

Northern Counties Allotments Association

Managing Finances – Course

Overview

1. Introduction

Managing an Allotment Site can be a challenging prospect but, if done properly, can be very rewarding. Whether you are Self-Managed or just have an Association that represents you and your fellow plot-holders, it doesn't matter, the fundamentals are the same. We have developed a Course to help you Manage Your Allotment Site

If you are Self-Managed then you will probably have an agreement called a Lease or Tenancy Agreement with your Landlord. If you just have an Association without any agreement with your Landlord then certain parts of this overview can be ignored, where this is applicable it is mentioned. The course will give you a basic understanding of Leases and Tenancy Agreements.

The Course is run over a whole day or two half days or in evenings, either you can attend with others at one of our organised courses or we can tailor it to suit your own site and at your convenience. Once you have completed the Course, we will carry out follow up visits to discuss such things as changes to the Rules or Constitutions and many of the other aspects of Allotment Management listed below.

2. Financial Management

This is a separate part, part three, of the Self-Management Course. Whilst it is not necessary to attend the first two parts, it helps a lot if you have.

In this part there will be an overview of basic financial control, how to deal with companies' house, HMRC etc. We will then concentrate on Rent Collections, Membership Lists, and, if you have one, how to control finance in your shop.

You will learn all about Audit Trails, the bits that tie everything together so that your members can see how the money has been spent, who authorised the expenditure and who was paid and where their rents go to!

Some of the areas covered are: -

The Business Plan

You need one of these for the years to come, you will learn the basics of a 5-Year plan

Budgets

You will need a budget – you must be aware of what your income is and what you're going to spend it on

Rents

How do you set your rents, what is included in the rent?

Audit Trail

Receipts, Invoices, Purchase Orders goods receipt notes – how do you connect them all

Financial Control – Reporting

Balance Sheet, Profit and Loss account, End-of-Year statement

Controlling your costs

Utilities, water, insurance, maintenance, capital costs etc

Grant income

Where can you get an income from

Trading

Shop income and expenditure – suppliers, customers etc

The Financial Control course always follows the first two parts of the Self-Management course two weeks later.

3. Ongoing help, mentoring and guidance

We don't believe that you can learn how to manage an Allotment Site in a single course. The NCAA will give you follow-on help for as long as you need it. We will have meetings with your new or existing Committee and help you formulate a plan for the next five years.

Templates are available for rules, constitutions etc, we will help you tailor them to suit your site, ensuring that the documents are robust, fit for purpose and will last for many years. At the same time we monitor changes in legislation and can advise you on the ongoing changes you may need to make to these important documents, both now and in the future.

We can supply templates for the Members Register, Plot Inspection Regimes, Financial Control, Letters for new Tenants and Termination Letters and many more.

If you require, we can attend your Committee and other site meetings, giving you guidance and training on an ongoing basis, maybe even for a year, until you are really confident in managing your site.

Who are we, what do we do.

The Northern Counties Allotments Association (NCAA) seeks to serve the needs of Allotment Tenants, Managers and Landlords in the area bounded by the Yorkshire/Lancashire boundaries to the South, the North Sea to the East and the Cumbrian Coast to the West and Scotland. In terms of community areas this is the Tees Valley, Tyneside, the counties of Durham, Northumberland, Cumbria and Scotland together with the cities, parishes, towns and boroughs in the area.

We aim to assist allotment people with tasks that they may not be familiar with; Self-Management, Fund Raising, Constitutions, Rules for Tenants, guidelines on allotment management and others that occur from time to time like rodent control. Also, the Quarterly Forums allow exchange of ideas, help on horticultural and livestock problems and many other topics.

To see when the next Course is running or to attend one of our other events then go to our website www.ncaa.org.uk. To contact the Secretary: 0793 413 5470 secretary@ncaa.org.uk or the Counties Adviser 0793 291 5768 adviser@ncaa.org.uk.