Constitution and rules of the

RIVELIN VALLEY ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

1. **Name**

   The name of the organisation shall be Rivelin Valley Allotment Society.

2. **Official communications**
   Shall be normally be received and signed for on behalf of the society by the chair or in absence of the chair by the secretary or the treasurer.

3. **Aim of society**
   To promote the pursuit of allotment gardening as recreation and in so doing promoting health,education and creating stronger communities, by assisting all members and the public, particularly within the Rivelin Valley area.

4. **Objectives of society**
   (a) To actively cooperate with community groups and organisations with a view to increasing the uptake of provision of allotments in the Rivelin Valley, by improving standards and facilities.
   (b) To establish a working relationship with the Sheffield City Council that supports their efforts of improving facilities, carrying out essential maintenance, preparation of allotment gardens for letting and producing publicity about availability of plots.
   (c) To participate in early consultation activities in the wider Sheffield allotment community on matters concerning rent, water rates, proposed site changes and reviews of the tenancy agreement and or other general allotment policy and procedures determined by Sheffield City Council.
   (d) To provide adequate secure storage of and administer any distribution service of communal maintenance machinery and equipment including seed and plant swap scheme for members.
   (e) To help new gardeners on site in whatever way is appropriate including providing where possible introductions to a nearby experienced gardeners for practical support and advice during early months of a tenancy.
   (f) To promote where possible good practice in organic gardening.

5. **Powers**
   The society shall have full power to do all things necessary or expedient for the accomplishment of its objectives.

6. **Use of name**
   The name shall be used in all business letters, notices, advertisements and other official publications of the society, payments, cheques and orders for money or good purporting to be signed by or on behalf of the society and in all bills, invoices, receipts and letters of credit of the society.

7. **Membership**
   The society shall consist of tenanted allotments and leisure gardeners from sites within Rivelin Valley and of such other persons as the existing paid-up membership may decide to admit by a consensus vote.

8. **Membership subscriptions**
   Members will be asked to make an annual subscription determined at the AGM and payable on 1st April each year. The treasurer will advise a level of subscription for the current financial year for those present at the AGM to consider and decide.

9. **Cessation of membership**
   A member shall cease to be a member in the following eventualities:

   (a) The member's death
   (b) The member's resignation
   (c) Non-payment of subscription
   (d) The expulsion of a member under section 10 of this constitution.

10. **Expulsion of membership**
    A general meeting may, by a vote of two thirds of the members present and entitled to vote, expel any member for conduct detrimental to the society, provided that a notice specifying the conduct for which it is intended to expel, is sent to the member at the address entered in the register of members at least one calender month prior to the date of the meeting.

11. **List of membership**
    The secretary shall administer the keeping of a membership list that is updated annually in which shall be entered the following.

    (a) Name of the member and plot number
    (b) Date of joining and leaving
    (c) Provided contact details which may include: address, telephone number(s) and email.

    Any member may see the entry in respect to them recorded in the official list of members and in their own interest must notify the membership secretary of any changes to the above.

12. **Governance**

    Governance and decision making of the society shall be vested in the general meeting of members.

13. **Day to day management**
    Day to day management will be the responsibility of the all members elected as the officers of chair, treasurer and secretary. Addendum 1-3 detail the roles and responsibilities of each officer.

14. **Election of officers**
    The officers will be elected from members of the society at the AGM and will take office at the end of the AGM at which elected until the end of the next AGM.

15. **Power of the officers**
    The officers shall have full power to supervise and manage day to day work of the society according to this constitution for the purpose of accomplishing the society's objectives.

16. **Co-option of members**
    Any officer may co-opt any member to assist them in their work. Any co-opted members do not assume power invested in the officers to conduct day to day business of the society.

17. **Attendance of officers**
    Any officer who has failed to attend three GM's in any year for any reasons unacceptable to the members will cease to be an officer.

18. **Removal of officers**
    The members may remove any officer by a simple majority at a GM, following an open discussion of the issues or concerns raised by any member over the day to day running of the society. Members must notify the secretary in writing their concerns, at least 7 days before a GM, so that it can be discussed as an agenda item and allow the officer concerned time to respond.

19. **Mid-term vacancies of officers**
    The members will elect new officers as a vacancy arrives at the next available GM. Where for any reason the treasurer ceases to hold office the members will appoint an acting treasurer and ask the honorary auditor to carry out an interim examination of the financial accounts before the acting treasurer takes up office.

