

## **ALEXANDRA COMMUNITY GARDEN EXPECTATIONS & GUIDELINES – 2019-20**

### ***Purpose***

The purpose of Alexandra Community Garden (ACG) is to provide an opportunity for local residents to grow their own produce; learn about organic gardening, as well as issues related to food and food security; and enjoy socializing in the context of community and civic engagement and advocacy.

### ***Criteria for Participation***

- 1) Membership
  - a) Membership in ACG assumes that members have read, understood, and agree to comply with these *Expectations & Guidelines*.
  - b) Unless there is a surplus of unallocated plots, gardeners must be resident in South Surrey or White Rock.
  - c) Applicants must not have a community garden plot elsewhere.
  - d) Applicants must complete an application form. Priority will be given to returning gardeners who have contributed the required volunteer time.
  - e) Those who obtain a plot are required to become members of Alex House and pay a seasonal plot fee, determined by Alex House. New applicants are required to pay a deposit upon application, which will be applied to the fee if the application is successful; or refunded if not.
  - f) Returning gardeners are confirmed upon application, and must pay their membership and plot fees at that time. New applicants are required to pay the fees once a plot is confirmed for them. New applicants are processed on a first-come, first-served basis.
  - g) Membership and the garden season run from April 1<sup>st</sup> to March 31<sup>st</sup>.
  - h) Unsuccessful applicants for a given season will be invited to indicate if they wish to remain on a waitlist.
- 2) Volunteer Contribution & Collective Responsibility
  - a) All gardeners are required to volunteer a minimum of eight hours for the benefit of the gardens as a whole; and/or to the maintenance of the gardens and grounds of Alex House. Volunteer time includes attending business meetings, general maintenance, social and educational events, fundraising, and community engagement.
  - b) It is the responsibility of gardeners to ensure that they log their hours. Logs will be provided for meetings and events; and individual time contributed to collective maintenance should be recorded on the log sheet available in the garden shed.
  - c) Returning gardeners who have not fulfilled the volunteer requirements of the previous season will be required to apply as new gardeners.
- 3) Termination/Withdrawal of Membership
  - a) Membership in ACG may be terminated without refund for the following reasons:
    - i) Failure to pay membership and/or plot fees
    - ii) Failure to personally maintain one's plot for more than twenty-one days without a valid reason.

- iii) Failure to keep common areas tidy; theft of garden equipment, property, or produce; and/or wilful misuse, damage, or destruction of garden equipment, property, or produce.
- b) Gardeners who must withdraw due to unavoidable circumstances will receive a partial refund of their plot fee, pro-rated to the date of withdrawal, up until June 30. A notice of withdrawal, citing the reason(s), must be received in writing; otherwise the plot will be deemed abandoned and the fee forfeited in its entirety.
- c) Those whose membership was terminated under Section 4(a) will not be permitted to re-apply, without special permission of Alex House.

### **Governance**

- 4) Authority and Funding
  - a) ACG is a community engagement project of Alex House. The Community Programs (CP) Manager is the designated liaison between Alex House and the gardeners.
  - b) Plot fees and money raised through fundraising shall be designated by Alex House for the operation, maintenance, and improvement of the garden. Allocation of funds for garden purposes shall be at the discretion of the Garden Committee, with the concurrence of Alex House.
  - c) Residual funds left at the end of the season will be allocated to the Alex House operating fund; but may be carried over to the new garden season for specific, identified purposes.
  
- 5) Meetings
  - a) Following the selection of gardeners in March, the CP Manager will organise an initial meeting to provide information about ACG; assign plots (see Section 8); and review the *Expectations & Guidelines*.
  - b) There will be monthly meetings from April through September; and bimonthly meetings in November and January. The purpose of the meetings is to discuss issues, priorities, plans, and activities related to the garden.
  - c) No events can be scheduled or money spent without the prior consent of the gardeners at the business meeting, and with the concurrence of Alex House.
  - d) The Master Gardener(s) and CP Manager may attend the meetings *ex officio*.
  
