



Member & Garden Use Guidelines

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Welcome to the Gardens

To complement our bylaws, the Board of Directors of Gardens for Charlestown has assembled these Membership & Garden Use Guidelines (the "Guidelines").

These Guidelines were adopted by the Board at the start of the 2021 season. They are an effort to document some of the policies and practices that have evolved over the years so that we can be transparent and consistent about how we operate as an organization. Further, these Guidelines set expectations regarding garden use. They were created to ensure that everyone can enjoy the garden safely and share in the responsibility of maintaining this beautiful open space.

Membership Guidelines



1. Membership

Criteria for membership is defined by the bylaws. A copy of the bylaws is available on the Gardens' website (www.gardensforcharlestown.org) in the "Members" section.

a. **Membership Terms and Conditions.**

- i. Only one individual per household may be a Member.
- ii. If another individual in the same household as a Member plans on tending a plot on a regular basis, that person is to be listed on the annual membership form as a "Plot Sharer." This applies whether Plot Sharers are a spouse, life partner, sibling, adult child, roommate, or friend; and such persons are also asked to complete and submit a separate annual membership form as Plot Sharer.
- iii. A Member remains in "good standing" by adhering to these Membership Guidelines and—if the Member shares their plot—seeing to it that any Plot Sharer is also adhering to the guidelines.
- iv. If a Member fails to adhere to one or more of the Membership Guidelines, or if any person with whom the Member is sharing a plot fails to adhere to one or more of the Membership Guidelines, the Board may suspend or remove that individual from the membership consistent with the bylaws.
- v. Consistent with the bylaws, a Member must meet all of the requirements for membership, including executing an annual membership form, paying an annual plot fee, and abiding to maintain their membership.

Membership Guidelines



2. Plot Sharing

A Member may add up to two additional persons to their plot as "Plot Sharers," so long as they meet the following conditions:

- Be otherwise eligible to be a Member as outlined in the bylaws (i.e., meet age and residence restrictions); and
- Have executed the Plot Sharer form.

a. Plot Sharing Terms and Conditions.

- i. Plot Sharers are to receive the same communications sent to Members and are welcome to attend all Member events, including the Annual Meeting. Note, however, that at the Annual Meeting only a Member is eligible to vote on membership issues.
- ii. One remains a "Plot Sharer in good standing" by adhering to these guidelines.
- iii. Any volunteer hours contributed by the Plot Sharer accrue to the account of the Member with whom they are sharing a plot, and the Plot Sharer should record them in the volunteer hour tracking system.
- iv. With respect to the use of the patio, any Plot Sharer is welcome to use the patio under the same conditions as the Member with whom they are sharing a plot, but it is the responsibility of the Member to reserve the patio on the calendar, to ensure that the requisite volunteer hours have been performed on behalf of their shared plot, and that the patio has been left in good order.
- v. If a Plot Sharer fails to adhere to one or more of the Membership Guidelines, the Member with whom the person is sharing the plot will be contacted for remediation of the situation. If the situation with the Plot Sharer is not resolved, the Board may terminate the membership of the Member and the Plot Sharer will be ineligible to become a Member at a later date.

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vi. A Plot Sharer can become a Member in one of two ways:

- First, if a Plot Sharer (who does not live in the same household as the Member with whom they share the plot) has been on the waiting list and is assigned a plot.
- Second, if the Member with whom they are sharing the plot transfers membership to them because the Member is no longer able or interested in maintaining their plot.

If a Member transfers their membership to their Plot Sharer, this transfer does not create a vacancy in the membership.

vii. Transfer of membership to a Plot Sharer can take place if the following conditions are met:

- The Plot Sharer must be in good standing for two consecutive seasons.
- For transfers happening at the start of a new season, the Member and Plot Sharer have informed the Clerk (clerk@gardensforcharelstown.org) of transfer when submitting the annual membership form.
- For transfers happening in the season, the member and the Plot Sharer have informed the Clerk of the transfer and the Plot Sharer has executed a membership form.

Garden Use Guidelines



1. Volunteer Commitment

All maintenance, programming, and fundraising is performed by our Members. Every Member is expected to contribute **at least 12 hours per season** maintaining common areas (e.g.: paths, border gardens, patio, trees, lawn, sheds, and tools) or participating in the planning and execution of the garden's events or programs. The volunteer hours requirement can be fulfilled by the Member or by the Plot Sharer(s).

All activities are to be conducted under the direction of a Director or Coordinator, and hours should be recorded using the logging system for volunteers set up for that purpose.

