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"Security at the Front Gate"
Please ensure that you
close and lock the gate
when you enter or leave
the site.

Covid-19 - How it still affects us!

Editor: Mike McNamara - E14

Covid-19 (Coronavirus)

New rules will come into force on December 2nd. As far as we understand (at the time of writing), visiting Allotments will still be allowed. However, there is still a need to be aware of all the new restrictions and rules concerning the ongoing current health crisis.

We advise all plot holders to protect their hands when touching the gate/padlock when entering/leaving the site – please use the bin bag by the gate to dispose of used gloves/masks.

Plot holders must **NOT** wash their hands (or any of their tools) in the water tanks around the site. Please use your own container/bucket for this. The latest updated (December) advice can be found at...

National Allotment Society - Covid 19 Emergency Measures

UK.GOV - Coronavirus (COVID-19): what you need to do

Notices

AGM - Report – As we have not been able to hold an AGM this year due to the Corona Virus Pandemic restrictions, the Allotment Association has put together a report on 2020. You can find this on page 3/4 of this month's newsletter.

Plot Numbers – It is a requirement of the Tenants Agreement that all plots be numbered correctly and it is the responsibility of the tenant to do this.

From our last plot inspection we noticed that a number of plots remain un-numbered. Please number your plot.

December - Some To Do's

December brings us to the end of the calendar year. Have a think about the growing successes of the past year and maybe some of failures and what to do about them. With that in mind, here are some jobs that for this month.

- · Keep harvesting Brussel sprouts, check the stakes are firm
- Harvest Winter Cabbage regularly, depending on variety they can remain in the ground for months
- Parsnips and Leeks can remain in the ground to be lifted as needed.
- Continue to dig over cleared plots and cover with well-rotted manure where needed
- Continue to dig a Runner Bean trench & fill with kitchen waste, then cover with soil
- December is a good time to have a clear out of that shed and clean up the tools ready for next season
- Now is also a good time to carry out any structural changes you make want to make to you plot and will provide some good exercise to keep you warm during the shortened cold days
- More tips at <u>Allotments & Gardens</u> and <u>Gardeners World</u>

"What's to grow next season? Now is the time to start planning your next sowings – use our guide on page three"



Chairman's End of Year Report – 2020

With the absence of an AGM this year your committee thought it would provide the tenants with a brief report on activities on the site over the last year or so.

Covid aside it has been a challenging year for the allotmenteer with heavy rains in the Spring followed by prolonged drought during the summer. There were many issues with the water with demand outstripping supply. A lesson for the future, try and avoid the popular times in the evening to do your watering as these hot summers could well become the norm.

The flooding at the beginning of the year emphasised the urgency in sorting out the drainage by the main gate. This work is integrated with the work on the pond but due to the Covid epidemic and the subsequent disruption to council finances this work has been postponed.

The road repairs still went ahead in September with the emphasis on repairing the area by the gate and raising the road level to help alleviate the flooding on the adjacent plots. This appears to have been successful. Work was also carried out on J row which takes a high proportion of the traffic on the site.

Please remember to keep to the site speed limit of 5 MPH. Speed is one factor that has a detrimental impact on the condition of the roads.

A big thanks to the 35 people who turned up to help, a record turnout. A BBQ was held afterwards on the Launchpad plot.

The bees are now firmly established on site and having them on site is a benefit to all of us. Steve Cook oversees this project and it has been a tremendous success. The bees are now settling down for the winter and will begin their foraging in the Spring .There are now 5 bee keepers on site and 12 hives. There should be another 2 bee keepers joining the group next year. If any tenant is interested in bee keeping please contact Steve via the usual E mail address.

With the Covid restrictions the Launchpad project came to a halt as we could no longer receive corporate volunteers on to the site. With produce in the ground and a polytunnel full of tomatoes, Peppers and other produce we had to rely on tenant volunteers to keep the project going and continue with our weekly deliveries to the Readifood food bank in Boulton Road. I would like to thank Mike, The two Teresa's and Lewis for the help with the watering during those baking hot summer days. We are looking for more volunteers to help out with this project, even if you can only spare a few hours per week we would welcome your input.

Site security has been an issue this year. The determined thieves will always get in as they simply cut through the fence, usually in the same area along Town Lane. We plan to strengthen the perimeter in this area and hopefully make life a bit more difficult for these individuals.

Petty pilfering has continued this year and sadly it is being committed by someone who has a key probably a tenant or an ex tenant. We are determined to catch this person and cameras have been have been placed at various locations around the site. It is a matter of time and a bit of luck on our part.



A handy guide for Sowing & Harvesting



Click on these for larger version

"Site Security is important for all of us.

Please lock the gate when you enter or leave the site.

Also don't leave highvalue items in your plot shed"

End of Year Report – 2020 Cont.

If you have anything stolen it is important that you report it straight away as we may well have a camera close to your plot. On behalf of all the tenants I would like to thank Ian for his work in maintaining the cameras. A new lock for the main gate is on the agenda and hopefully will be approved by the council in December. This lock will be more secure and the keys cannot be copied.

The new web site is up and running with our on line shop. All items for sale raise money for association funds. Please try and support this enterprise and help us to fund future projects that will improve the site.

As the year draws to an end, I would like to thank my fellow committee members for their commitment over the last year. We have managed to hold our committee meetings

Other Items - Continued

Allotment Waiting List – The site continues to attract interest with the waiting list now standing at **63**.

Plot Inspections – Another inspection was recently carried out and further plots have been identified as unused. This will result in more plots being allocated to new tenants and reduce our growing waiting list.

Lauchpad – Looking for a couple of volunteers to help with digging over part of the plot as not corporate volunteers due to Covid restrictions, let us know if you can help via the normal email.

For Sale - 10 large 15 litre water bottles for sale at £3.00/ each. Contact andy.parts@hotmail.co.uk

Allotment Committee Secretary Post

Duties will include:

- Attend Allotment Committee Meetings
- Create Minutes noting actions and follow-ups to be taken of all Meetings & Circulate to committee members
- Act as an additional liaison with Woodley Town Council for allotment letting/waiting list and other committee related items
- Create Agenda's for upcoming meetings, based on follow-ups/feedback from previous meetings and any new items
- Create Agenda for AGM, based on follow-ups/feedback from previous meetings and any new items
- Liaise with the Newsletter & Website Editor and with the Facebook group.

If you are interested, please contact us via the normal email.

either on site or in the local pub and, despite the challenging conditions, have carried on a normal representing our fellow tenant's interests.

Allotment Association Financial Statement (Abridged)

| Opening balance as at January 2019 | £1,370.64 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|
| Income up to 30/11/20 | £3,143.13 |
| | £4,513.77 |
| Expenditure up to 30/11/20 | £1,362.97 |
| Closing balance as at 30/11/20 | £3,150.80 |

Full details will be published via a Special Bulletin

Other Accounts Changes:

- New Lloyds Bank account opened.
- Signatories changed one removed, one added
- Internet banking set up for Treasurer & 2 x other committee members.
- New savings account opened for project money to be put aside.
- To date we have also received £20.99 from our recently launched website shop.



Paths Between Plots – As a reminder to all plot holders, please keep the paths between plots free of all items. They are not there to dump weeds and other items on. Let's keep the place tidy please.

Our Contact Details

If you have any suggestions for items that you would like to see covered in further editions of this newsletter, please do contact us at:

readingrdallotments@hotmail.co.uk