



Earls Colne Allotment Association (ECAA) Rules. (version 1.1 Nov 2011)

In order to ensure the establishment and preservation of the Earls Colne Allotments as a place of recreation and enjoyment to all members, the following rules have been drawn up and must be agreed to by each tenant on application for a plot.

Use and Upkeep of Your Allotment

1. Use the land allocated; wholly or mainly for the production of vegetables, herbs, flowers or fruit crops for consumption by yourself and family, and for no other purpose.
2. Not underlet, assign, or part with possession of the Allotment Garden or of any part thereof without express written consent of the Earls Colne Allotment Association (ECAA).
3. Not sell any produce from the Allotment Gardens (*exchanging unwanted produce with other allotment users is acceptable and encouraged*).
4. Keep your plot clean and free from flowering weeds, in a good state of cultivation and fertility and in good condition throughout the year.
5. Keep all boundaries and adjacent pathways to your plot tidy, and unobstructed.
6. Shall not erect any permanent fences around plot (*raised beds, and stakes for support of vegetation are acceptable*). Temporary fencing may be used (ref points 12 & 13)
7. Not plant any trees, fruit bushes or otherwise, that may in time cast shade over a neighbouring plot (*i.e. these should not exceed a height of 2 metres and should be planted towards the centre of the plot.*)
8. Be mindful of introducing invasive or destructive plants, which could affect neighbouring plots, or cause long term damage to your own plot (in terms of disease, or difficulty in removing). Ensure your seeds and seedlings are from a reliable source (*i.e. are readily in the UK*).

Temporary Structures

9. All structures within your allotment should be of a temporary construction, i.e. should not incorporate concrete or other hard-landscaping materials. All structures should easily be dismantled, without any permanent impact to your plot. Use of old doors or windows is not permissible.
10. In establishing fruit cages, consider the overall look of the structure (*should not be an eye-sore!*) and ensure it is not higher than 2.1metres.
11. Use of large poly tunnels for protection of crops is not permitted, but smaller cloches are acceptable.
12. Ensure the footprint of any shed/greenhouse does not exceed 2.5m x 2m nor 2.1m high – only one such construction is permitted, and shall be well maintained and in keeping with the rest of the Allotment buildings (*i.e. of a "standard" design and painted a shade of brown, green or black*). If also planning a paved or decked area, this should not exceed a footprint of 4m². The combined maximum footprint of any shed and "paved" area should not exceed 9 m².
13. If wishing to establish a pond (*to attract wildlife, such as toads and insects*); it should be sited at least 2metres from any pathway, and to a maximum depth of 0.5m. You must rely solely on rainwater or your water-butt to top-up the pond; water from the communal garden tank may not be used.
14. Only store materials that are to be used within the plot (such as beanpoles, pots, cloches etc). any materials brought on site for construction (timber, paving etc), must be used, or removed from site within 3 months.

Respect for Our Neighbours

15. Be respectful and considerate of other people's enjoyment of the Allotment Garden. Please be mindful of inappropriate language or behaviour (*by you, your family or your friends*) that may cause offence.
 - a. Ensure the noise levels of radios (or other sound systems) are such that you do not disturb other Allotment users.
 - b. If having a BBQ or using a gas stove, ensure that it is fully extinguished before leaving.
 - c. Ensure that any children in the Gardens, are accompanied and supervised by a responsible adult.

Dogs, Animals and Bees

16. You may not keep any livestock animals on the allotments (such as rabbits, chickens, goats, pigs etc)
17. If bringing a dog on to the Allotment site ensure it is kept under control, within your own plot at all times and that any fouling is cleared-up immediately.
18. The placing of beehives in the allotment gardens will be subject to agreement with the ECAA. Hives will need to be kept away from the main plots (e.g. within the community orchard) and numbers will need to be restricted. Proof of competency in handling bees must be provided (*e.g. hold a Bee Keepers Association certificate*). For safety reasons, you should agree to only handling bees when another adult is present.

Site security and our Environment

19. Only be at the Allotment between 7am and 9pm, and then **only** during the hours of day light.
20. You will be issued with one key for the Allotment Gardens; for which a deposit is required; please do not create any duplicate sets. Loss of keys should be reported as soon as possible to a member of the ECAA committee; and you shall be liable for the cost of replacement.
21. Ensure security is maintained by locking the Allotment Garden on leaving the site; and keeping the gate locked if you are working there alone.
22. Respect others' wishes to chemical-free growing, and as such be cautious in the use of any pesticides, such as avoiding spraying on a windy day.
23. Dispose of any waste in the most environmentally friendly way, i.e. set-up and use compost bins for waste vegetation, removing non-compostable waste from the Allotment Garden.
24. No carpets to be used on the plot or surrounding areas. If using carpets for composting, these must not have foam backing (i.e. must not contain rubber, which will contaminate the soil).
25. Use of barbed or razor wire is not permitted within the allotment gardens.
26. Bonfires are only permitted during maintenance days, and will be supervised by the committee / maintenance team.
27. Respect every plot holders right to use the communal water tank, by being considerate in your usage. If you have a shed ensure a water butt is positioned to collect rain water for your plot. Please do not use water from the communal tank to top up a pond.
28. Do not remove any trees, fruits, branches etc from the perimeter fence or any communal areas; nor take away any soil, earth or sand from the Allotment Garden. (*Any fruit from the Communal planting area will be disposed of or shared-out as agreed annually by the ECAA*).
29. Support the ECAA in maintaining the whole area by helping on designated days to maintain the hedges, grass cutting etc as is needed.

Ending Your Agreement

30. Inform the ECAA in writing at anytime you decide to give up your plot. This will formally end the tenancy agreement. No refund will be given for any part of the year remaining.
 - a. Your Membership card and key will need to be returned (and your deposit will be refunded for key).
31. The Parish Council and/or the ECAA may serve notice to end your allotment agreement;
 - a. With a minimum of twelve months notice in writing, OR
 - b. By giving three months notice in writing if the land has been appropriated for another use (building, industrial use, or road / sewer requirements). OR
 - c. By giving one months notice in writing;
 - i. if rents are in arrears by more than 40 days
 - ii. If you have failed to respond to reasonable requests regarding improper use of your plot or inappropriate behaviour within the allotment gardens.
 - iii. If a serious breach of conditions of the allotment agreement has been committed.

Support and Contacts

32. If you are unclear on interpretation of any of the above rules, please contact the allotment Chairman, or member of the committee in the first instance (*e.g. if you are worried about, footprint, height or design of any structures you'd like on your plot*). The committee should be able to advise quickly on any matters.
33. If you have cause for complaint, please contact a member of the Committee as soon as possible; you should reasonably expect that your concerns are dealt with fairly and in a timely manner.
34. Contact details for committee members, will be available on the Earls Colne Parish Council Website, as will latest news and information. An emergency contact number will also be available on the site notice-board.