20. **Annual general meetings (AGM)**
    The AGM shall be held soon after the audit of accounts is completed as is convenient, normally the second Sunday in March or a date agreed by members at a GM.

21. Notice of annual general meeting (AGM)

At least seven days' notice in writing will be given of every AGM, stating the business to be transacted. The notice shall be sent to every member at their email address entered in the list of members. No other business than that stated in the notice shall be transacted at the meeting.

22. General meeting (GM)

General meetings will normally be held on the second Sunday of each month or on dates agreed at a GM. The venue and times will be agreed by members at each meeting for the next meeting. The first GM will be convened immediately after the AGM in March as the first meeting of the season. The last GM will be in October each year.

23. Conduct of meetings

Every members present at a GM and not otherwise disqualified shall have on vote and where cotes cast in any matter are equal the chair shall have a casting vote in addition to his/her vote as a member.

24. Presiding officer at general meetings (GM)

At all GM's the chair or a chair elected at a meeting shall preside.

25. Quorum at general meetings (GM)

A quorum at GM's shall consist of 4 members or 25% of the membership whichever is greater.

26. Discussions at meetings

No political or sectarian issues shall be raised or discussed at any society meetings. No tenant or member disputes will be discussed at any open society meetings.

27. Arbitration for disputes

Any disputes between tenants or members shall be referred to the allotment manager at Sheffield City Council for arbitration. Any complaints about officers of the society shall be dealt with by the members by an open discussion. Members must notify the secretary in writing their concerns, at least 7 days before a GM, so that it can be discussed as an agenda item and allow the officer concerned time to respond.

28. Financial records

The treasurer will keep in date order a record of all income and expenditure related to the society's financial transactions. All expenditure must be supported by a supplier's receipt or appropriate voucher which shows the date of expenditure, the total amount and the purpose for which the payment was made. Receipts for membership donation income will be given, recording the date paid, the duration of the membership fee and the name of the member. The receipt will be proof of membership.

29. Banking

The treasurer shall open a cheque book account with a bank or building society in the name of the society. Payments by cheque shall require any of 2 of 3 authorised signatures – chair, treasurer or secretary.

30. Annual accounts format

If no other activity is envisaged then a simple income and expenditure account and a balance sheet will suffice. In the event of other activities needing to be presented separately e.g. shows, trading, then a separate simple sub account may be introduced by the treasurer.

31. Financial reports to membership

The treasurer shall make a verbal or written report at each GM on income, expenditure and liabilities up to the Friday before the meeting. The treasurer verbal financial report shall be recorded in the minutes. The treasurer will make available at any request of a member the most recent bank statement.

32. Special expenditure

When special projects are considered they will be costed as far as possible and the treasurer will advise the membership on possible ways of funding.

33. Presentation of accounts for examination

The treasurer shall close the annual accounts on the 31st December each year and prepare income and expenditure statements and a balance sheet presentation to the honorary auditor by the 15th February. The examined accounts shall be signed by the honorary auditor and the treasurer and circulated as part of the agenda for the society's AGM.

34. Appointment of honorary auditor

The honorary auditor shall be appointed at each AGM and shall hold office until the close of the following AGM

35. Qualifications of honorary auditor

The honorary auditor must not be an officer of the society, but otherwise any person, member or not who has agreed to carry out the duty may be nominated.

36. Approval of audited accounts

The AGM will consider the annual accounts presented by the treasurer and or honorary auditor. Adoptions of the audited accounts will be proposed by a member other than the treasurer or honorary auditor. The honorary auditor may raise at the AGM any financial matters which require the attention of the society.

37. Availability of audited accounts

Any member has the right to request a copy of the adopted audited accounts from the secretary who will provide a copy within 2 weeks of the request.

38. Requests to change constitution rules

Request to change this constitution must be notified to the secretary 7 days prior to a GM.

39. Amendments to this constitution

The rules of this constitution maybe amended by resolution of a three fourths majority of those attending a GM where the request for a change has been made an agenda item by the secretary.

40. Dissolution of the society

The society will be deemed to be dissolved if the members cannot elect or maintain the officers of chair, treasurer and secretary. The society may at any time be dissolved by consent of three fourths of the members, testified by their signatures to an instrument of dissolution. Instructions for dissolution will clearly set out what is to happen to any assets and residua cash after payment of expenses, which are to be transferred to a charitable organisation with similar interests. Cash maybe lodged with the National Society of Allotments and Leisure Gardeners headquarters office and held against any reformation of a successor society.

Revised constitution and rules proposed and approved 12th March 2020