DRAFT

Brighton and Hove Allotment Federation

Development Fund Machinery and Equipment

Criteria for grants to be awarded.

The Federation committee is very keen to use the Development Fund to make Allotment Gardening an easier and better experience. We are also keen to see an increased sense of “ownership” of common areas. Committee members will be very pleased to discuss these criteria verbally and support members with making applications. We will also support the formation of site organizations to own pieces of equipment, including funding the production of publicity to create such organizations.

If you are applying for a piece of equipment we will need to know about

Purpose: The Federation Committee need to know why the piece of equipment is needed at the particular site. The answer may be obvious (“We need a hedge trimmer because we’ve got lots of hedges along the haulage ways”) but it must be given.

Access: The Committee need to know that the equipment will be available to all plot holders on the site. This might mean that a number of trained people are prepared to use the equipment on behalf of plotholders. It might mean that training will be offered to anybody who wants to use the equipment. We need to know that the equipment will be adequately advertised as available and contact details to get hold of it will be published.

The Committee will also want any equipment to be available to suitably trained and experienced federation members at other sites, or available for any practical projects undertaken by the Federation itself.

Sustainability: The Committee do not feel that there are sufficient funds to purchase and replace equipment indefinitely. There should be some way of collecting money for the use of the equipment to save towards its maintenance and eventual replacement. This can include charges to other sites and to the Federation itself.

Safety: The Committee needs to be assured that due diligence will be taken in regard to health and safety procedures. Arrangements need to be made for personal protective equipment to be bought and distributed with the equipment.

Ownership: The equipment must be purchased for and on behalf of the site. There must be some organised group of plotholders, preferably an Association or Society, who own the equipment. The organisation can be relatively informal but it must be open to all site members to join.

Storage: The committee need to know where the equipment will be stored and what arrangements will be made in the event of a person storing it leaving the allotment site.

Insurance: The equipment must be insured against theft. This may be as an extension to somebody’s personal household insurance.

Appropriate use:  
The committee will need some evidence that the site members are aware of the limitations of any equipment. For example a line trimmer (standard strimmer) is not appropriate for clearing bramble patches. Misuse of equipment will certainly reduce its functional life and may be dangerous.

Environmental

Concerns: At present most hand-held equipment operates on two-stroke engines. These generate more pollution than four-stroke engines. It is debatable whether electric equipment is any better for the environment (the original source of energy used to re-charge electrical equipment, and the eventual disposal of dead batteries may outweigh any immediate benefits in emissions). The Committee will want to know that these issues have been considered.

There is also a potential issue of noise pollution. The Committee will want to know what consideration has been given to other plot-holders who may be disturbed by the use of the equipment. We do consider that Allotments are light agricultural sites and that the noise of light agricultural machinery is to be expected. However we are also aware that plotholders view the peace of the allotments as a precious part of their experience. We will want to know that some consideration has been given to these issues. (The answer may just be “We don’t expect to use it that often”).

RH 21/11/13