- 6) Garden Committee
  - a) A Garden Committee, responsible for specific aspects of the maintenance, well-being, and development of ACG, shall be selected by the gardeners at the first business meeting of the season.
  - b) The Garden Committee consists of a Chairperson, Secretary, Donations Coordinator, Events & Work Parties Coordinator, Engagement Coordinator, and Communications & Publicity Coordinator.
  - c) Positions may be shared or rotated, and gardeners are encouraged to volunteer for them. If a position comes vacant during the year, the membership will be responsible for identifying a replacement.
  - d) The duties of the Committee are as follows:
    - i) Chairperson: Chairs meetings, assists the CP Manager in developing an agenda, facilitates discussion.

- ii) Secretary: Records and circulates minutes; maintains an up-to-date contact list; and communicates with members by phone and/or email.
  - iii) Donations Coordinator: Solicits donations and sponsorships (using a form letter approved by Alex House); and identifies and makes applications for funding.
  - iv) Events & Work Parties Coordinator: Oversees planning for events and work parties, including defining the scope of the work, ensuring volunteers sign-in, and arranging refreshments.
  - v) Engagement Coordinator: Undertakes responsibility for initiating and maintaining avenues of cooperation with other local community gardens and with the community at-large, in order to pursue common goals and activities, and to advance the interests of community gardening, food security, and the preservation and expansion of green-space.
  - vi) Communications & Publicity Coordinator: Takes photos of ACG events and activities, administers the garden's social media platforms, and writes occasional brief articles related to the garden.
- 7) Responsibilities of the CP Manager
- a) As liaison to Alex House, the CP Manager (or designate) shall attend and participate in meetings; provide the project's financial statements in a timely fashion; and assent to any decisions taken at business meetings.
  - b) The CP Manager takes an active role in publicizing the garden and recruiting new gardeners, using the Alex House website, social media platforms, posters, and other media.
  - c) The CP Manager receives and records applications, maintains the wait list, and annually produces a contact list to be maintained jointly with the Secretary.
  - d) Receipts and invoices for approved garden purchases shall be forwarded to the CP Manager for reimbursement.
  - e) The CP Manager may, from time-to-time, communicate with the gardeners as a whole.

### ***Plots and Maintenance***

- 8) Assignment of Plots
- a) Plot selection will occur at the orientation meeting in March. Returning gardeners may elect to move to a different, vacant plot. Plots are assigned to new gardeners by lottery.
  - b) Once a plot is allocated, it becomes the member's responsibility and is not transferable.
  - c) Gardeners may retain a plot as long as the fees and volunteer requirements have been fulfilled.
- 9) Individual Plot Maintenance
- a) Gardeners are expected to:
    - i) Dig over and clean the plot before April 30; and begin planting before May 31.
    - ii) Garden organically. The use of chemical fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides, or non-organic materials is prohibited as is the planting of invasive species.
    - iii) Maintain, water, and care for one's plot, including timely harvest of produce.
    - iv) Build soil and the fertility, diversity, and resilience of the ACG ecosystem.
    - v) Use water efficiently and sparingly.
    - vi) Be respectful toward other gardeners; and avoid impeding or damaging their plants and plots.

- vii) Maintain one's own plot. Delegation of gardening (with the exception of the temporary illness, absence, or incapacity of the gardener) may result in the termination of allotment with no refund, in accordance with Section 4.
  - viii) Return the allotted garden box to its original state at the completion of the garden season (March 31<sup>st</sup>). This condition is waived for returning gardeners who have been assured that they may continue with their existing plot.
  - ix) Dispose of organic material in the appropriate receptacle. Weeds, diseased plants, and seeds or seed-bearing plants must be placed in green waste bins; all other material should be added to the compost bin.
  - x) Observe and report any violations to the CP Manager.
- b) A gardener on vacation or otherwise incapacitated may delegate plot maintenance to another person. They must inform the CP Manager of their absence, expected duration, and the name of the person caring for their plot.
  - c) Failure to maintain one's plot will result in termination of the allotment with no refund, in accordance with Section 4, above. The plot will be deemed abandoned and may be allocated to another gardener, or used for a common purpose.