If a Member cannot attend the various monthly cleanups, due to health or schedule conflicts, alternative tasks that may be performed at their convenience can be assigned by the Maintenance or Border Coordinator.

If gardeners do not fulfill their 12 hours of volunteer service, ongoing membership is not guaranteed. The Board will review the circumstances and discuss options with the Member.

2. Individual Use Garden Plots

Individual plots, as delineated by wood or stone boundaries, are intended for the sole use of the assigned Member or Plot Sharers. Other Members, Plot Sharers, and the public are asked not to enter, traverse, or place anything or disturb plants and structures in any individual plot without the permission of the assigned Member.

Members will observe the following guidelines for their individual plots:

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a. **Start and End Date.** Each plot should be planted by the first weekend of June and all annual plantings and structures over 2 feet should be removed or dismantled by the first weekend in November.

b. **Weeding.** Each plot should be weeded regularly--bi-weekly is recommended--as weeds spread quickly throughout the garden. Overripe vegetables should not be left on the vine or ground as they attract rodents.

c. **Hoses.** Hoses may not be run through or over someone else's plot. When done being used, hoses should be emptied of residual water and placed back.

d. **Fences and Borders.** Any new fencing erected around individual plots should be no taller than two feet and fabricated of metal. Fencing supports may be made of wood, metal, or hard plastic. Metal supports should be galvanized or painted black or green. Plastic supports should be painted black or green. Fencing should be freestanding or secured to the soil of the plot; fencing should not be adhered or affixed to the borders.

Bricks, pots, and similar objects should not be placed on top of the borders of each plot.

e. **Light Blocking Structures or Plantings.** Neither structures (trellises or plan supports) nor plantings should be placed in such a way to cast shade on another plot. New or existing plants should be trimmed so that they do not cast shade on another plot.

f. **Encroachment.** Plants that encroach on the common pathways or other plots should be trimmed to remain within the borders of a Member's plot.

g. **Open Flames.** Live fires, including candles and Tiki torches, are not allowed in individual plots or anywhere in the Gardens.

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- h. **Invasive Species.** Gardeners should not plant invasive species, trees, shrubs, or cannabis--see website for a list of prohibited plants.
- i. **Walkways.** Keep walkways adjacent to your plot free of structures, trash, and pots. Members are responsible for weeding the walkways adjacent to their plot.
- j. **Gravel.** Members are asked not to use gravel or small stones in their individual plots.
- k. **Vacating a Plot.** When vacating a plot, it should be left free of structure, plant material, and any walkways/stone unless there is an agreement with the Board Member responsible for plot assignments as to what, if anything should remain.

Absent such an agreement everything must be removed within one week of giving notice to vacate the plot or, if at the end of a season, March 15. If the plot is being vacated mid-season, everything must be removed on or before the date the member intends to vacate.

3. Common Use Garden Areas

Common use garden areas include stone/gravel and grass pathways, as well as border gardens along Main Street, Bunker Hill Street, and Charles Street. Gardeners and the public are welcome to use the pathways during daylight hours for viewing gardens and plant material. Pathways are intended to provide easy access to gardeners to their plots and for hoses to reach individual plots. Border gardens are intended to provide viewing enjoyment for gardeners and the public.

- a. **Pets.** Pets must be leashed at all times. Owners will clean up after their pets and prohibit them from entering plots, urinating on plant material, or otherwise harming plant material, borders, or structures.

The Board reserves the right to limit access to the garden by any pet in the event these rules are not followed.

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- b. **Visitors.** All common areas of the garden are open to the public from dawn to dusk. Visitors and members must ensure that children accompanying them in the garden are supervised by an adult at all times.
- c. **Picking and Cutting.** No picking, cutting, planting, or removing plants or plant material from common border areas without the approval of the Border Coordinator.
- d. **Border Crossings.** Border gardens should not be entered or crossed except where walkway breaks have been established.
- e. **Structures and Signs.** No structures, signs, or other items may be installed in common areas without the approval of the Board. Nothing may be attached to the perimeter fence, gates or trees unless approved by the Board. The Garden does not allow political banners to be placed on fencing, in plots or in common areas.
- f. **Debris and Structures.** Common areas must be kept free of debris and structures.
- g. **Flames and Torches.** No live fires, including candles and Tiki torches, may be installed in common areas.



4. Common Use Garden Structures and Contents

Common use structures include the Tool Shed, Big Shed, and Lattice Shed. Please observe the following guidelines with respect to their use.

