

Wendover Ashbrook Allotment Association Limited

Newsletter – April 2015

Hopefully April showers will have arrived by the time you receive this copy of the Newsletter, which I started early in the month. We seem to have been stuck in a spell of dry and windy weather for several weeks now.

MANAGEMENT

We have a change of leadership of the Land Management Group, following the resignation of Mark Pearson from this role as he will shortly be leaving the neighbourhood. My thanks to Mark for his efforts in helping us manage the allocation of tenancies and monitor plot and site condition.

Our Secretary, John Currell, has stepped into the breach and taken on the job of heading up this group. He reports that all the plots are currently tenanted and we have a healthy waiting list of prospective new plot-holders.

The group will continue to survey the site several times during the season, endeavouring to ensure that on each plot:

- There is an adequate level of cultivation – at least 70% cultivated,
- All paths & hedges are being kept in a reasonable state,
- Seeding grasses and weeds are being properly controlled,
- There is no accumulation of rubbish and no dangerous or inappropriate structures or items.

Where plot maintenance is found to consistently have fallen below acceptable standards we will endeavour to contact the tenant to discuss the situation. Clearly there could be many reasons why a tenant is apparently struggling with a plot. Hopefully, with mutual understanding and, where appropriate, support from the Group, it will often be possible to rectify the situation. However, when the problems persist, it might be necessary to ask the tenant to reduce the size of their holding or, in extremis, to terminate the tenancy. It would be inappropriate to allow plots to become unkempt and a nuisance to neighbouring tenants, when we have a significant waiting list.

You will have noticed that three additional water tanks have been located on the main drive. Thanks to Peter Lockett for sourcing the tanks and arranging for the installation of the additional pipe-work. Thanks also to Francis Biggerstaff, Reg Woodward and John Elliot for helping with the installation. Please don't use the tanks to wash tools or vegetables as we don't want them to accumulate mud and debris. Also please take care not to contaminate the tank water with fertilisers or pesticides.

MAINTENANCE

Mowing of the central areas has now commenced and a mowing rota has been prepared and distributed by Keith Waterman. Following the success of the honesty manure heap we have arranged for some more manure to be delivered over the next few days. Thanks to Andrew Gardner for arranging this. Users of the honesty heap should fill in details of manure collected and arrange to pay Neville Morton at the rate of £1 per load as before. Those who have outstanding payments for manure collected earlier should contact Neville, or any Committee Member and settle up.

The Committee do not intend that further bulk deliveries of manure will be made until the end of the growing season. Individuals may arrange their own deliveries of manure, as before, but it is

important that consideration is given to the condition of the roadway if the weather is wet; and any manure dumped on the paths or other common areas must be cleared without delay. We also ask that drivers using the central roadway to deliver plants, tools etc to their plots should unload and then park their vehicle in the car park.

After requests from plot-holders, the Committee has agreed to make some equipment available for loan. Francis Biggerstaff has agreed to arrange for a shed to be erected, close to the garage, to house a mower and a rotavator for general use. Those interested should contact Francis or me to make arrangements and receive basic instruction in equipment operation.

OTHER NEWS

The allotments are a wonderful resource and many of us like to bring our dogs along for the walk and allow our children to help and benefit from the experience. Unfortunately, in my experience, the children soon lose interest when the weather is cold and wet. As a serious point, however, please make sure that dogs are kept on leads and children do not stray into trouble or run around the site.

On a lighter note, Derek Patton, who organised the bonfire party last year, has volunteered to arrange a series of Saturday socials based on coffee mornings with plant swaps.

The events will be between **10am and Noon** outside the garage on the following days (generally the 2nd Saturday each month):

- **May 9th**
- **June 13th**
- **July 11th**
- **August 8th**
- **September 26th – which will probably be Rent Day**

So make a note in your diary - come along and have a chat, make new acquaintances and, perhaps, pick up some unfamiliar plants to grow on your plot. Derek would welcome more helpers to join the social group – particularly from the Aylesbury end of the site. If you think that you can help – even occasionally - please contact Derek at: 01296 623624 - derekpatton@email.com

I have two additional requests for help from you; First, we are still in desperate need of help with the **website** – wendoverashbrookallotments.weebly.com - There is not too much work involved, but we need someone with IT experience and confidence. If you are interested please let me know. Secondly, to help the formal running of the Association, we have a vacancy for an independent **lay auditor** to inspect our annual accounts.

The next Committee Meeting will be held on the 29th of June 2015. Please let the Secretary or me know if you have any items you would like to be considered for discussion.

I hope you all have a great growing season this year and enjoy your allotments.

Bob Bulpett

robert.bulpett@yahoo.com