#### 10) Common Plots and Areas

- a) A special plot located at Camp Alex is designated for growing produce to be donated to a local food bank. This will be maintained by a team of volunteers, under the direction of a Team Leader.
- b) A certain number of common plots and produce-sharing plots (for passive harvesting by passers-by in the community) have been, and may be established. It is the responsibility of gardeners to maintain these plots.

#### 11) Master Gardener(s)

- a) The CP Manager, in cooperation with the Master Gardeners Association of British Columbia, may from time-to-time identify one or more Master Gardener(s) to assist in developing the skills of gardeners.
- b) The Master Gardener(s) report directly to the CP Manager; and works with the CP Manager in identifying activities to enhance education and formation.

#### 12) Maintenance and Safety Guidelines for Garden Areas

- a) Gardeners are expected to keep common areas tidy by placing all waste in the appropriate receptacles, returning equipment to the shed, and recoiling the hose.
- b) Nothing permanent may be affixed to garden box (structures, writing etc.); and all other garden objects and decorations must be safe.
- c) Items brought to the garden must leave the garden or be placed in the shed. Unless labeled, anything left in the shed will be considered for common use.
- d) Common areas, including pathways between allotments, must be kept free of any waste. Weeds, bulbs, and seed-bearing products must be placed in the green waste bin; and other garbage removed entirely from the garden area. All other matter should be composted.
- e) Gardeners are expected to inform themselves of appropriate composting procedures, and to follow them. This means keeping diseased and seed-bearing plants and weeds out of the compost; ensuring material is small enough to effectively break down (or is cut up); and helping the decomposition process by keeping the bin moist and the contents regularly turned.

- f) Children under the age of 16 must be supervised, and pets kept on a leash or under the control of their owner at all times.
- g) Failure to maintain the common area will result in termination of allotment with no refund, in accordance with Section 4, above. The plot will be deemed abandoned and may be allocated to another gardener, or used for a common purpose.
- h) All gardeners are expected to monitor the garden site as a whole, and report any concerns about common spaces or individual plots to the CP Manager.

### **General**

#### 13) Use of Alexandra House Facilities and Equipment

- a) Gardeners may use the washrooms located onsite. The passcode will be given to gardeners. Gardeners are requested to walk the perimeter of the field to access the facilities, so as not to disrupt activities at the Camp.
- b) Alex House equipment located outside the garden precincts may be used by gardeners with the permission of the CP Manager or Master Gardener.

#### 14) Complaints

Any complaints concerning another gardener; the maintenance of the garden as a whole; or Alex House policies, procedures, or activities must be made in writing and submitted to the CP Manager. The complainant will be contacted in a timely manner to outline what action (if any) was or will be taken, and the reasons. The decision of the CP Manager is final.

#### 15) Limitation of Liability

By signing the application form, users agree to release Alexandra Neighbourhood House and its employees from all liability relating to injuries that may occur through use or enjoyment of Alexandra Community Garden. Users agree to hold Alexandra Neighbourhood House free from any liability, including financial responsibility for injuries incurred. Users also acknowledge the risks involved in gardening and maintenance; and acknowledge that participation is voluntary, and undertaken with knowledge of the risks. Additionally, users affirm that they know of no medical condition likely to increase the likelihood of experiencing injuries while engaging in this activity. By signing the application form, the applicant and his or her delegates forfeit all right to bring a suit against Alexandra Neighbourhood House for injury or harm incurred while participating in ACG activities. Users agree to make every effort to obey the *Expectations & Guidelines*, and should ask for clarification when needed.