



Communication Policy

(primarily for Trustees, but also for plotholders)

The Tenancy Agreement

It is really important as Trustees / Committee Members that we lead by example. Please ensure that you regularly familiarise yourself with the wording of the Tenancy Agreement and follow all aspects of it.

Communication

(whether with fellow committee members, plotholders or members of the public)

To Plotholders who have email addresses

If an email is being sent to more than one plotholder, the email addresses should be put in the BCC box. Emails should only be sent through the bustardthorpeallotments@gmail.com email account, unless they are regarding lettings or the waiting list when the Lettings Officer will use the bustardthorpelettings@gmail.com email account.

To Plotholders who do not have email addresses

It is important that if any email is sent to all plotholders with email addresses, that the same information is either posted to plotholders, or posted on the noticeboard by the shop on site.

Committee communications

Inevitably there may well be communications which don't involve all committee members, in such a situation it is important that the outcome is shared with all members of the committee by email, e.g. the purchase of a large piece of equipment. This can be done through the minutes of the subsequent committee meeting.



Email Etiquette tips:

Some of this also applies to other forms of electronic communication such as texts or WhatsApp.

The Process

- Answer swiftly even if it is just to acknowledge receipt and indicate that you will reply in full later.
- Do not overuse the high priority option - avoid using URGENT and IMPORTANT.
- Don't send or forward emails containing libelous, defamatory, offensive, racist or obscene remarks, chain letters.
- If uncertain, use a more third-party, formal approach - informality can be misunderstood, e.g. write it as if it was a traditional letter with the salutation being 'Dear' rather than 'Hi', avoid using emojis, '!' and abbreviations.
- If sending an email on a new topic do not use a previously sent or received email and Reply or Reply All. Start afresh with a new list of recipients and subject title.

Email Addresses

- If the **Reply All** facility is used, it is worth checking the email addresses which will receive your replying email, to ensure that the new message is sent only to the intended recipients. Also, check the email addresses and do not presume that the previous sender had all the email addresses correct.
- When sending emails to all Bustardthorpe plot holder email addresses, if **bounce-back emails** are received as a result, contact using a different method, e.g. message to a mobile phone number, to get the erroneous email address corrected for replacement on the Association database of plot holders.

The Structure

- Start by making sure that the subject is meaningful, summarises the content of the email and where relevant include the plot number and surname of the tenant.
- Don't leave out the message thread of previous emails on the same subject, it allows the reader to read in context.
- Use cc: field sparingly and be sure that you actually want all recipients to receive the email if you select **Reply to All**.

The Content - *to enable you to get your message across in a way that the recipient can easily understand and read*

- Write it as if it was a traditional letter on paper. i.e. start with 'Dear' and end with something like 'With kind regards', 'Best Wishes' or some such.
- Use proper spelling, grammar, paragraph breaks & punctuation and take care with abbreviations and emoticons.
- Ensure that there are no more than 5-6 lines of text in a paragraph and put a line of space between paragraphs.
- The complete email should be readable on one screen without scrolling, otherwise it is too long.
- Be concise and to the point - avoid long sentences.
- Use proper structure and layout.
- Do not write in CAPITALS.

Bustardthorpe Allotments Association Charitable Incorporated Organisation (BAACIO)

Bishopthorpe Road, York, North Yorkshire, YO23 2QA

Registered Charity No: 1211930



Email Footers

If at the end of a received email you see wording similar to:

Sent from Samsung Mobile on O2

This indicates that the sender composed and sent the email on their mobile phone and it would be worth bearing this in mind when reading it as typing text on a mobile phone is not as easy as on a tablet, laptop or computer.

Finally, and most importantly:

- before sending it read the email through again from beginning to end as if you were receiving the email from someone you did not know.
Please remember that you should be able to say face to face what you have put in your email without either person feeling uncomfortable.
- If in any doubt, save it as a draft and come back to it afresh.

Data Protection

Association Responsibilities

Association Membership Database retention

Only the Site Secretary can amend the Association Membership Database (AMD). The Treasurer has access to a sub-set of data during the rent collection period, and the Lettings Officer has a version which also links into the waiting list database. All out of date versions must be deleted if electronic or shredded if in paper form. An abridged plot number, name and mobile phone number only hard copy is left in the shop out of sight.

Association Membership Database retention

When a plotholder leaves or details change the master database should be updated and previous versions, both original and copies, both .PDF and hard must be deleted or destroyed.

Tenancy Invoice retention

At the beginning of each year any hard copy documents of personal data, eg. New Tenant Application forms should be shredded.

Plotholder Responsibilities

Throughout the year, plotholders must ensure that they inform the Site Secretary of any changes in their name or contact information, whether change of postal address, email or telephone numbers.



Appendix 1 - The Nolan Principles

(The 7 principles of public life)

1. Selflessness - Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.
2. Integrity - Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.
3. Objectivity - Holders of public office must act and take decision impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
4. Accountability - Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.
5. Openness - Holder of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.
6. Honesty - Holders of public office should be truthful.
7. Leadership - Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/the-7-principles-of-public-life/the-7-principles-of-public-life--2>

*Reviewed by: Jo Rogers,
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