

## Wendover Ashbrook Allotment Association

### Newsletter – Autumn 2018

We are approaching the end of another allotment year, and looking back it has certainly been challenging. We had a long winter, leaving sodden ground in March & April, a small window of opportunity to get things going in May, followed by desert conditions in June & July, when very little prospered. Hopefully people, and especially new starters, will not be disheartened and inclined to give up because of this year's experience. As we know it is usually much better than this!

There were some good outcomes from the hot and dry weather; the grass didn't need much attention, very few annual weeds germinated and the slug damage was much reduced. In fact my spuds and carrots, though less in quantity, were generally free from holes and taste fine. Tomatoes and sweet-corn were excellent and the beans and brassicas were kept alive by watering.

### MANAGEMENT

Our secretary, John Currell, manages the allotments and, among other things, organises the regular plot inspections, the register of tenants and the allocation of plots to new tenants.

As we are approaching rent day, John would like to hear from you as soon as possible if you are considering giving up your plot or downsizing. We are at full occupancy and have a short waiting list of keen new allotmenters hoping to join us. Additionally, if you would like to move to a different plot or take on more space, please contact John who will try to accommodate you.

Please note that **RENT DAY** this year will be on **Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> September** and Neville Morton will be at the allotment garage to receive your payments between 9:30 and 12:30. We have decided that the rent for 2018-2019 will remain at £2.00 per pole so please, if possible, bring the correct money.

John has also asked that you check to see you have responded to his request that you formally consent to your personal contact details being held by the Association. This is to comply with the soon to be enforced 'General Data Protection Regulations'. If you fail to do this we will not be able to contact you.

### SITE MAINTENANCE

Our allotment site generally looks in good condition and many plots have been, or are in the process of being, cleared and tidied ready for the next growing season.

The volunteer mowing team, organised by Keith Waterman, has not had to work too hard this year, but their contribution to maintaining the central driveway and grass parking area is much appreciated.

The work of maintaining the Associations mowers, rotavator and trimmers is carried out by Francis Biggerstaff and Robin Beattie, who also tidy up badly neglected plots and will offer advice and support on practical matters. If you don't have your own mower remember you can borrow one to help you keep the paths around your plot in good condition. A small donation is welcomed to cover the cost of fuel and machine maintenance.

Francis and Robin will also give advice on suitability and location of proposed new structures such as; greenhouses, sheds, water-butts and other gardening features including trees and potentially large fruit bushes. This is to avoid future conflict with neighbouring plots and to keep within our local rules on permitted materials and structures.

Boundaries and hedges are generally in good condition and at this time of year we can consider tidying them up, as birds will not be nesting. Please don't do this without discussing with Robin or Frances. It is essential that our boundary hedge adjoining the field is maintained at a sensible height, for example two metres. There are a couple of areas where it is currently too low and very insubstantial, this has reduced its effect as a wind barrier for adjacent plots and also its deterrent to sheep, which can easily jump the wire fence along the field edge, as observed today.

On a brighter note, we still have some manure on our communal heaps and this must be used up before we can restock. The price remains at £1 per barrow load (wheelbarrow available by each heap). This is the time of year to gain maximum benefit from spreading it on your plots. In the next few weeks we hope to arrange further deliveries before the weather changes and the central path will be closed over the winter to prevent damage by the heavy tractor and trailer.

### WEBSITE and NOTICEBOARDS

The website ([wendoverashbrookallotments.weebly.com](http://wendoverashbrookallotments.weebly.com)), maintained by Rebecca Miller, is a great source of helpful information about our allotment association; with recipes, tips on allotment growing (contributed by John Marshall) and a number of useful links to other sites.

The website forum, which is intended to provide ongoing contact and discussion, is under development and our secretary will shortly provide details of the new system by group email.

The notice boards are used to post contact information, copies of our regulations and details of upcoming events.

### SOCIAL EVENTS

'Social Saturdays' involving cups of tea and coffee together with delicious cakes and bacon butties were arranged by Derek Patton. During his summer holiday, Gayani Wren stepped in to keep us going with food and drink to facilitate lots of very useful discussion about plants, the weather and other important allotment issues.

### MEETINGS

The next Committee Meeting will be held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> of October. Please let the Secretary or me know if you have any items you would like to be brought to the attention of the committee.

The shareholders **Annual General Meeting 2018** will be held in the Library Rooms at 7:30pm on Friday the 30<sup>th</sup> of November. All ploholders are invited to attend but only shareholders are entitled to contribute to discussion and vote on any matters during the initial, formal, part of the meeting. This will be followed by a social event with wine and nibbles.

Bob Bulpett – Chairman WAAA (12/09/2018)

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