

Western Wards Allotment Association

Salisbury Site Managers

Robin Green email - robin.green505@gmail.com

Martin Wheeler e mail – firefly21@hotmail.com

10th March 2022

Salisbury Green Allotment Site – a 2022 spring season update

Dear Plot Holder,

In my diary, Sunday 20th March is the first day of the spring season. After the recent severe winter storms, it's good to see so many of you tidying up the site and starting to cultivate your plots ready for spring planting. Martin and I are very sorry that many of you suffered damage to greenhouses and sheds during storm EUNICE. The high winds completely demolished two greenhouses but the majority suffered some damage to one or more glass panes.

To welcome the spring season, a **second social gathering** has been arranged at the Cricket Club on **Saturday 19th March 2022 between 4pm and 6pm**. All will be very welcome for a social drink and Martin and I will be available to answer questions about site projects and anything else you may care to ask. I am sure you will wish to say hello to friends and exchange good planting ideas with fellow plot holders. Many thanks to Hazel Oliphant, the cricket club secretary and plot holder for 36A(1) for hosting the event.

Other allotment matters of interest are as follows:-

1. WWAA - Annual General Meeting (AGM) 2020

The WWAA AGM 2021 took place on Thursday 22nd January 2022 at St Mary's Church Rooms, Warsash. It was good to see so many of you there. Whilst there were no nominations received for the role of WWAA Chairman, the Chair of Trustees Richard Bastow has kindly stepped in to fill the gap until a new management committee Chairman is appointed. Treasurer Paul Rann (Warsash plot holder) and the Hon. Secretary, our own Julie Prescott (Salisbury Green Plot 35A (2)) will continue in their roles.

Martin (Plot 8 A(1)) and I (Plot 32B) will continue to serve in our voluntary roles as site managers at Salisbury Green for a further year.

It is intended that the draft minutes of the AGM will be published on <https://www.wwaa.org.uk/new/>.

2. Vacancy for WWAA Chairman

The Western Wards Allotment Association continues to be very successful with our five sites fully occupied and more people always wanting to come and experience the pleasure of working the land and meeting like-minded people.

The Association operates with a board of trustees and a management team, all of whom are volunteers and we are looking for more people to come and join us.

At the moment, we have a vacancy for a Chair for the Association. The Chair's role is to guide and lead the association so we are always delivering for our plot holders and if you are interested in finding out more about this role or any of our roles please contact your site manager, the Treasurer or Secretary.

3. Experimental Outdoor Eco Composting Toilet

Martin and I have been concerned for some time that there are no toilet facilities at Sarisbury Green. The nearest public toilets are some distance away. After investigating proposals, Sarisbury Green site has been chosen by the WWAA management committee to purchase an 'experimental outdoor eco composting toilet facility' manufactured by Dunster House. The cost of £1299 plus additional building costs were part funded by a grant from Hampshire County Council of £1,000. For those who might be interested, the Dunster House range of eco toilets can be found at https://dunsterhouse.co.uk/eco_toilets. We expect delivery of the 'self build components' on 22nd March 2022 and it is intended to trial the facility on Plot 31A. If the experiment proves successful, we will apply for a second composting toilet to be installed at the north end of the allotment site.

4. Plot Vacancies and waiting list

Following project work carried out by managers and Mr Ben Spraggon, the volunteer digger driver, over the winter, **one vacant plot 9B(2)** will be made available on the Sarisbury Green site. The plot will be offered to the first name on the waiting list.

There are 20 persons on the 'Sarisbury Green allotment site waiting list', some of whom have been waiting for nearly two years. Under the circumstances, the waiting list has been closed until there are further vacancies occurring, but the names of ten further 'interested persons' are being recorded.

5. Water and Water Butts

I am pleased to report that the water supply will be turned back on 1st April 2022.

Please inspect your hosepipes feeding water butts to ensure there are no leaks especially where they have become inadvertently buried in the ground. Water is now the most expensive resource we use.

In relation to water butts on plots, most have no 'cover' over them. In the warmer weather, birds tend to perch on the edges of the water butt in an attempt to drink or bathe their feathers. Unfortunately, some drown in the attempt. To protect birds, it would be good practice to place a cover over the top of water butt using simple wire mesh, a piece of board or, if you have one, a purpose made cover.

