Triangle Community Garden

Growing Ability Referral and Application Policy and Procedure

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Revision History

Date	Details	Author	Review Due
March 2013	New policy	J Cliff	March 2014
March 2014	Reviewed	Liz McElroy	March 2015
March 2015	Reviewed	Liz McElroy	March 2016
March 2016	Reviewed	Liz McElroy	March 2017
March 2017	Reviewed	Liz McElroy	March 2018
March 2018	Reviewed	Liz McElroy	March 2019
March 2019	Reviewed	Liz McElroy	March 2020
July 2022	Reviewed	V Wyer	July 2022
Sept 2023	Reviewed	V Wyer	Sept 2024
March 2025	Reviewed	V Wyer	March 2026

1. Policy Statement – Purpose and Scope

This policy sets out the arrangements for adults with support needs wishing to join Growing Ability (GA). Whilst this is a Triangle Community Garden (TCG) policy, it is only applicable to Growing Ability and not other sectors of the organisation.

2. Referrals

2.1. In line with TCG's Equality and Diversity Policy, Growing Ability welcomes referrals from all sectors of the community. Referrals are accepted from:

- Professionals – care managers, support workers, GPs etc;
- Family members;
- Individuals via self-referral

3. Procedure for applying

The referral process is as follows:

3.1 The initial step is to contact the Project Manager to arrange a visit;

3.2 If interested, potential gardeners will be invited for a taster session (half day). This is free of charge and allows staff to assess their support needs and suitability, and provides an opportunity for the individual to see if they like Growing Ability;

3.3 Whilst copies of care plans and external risk assessments prior to the visit and taster session are not required (providing the individual is accompanied by a professional or family member), it is helpful if these documents can be available at this stage. If an individual is to attend unaccompanied then a referral form fully completed and signed by a professional will be required before the visit is arranged.

3.4 If a potential gardener is interested and they are considered suitable, a provisional offer of a placement (including the fee to be charged) will be made and the following documentation issued:

- Service user placement contract letter;
- Medical form;
- Confidentiality form;
- Equal Opportunities Form
- Growing Ability Ground Rules
- Referral form to be signed by a professional
- Gardener Agreement;

3.5 Once the above documentation is completed and returned together with copies of the care plan and external risk assessments where appropriate, a firm offer of placement will be made subject to a place being available.

3.6 If a place is not available immediately, the applicant will be placed on a waiting list. Provided there are sufficient applicants, Growing Ability will endeavour to create new sessions to meet demand, until site capacity is reached. New sessions will normally be created in September to facilitate coordination with changes in gardeners' other activities eg sessions at North Herts College. Existing gardeners will also have the opportunity to change session times at this point.

3.7 New gardeners will attend a 4 week probationary period, for which fees will be charged, where their level of support needs and suitability will be confirmed. Occasionally the probationary period could be extended by Growing Ability if no definite decision has been made on the support needs or suitability.

3.8 Subject to Growing Ability staff being confident that an individual is suitable and that the staff can meet the individual's support needs, confirmation of a placement will be issued. Where an individual is not assessed as suitable, feedback will be provided. Where suitable but more support is needed this will be discussed with the referrer as this will affect the cost of the placement.

3.9 Where a referrer is unsatisfied with the conduct or outcome of the referral process then they should initially address their concerns to the Project Manager in accordance with TCG's Complaints and Compliments Policy (but note Para 6 below).

4. Charges

4.1. Charges for Growing Ability are based on the level of support required by each individual and therefore the number of individuals who can be supervised in one group.

4.2. Current charges are published from time to time and are normally reviewed with effect from 1 April each year.

4.3. Unless Growing Ability has external funding for a particular project, all placements must be paid for in full in some way eg:

- Personalised budget
- Direct payment
- Self-funding
- Other means

4.4. Detailed charging arrangements are set out in the Placement Contract letter. All sessions are to be paid for whether attended or not and there is a one month notice period to terminate the contract during which charges must be paid. Individuals attending are requested to pay **monthly in advance** of attendance via standing order.

4.5. Current charges per 2.5 hour session are:

- Low support need £31.50
- Medium support need £47.25
- High support need £75.60 (this figure is based on Growing Ability recruiting and paying for 1:1 support for the individual **whilst on site.** In the event that it is not possible to recruit such support or that commissioners wanted the individual to work 1:1 with a member of GA staff then the cost would be £121 per session).

4.6 Where Medium or High Support Need individuals are accompanied by their own support worker(s) **who is/are deemed by GA staff to be willing and able to take an active part in supporting during the session,** then the charge will be £31.50 (ie as for a low support need gardener).

4.7 Individuals whose attendance is directly commissioned by Herts County Council (HCC) – ie those do not pay via direct payments or independent service funds - are subject to fee rates set by HCC which may differ from the above.

5. Assessment of level of support needs

5.1. It is critical that potential gardeners' support needs are assessed by the experienced staff team at GA on the basis of the likely level of support required in the project / open air / horticultural environment of the project whilst taking into account, but not constrained by, external care plan / risk assessments / other information.

5.2. GA assesses support needs across four main areas – safety, physical including sensory support, social need, and motivational support.

5.3. The levels of support are defined as follows:

Low Support Needs:

- No risk of leaving the project / work area;
- Requires little or no direct supervision to undertake a task from start to finish;
- Some prompting of appropriate / best way of working;
- Wears appropriate work clothing and works safely;
- Can work in a group of between 1:4 and 1:6 staff ratio;
- Does not rely on staff or volunteers for social interaction.

Medium Support Needs:

- Moderate risk of leaving the project / work area;
- Requires supervision to undertake a task from start to finish;
- Prompting for each step of the best way of working;
- Prompted to wear appropriate work clothing and may not be able to work safely;
- Can work in a group of between 1:2 and 1:4 staff ratio;
- May require some support from staff or volunteers for social interaction.

High Support Needs:

- High risk of leaving the project / work area;
- Cannot undertake a task alone from start to finish;
- Prompting for all steps of the best ways of working;
- Prompted to wear appropriate work clothing and possible assistance required in putting clothing on;
- Will not be able to work safely unsupervised;
- Can only work in a group of between 1:1 and 1:2 staff ratio
- Will require support from staff and volunteers for social interaction.

5.4 Whilst the level of supervision required will vary with different tasks, the above scale of care requirements constitutes an average across a range of tasks. The assessment of individuals into one of the above categories remains the sole right of GA.

5.5 GA does not provide personal care (eg toileting support) for individuals. Any individual attending who requires such support will need to be accompanied by a support worker who is appropriately qualified / accredited.

5.6 GA does not provide transport to and from the project or support for individuals to travel to and from the project.

6. Refusal or withdrawal of service

6.1. GA will work with service commissioners to ensure that all individuals are suitably placed and supported, however GA retains the right to refuse or withdraw a service to any individual in the following circumstances:

- After assessment it is believed that the person would be at high risk at GA to themselves, the general public, other gardeners, volunteers or staff;
- The service would not / no longer meets their needs;
- The environment is / has become unsuitable for them.

7. Contact details

The up to date contact details for Growing Ability are always available on the website – www.trianglegarden.org/contact-us and in all current publications.

8. Publication

- This policy will be available at Ransom's Pavilion, and on the Triangle Garden website: www.trianglegarden.org. It is available on request in hard copy – please email info@trianglegarden.org or write to Triangle Community Garden, c/o Hitchin Initiative, 1A Churchyard, Hitchin SG5 1HR.
- Current and new members of staff, GA volunteers, service users and trustees will be made aware of its existence and any revisions made.