasks which are within their skills and capability. The task list will show a number of tasks that can be done at a time convenient to you. Completion of the tasks will be monitored by the committee to ensure everyone is contributing to the Society. If you cannot attend the working parties or are unable to perform tasks on the task list (e.g. working away, illness etc) then please inform the General Secretary immediately.

The siting of NEW structures such as greenhouses, sheds, poly tunnels and ponds over plot boundaries by members who garden more than one plot is forbidden. This is in the members' best interest as it will allow ease of splitting plots back up if the member decides to give up a plot at a later date (this is not being applied retrospectively – no existing structures are required to be moved (May 2016)).

- S. Moving Plots: Existing plot holders who have demonstrated their ability to manage their plot well or members who find that they need to downsize should email the General Secretary for the opportunity to move to a larger or smaller plot before newly available plots are offered to new members.

8. FRUITING & NON FRUITING TREES:

- A. The plot holder must seek permission from the committee before planting any new tree.
- B. Only fruit producing trees of dwarf rootstock M27 (very dwarfing) or M9 (dwarfing) may be grown on your allotment. Trees should not be planted where they will cause an obstruction to a neighbouring tenant or a residential neighbour. Trees should not be allowed to grow in such a manner that they will cast shade on neighbouring plots. The tenant shall not plant any shrubs, conifers or trees that are decorative, non-fruiting, or have non edible fruits and if these already exist, they should be managed as fruit producing trees.
- C. The committee reserves the right to refuse permission for the planting of any new tree.

9 BEE KEEPING: Criteria for keeping bees on your plot:

- A. Plot holders who wish to keep bees must have been a member of their beekeeping club for a period of one year, and, whilst they have bees on their plot they must continue to be members of their local beekeeping club. You will need to provide a letter or email from your club confirming this.
- B. Beekeepers must make themselves available for inspection by FERA, should a

Bee inspector ask to inspect their bees.

- C. The committee requests that the beekeeper's be honest about the results of any inspection and make any information available if necessary.
- D. Plot holders must consult their adjoining plot holders before placing bee on their plot.
- E. All beginner beekeepers must have an 'expert' or mentor beekeeper from their beekeeping club from whom they can seek guidance.
- F. No one plot holder or plot may have more than 4 hives. The whole allotment site may have no more than 20 hives.
- G. Beekeepers must make available to the committee and other plot holders (via a notice on the site notice board) their contact details in the event of a swarm as well as the telephone number of the club of which they are a member.

Management of Bees

- H. In the event of a swarm, the beekeeper must arrange for the swarm to be captured or removed immediately.
- I. Beekeepers should site their hive (s) appropriately and be considerate of other people nearby when opening up their hive (s).
- J. If non beekeeping plot holders see a swarm, they can contact the number on the notice board.

Policy regarding Bees

- K. Where bees are causing a nuisance, beekeepers may be required to make changes to their beekeeping practices and/or the position of their hives.
- L. Plot holders must not go onto plots where bees are kept unless a committee member is entering a plot on committee business, for example, a plot inspection.

M. Plot holders who keep bees must have appropriate public liability insurance independent of any insurance policy provided by the allotment Society. You will need to provide a copy of this to the committee before you will be allowed to keep bees. Annually, you will need to provide a copy of your insurance policy to the committee.

N. Failure to follow any of the above rules may result in plot holders being asked to remove their bees from the site or being given notice to quit the site.