- a. **Tools.** Tools that are kept in the Tool Shed are intended for shared use by Members and Plot Sharers only while on the property of Gardens for Charlestown. Common use tools must be cleaned of dirt and debris and return to their designated place in the tool shed after every use. If a tool is broken, it should be left on the counter in the large shed. Maintenance (maintenance@gardensforcharlestown.org) should then be contacted to inform them of the issue.
- b. **Contents of Big Shed.** The refrigerator, books, tables, chairs and other common use items in the Big Shed are for use by Members while on the property of Gardens for Charlestown. All other items intended for garden sponsored events, and stored in the Big Shed, are not for common use.
- c. **Offsite Use of Items.** Requests for use of items in the Big and Tool sheds to be used off-site should be made to the Board of Directors (please contact the Clerk at Clerk@gardensforcharlestown.org).
- d. **Keys.** Keys are to be returned to their original lock boxes after every use. Both garden sheds are to be kept locked when not in active use.
- e. **Storage.** The interior areas of the two garden sheds and the greenhouse are not intended for general or off-season storage use by Members or Plot Sharers.
- f. **Shed Exteriors.** Nothing may be attached to garden structures without the approval of the Board.

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g. **Refrigerator.** The refrigerator may be used to store food and drink items belonging to individual gardeners for the period of one day. This rule does not apply to garden sponsored events.

h. **Food Handling.** No food should be left outside or on the counters of the Big Shed overnight, as this may attract rodents. All debris and garbage should be removed the day of your event.

i. **Use of Supplies.** Cleaning supplies, paper towels, napkins, plastic cutlery, etc., may sometimes be found in the Big Shed. Members and Plot Sharers may use a small, reasonable amount of these items if they are available. Members and Plot Sharers hosting an event on the patio are responsible for providing these items for their event.

j. **Containers and Structures.** Discarded containers, structures or any other non-organic materials should be removed from the garden by the Member or Plot Sharer.

5. Greenhouse.

A **limited amount** of greenhouse space is available for use by individual gardeners on a first come first served basis and is subject to an annual fee set each season by the Board. Each greenhouse gardener is entitled to one bench space. The greenhouse is intended for use during early months of the growing season (April and May) as a means to start seedlings.

a. Permission to use the greenhouse from other than an individual gardener (plants intended for common area use) is subject to approval of the Greenhouse Coordinator.

Garden Use Guidelines



- b. Greenhouse gardeners are allowed to store a limited amount of material for use in the greenhouse provided it has been labelled with the gardener's name and the current year.
- c. All material must be removed from the greenhouse by June 1 with the exception of material to be used the next year by continuing greenhouse participants (for example, pots or bagged soils).
- d. Heating and ventilation equipment will not run past June 1.

6. Garden Patio.

The garden patio area and use of the gas grills is a benefit for Members and Plot Sharers to enjoy. Members may reserve the patio for a private use up to 4 times a season. The length of time is limited to 4 hours per use, not including set-up and take down. Activity on the patio may extend beyond daylight hours, but is subject to a curfew (see b below).

a. **Reserving the Patio.** Members may reserve the patio for a private event once they have participated in 2 cleanups or completed 4 hours of volunteer service for the Gardens. Members may reserve the patio for up to 4 separate events per season totaling no more than 16 hours of use. The patio is reserved by adding the event to the password-protected electronic calendar provided for this purpose on the GfC website.

b. **Hours of Use.** Use of the patio for private events may not start earlier than 8:00 am. Curfew for patio is 10:00 p.m. Noise and music on the patio must be kept to a level that does not disturb neighbors. Music should be shut off at 10:00 p.m. All items used for a private event must be removed by 11:00 p.m. of the same day.

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c. **Grills and Flames.** Gas grills are available for use on the patio. After each use, they should be cleaned and locked. Live fires, including candles, and Tiki torches, are not allowed. Battery or solar powered candles or lights are options when using the patio for personal events.

d. **Post-Use Clean-up.** The patio must be clean and returned to its original condition and personal decorations or table items should be removed immediately after your event. Any damage or broken items should be reported to the Board as soon as possible.

7. Waste.

Members and Plot Sharers must abide by these guidelines and signs posted in the garden regarding the proper disposal of debris and lawn and yard waste.

a. **Individual Plot Waste.** All waste (garden debris, trash, and weeds) from individual plots must be taken out of the garden and disposed of off-site by the Member. No waste from individual plots is to be left in any area of the garden, including those areas that have been designated solely to hold waste from the common areas.

b. **Common Area Waste.** Waste from the common areas or garden cleanups is to be bagged and placed only in those areas designated by the Maintenance or Border Coordinators.

8. No Smoking.

In keeping with Boston Parks regulations, there is no smoking in individual plots or common areas.