6. WWAA - Affiliation to the Royal Horticultural Society

We would remind tenants that the WWAA as an organisation is affiliated to the RHS. An RHS Affiliated Society Garden Entry Card has been issued to the WWAA which gives a 30% reduction on the entry fee for one person and a guest to one of the following RHS Gardens:-

- Wisley; Hyde Hall, Essex;
- Harlow Carr, North Yorks;
- Rosemoor Devon.

If any WWAA member wishes to make use of the card (you need to show it when you arrive at the venues), contact John Parsons at the Trading Hut and he will make it available. John's telephone number is 01329 665008.

Following a recent newsletter from the RHS, there are proposals to organise a WWAA coach day trip to an RHS venue. Details will follow in due course and will be subject to demand.

7. Fareham in Bloom Competition

During 2019, Sarisbury Green Allotment Site was judged as part of Fareham in Bloom competition and, for the first time, I was delighted when the site was awarded a Gold Award. Disappointingly, the competition was cancelled in 2020 and 2021 and we hope that we can repeat our 2019 success in 2022.

I am sure that there will be one or two plot holders who will separately apply to have their plots judged and the process for application can be found on

https://www.fareham.gov.uk/leisure/open_spaces/fareham_in_bloom/farehaminbloom.aspx.

8. Local Horticultural and other Shows

Sadly and due to the coronavirus pandemic, local horticultural and other community events were cancelled in 2020 and 2021. However, I have been advised that:-

- Warsash 'Plant Sale' will be held at Victory Hall on Saturday 7th May 2022;
- Sarisbury 'Show on the Green' (at which the WWAA will have a stand) on Saturday 11th June 2022
- Sarisbury Community Centre Horticultural Show date to be advised.

These events are a bit of fun after a difficult two years and an opportunity to socialise. It would be good to see some Sarisbury Green plot holders' exhibit their flower arrangements or vegetables for judging at the Sarisbury Horticultural event. We have done very well in past years.

9. Health and Safety on Site

I am sure you will all agree that it is important for the site to be as safe as possible. In recent times, two plot holders we know about have tripped and fallen where there are deep gaps between paths and cultivated ground. These can trip the unwary and need to be filled in with soil to avoid causing injury.

10. The WWAA Jim Lett 'Trading Hut' at Hunts Pond Road

The Trading Hut is open on Sundays from 10.00am until 12.00 noon. The shop is stocked with a good range of products at very cost effective prices for WWAA members. Keep in touch with the shop opening and the range of products available at <https://www.wwaa.org.uk/new/> and follow the link to the Trading Hut.

11. 'Allotment Road' - Facebook

I am amazed that we have so many members using our 'Allotment Road' Facebook account. Clearly, there are a lot of non plot holders interested in what we do. Many thanks to Abigail Harrison Plot 31B for the work she does moderating the account. Abigail may be contacted for guidance on abigail.attic@gmail.com.

12. The WWAA website - <https://www.wwaa.org.uk/new/>

The WWAA website administrator is Rona Neilson. She works very hard to maintain the website on our behalf. If you have any photographs or items of interest which can be published on the website, Rona would be pleased to hear from you. Rona can be contacted using the email on the website 'Contact Us'.

13. Dave, the Scrap Metal Man

As most of you are aware, we use a scrap metal merchant 'Dave' telephone number 07772 609679 to collect and dispose of unwanted metals from the site. He collects on request and is very reliable. He also offers the supply of 'water butts' and 'incinerator bins' for a reasonable cost and will deliver.

14. Farewell to Ray Smith - Plot 8b (2)

Ray Smith who has been a plot holder at Sarisbury Green for some 33 years has decided to 'hang up his boots' and retire from allotment plot keeping. We thank Ray for his loyalty and hard work over many years and wish him well in the future.

15. Thank you

Finally, Martin and I in our site management roles would like to thank all of you who have provided lots of practical support with projects and general maintenance. It is much appreciated and the site looks a great deal better for it.

Martin and I will be carrying out our seasonal inspection this month to ensure we are complying with the tenancy requirements of the Fareham Borough Council as owners of the land. After the damaging storms and winter months, I am sure plot holders will wish to tidy up and prepare for spring and the Fareham in Bloom competition.

For our part, we will continue to do whatever we can to ensure Sarisbury Green Allotment site is a safe, secure, well maintained and a productive site for current and future plot holders.

Happy allotment keeping and best wishes,

Robin Green (32B) and Martin Wheeler (8A1)
Joint Site Managers