

Constitution for Horfield Organic Community Orchard

Name

1.1 The name of the group is Horfield Organic Community Orchard (hereafter referred to as the group / HOCO).

Aims and Objectives

2.1 HOCO manages an orchard, currently on a Horfield & District Allotment Association site, using organic practices and principles as defined by Garden Organic.

2.2 HOCO aims to educate members, and the wider community, in practical ways to grow fruit on a small-scale in an urban environment.

2.3 HOCO will promote the economic, environmental, nutritional, and social good of growing fruit in community settings. Through this work we seek to bring wellbeing to individuals, and resilience to neighbourhoods and communities in and around Bristol.

2.4 HOCO is a member-led group. Members share collective responsibility for managing all aspects of the orchard and the group.

2.5 HOCO is a not-for-profit community enterprise. Any monies raised through activities and/or fundraising shall be used to further the aims of the group.

2.6 HOCO aims to be an example to, and to work with, other organisations with similar aims, including Avon Organic Group, the group that founded the orchard in 1998.

Membership

3.1 Membership is open to any person on the terms agreed by the Management Committee.

3.2 The Committee shall have the discretion to recommend to the AGM the numbers of members accepted into the group.

3.3 The Committee shall have absolute discretion to accept or reject applications for membership, or to refuse to renew the subscription of a member after considering them in committee. The Committee need not give a reason for refusal of membership.

Management Committee.

4.1 The management of the group shall be a Committee elected annually at the AGM. The Committee shall consist of officers and not more than eight additional members. The role of the Committee is: to oversee the general management of the group; to make decisions on behalf of all members.

4.2 The group has a Chair, to be elected annually at the AGM. The role of the Chair is to ensure: the smooth running of meetings; that decisions are made; and to take on other responsibilities as these arise.

4.3 The group has a Treasurer. The role of the Treasurer is: to oversee the group's money and any payments it makes: to prepare the annual accounts.

4.4 The group has a Secretary. The role of the Secretary is: to keep an accurate record of members; to inform members of planning meetings and the AGM; to take minutes and to circulate these to members. This responsibility can be shared with the Chair.

4.5 Other Committee members can be chosen to manage particular aspects of the orchard and the group.

4.6 The Management Committee shall have the discretion to appoint a Co-ordinator, as a member of the Committee. The role of the Co-ordinator is: to oversee the day-to-day management by members of the orchard; to report regularly to the Management Committee and the members: to communicate the aims and activities of the group to the wider public.

Meetings

5.1 The Management Committee shall meet at such times and places as deemed needed, but not less than 3 times a year. A quorum at committee meetings is three members, which must include at least one officer. Decisions are reached by the majority vote of all members attending.

5.2 The Annual General Meeting will be held once a year to: receive reports on the activities of the past year; receive a statement of accounts; and plan activities for the future. At the AGM all the officers and other members of the Committee shall step down and be eligible for re-election. The quorum at an AGM shall be eight members.

5.3 The secretary shall call a Special General Meeting at the request of the Committee or at the written request of at least eight members.

5.4 At least 7 days before the AGM, or Special General Meeting, a notice of the meeting, and of the business to be conducted shall be sent to every member.

Accidental non-receipt of notice shall not invalidate the proceedings of any General Meeting, or meeting of the Committee.

5.5 At all general meetings and at committee meetings each member has one vote. Decisions are reached by a simple majority of votes by members present. The Chair casts the deciding vote should there be an equal vote.

Finances

6.1 The group has a bank account and has adopted appropriate financial procedures.

6.2 Payments from the account shall need the signatures of two of the Committee.

6.3 The group's financial year shall run from 6 April to 5 April.

Subscriptions

7.1 Group members shall pay an annual subscription. The Committee shall have the discretion to recommend to the AGM the subscription due.

7.2 Annual subscriptions shall be set to meet the basic running costs of the group and the orchard.

Use of Name

8.1 No person other than authorised officers of the group shall use the name, or act on behalf of, or represent, the group by: entering contracts; borrowing, investing, or spending money; selling or supplying produce or services, or any other official business, unless the Committee have first given them specific authority to act on behalf of the group. The authorised officers of the group shall have the discretion to revoke any delegated authority in whole or part.

Changes to Constitution

9.1 These rules may be added to, repealed, or amended by resolution at any Annual or Special General Meeting. Alternatives may be proposed by the Committee, or by not less than eight ordinary members, who shall notify the secretary at least six weeks before the AGM. No alternatives may be adopted unless two thirds of the members present at the meeting vote in favour.

Winding up the Group

10.1 If at any AGM a resolution for the dissolution of the group shall be passed by a two-thirds majority of all members as a result of a postal vote, the Committee shall realise the property of the group and, after discharging all liabilities, donate the remaining funds to Avon Organic Group, or another organisation having similar aims.