Notes of the GAF Open Meeting on Governance 10/4/25

The meeting's aim was to establish the governance issues that allotment association committees would like to see supported by the GAF website. Suggestions were collected from the people came along about what they felt they needed and what documents and ideas they were able to offer to others on the various topics that were raised.

The resulting resources would be used to provide ideas and exemplars of good practice and also serve as a basis for networking. They would be offered for people to use as best suited them rather than as any form of prescription.

The meeting agreed:

a) to the formation of a short-life working party to gather and organise resources and put them on the GAF website for people to access and
b) that a What's App Governance Group should be formed to enable networking.

Topics that were raised during a round robin of everyone who attended the meeting:

Governance Documents Constitutions, Rules, Incorporation (SCIOs, Community Benefit, Registered Societies), **Values and Ethical issues** – What are the committee's aims as to the ethos of their site. Accountability – how constitutions are interpreted and applied - the nature of volunteering. Appropriate training and support for committee members.

Policies: Health and Safety, Risk Assessments, Complaints, Inspections (procedure, seeking feedback effectively and mindfully from plotholders in the first instance) Mental Health and wellbeing, safeguarding (making sure people aren't being bullied or discriminated against), waiting lists.

Communication: Ethos and relationships. Induction for new plotholders, handbooks, newsletters, buddying. On-going engagement of all plotholders, social events. Groups /organisations as plotholders. Document handling (accessibility/length etc). Use of social media (consideration of people without email etc.) Consulting members – use of democratic practices.

Finance, accounting, insurance, raising money- applying for grants etc, Common resources – loos, community spaces, association fees etc.

General Legal: GCC rules and Regs, Community Empowerments Act 2015, Cooperative and Community Benefit Societies Act 2014, Open space insurance advice from ScotGov.

Conflict Resolution: ensuring accountability of committees to their membership, transparency re: committee's actions, complaints procedures, mediation, using appropriate procedures for termination of tenancies that take full account of people's circumstances, countering racism and cronyism etc.

The rich outcomes of this discussion will add to the GAF Growing a Good Allotment Community (GGAC) reflection workshop 11am – 3pm on Saturday May 17th at New Victoria Gardens Allotments.