

NEWS DIARY SPRING 2016

Apologies for the March/April newsletter being late but rather like Spring it took a while to arrive. After that cold wet period produce is finally catching up to the calendar. Let's hope things continue to improve.

Padlocks

Some of you may have seen the combination lock on the Netley Road gate. These are Marine grade locks that we hope will withstand the rigours of the English weather. At the committee meeting on the 12th May, we have secured total funding from the WWA to replace all the gate padlocks, as the current ones are failing, some have already been replaced with the combination type.

We anticipate that all the gate padlocks will be replaced by, or shortly after rent renewal on 1st October 2016.

Mower Sheds

The roofs of two of the mower sheds have been repaired which should improve the reliability of the petrol mowers. We also have an additional shed donated by a plot holder who did not require it for himself. Padlocks will be fitted to all mower sheds. Keys for the sheds will be obtained from the site managers and training will be given on the usage of the mowers. A £10.00 fee will be charged for each key. This will help to offset the rising cost of mower repairs and replacements. For those not wishing to use the petrol mower a generator will be available (the siting of which is yet to be decided as we only have one) for plot holders wishing to bring their electric mowers/strimmers onto site; the same charge will apply for a key and again training will be available.

Vacant Plots

This season a lot of plots have become available due to people retiring, relocating etc. The waiting list is very low so if you have your eye on a particular plot or would like additional space now is a good time to get it. Contact your site manager stating your requirement and your name and plot number will be put on the addition list to make the allocation of space fair and transparent. The condition of peoples' current plot will be taken into account before extra space is provided.

Bonfires

We recently had a complaint about a bonfire on the allotment from a neighbouring property. Our neighbour complained that smoke was being blown into his property and he had to close all the windows and doors. It transpired that the offending bonfire had been burning Leylandii trimmings, unusual waste for an allotment. Please check your tenancy agreement for guidance on burning waste. This is not the first complaint we have had on bonfires. For every complaint we receive, there are ten or more sent to Fareham Council. Bonfires are a good way of controlling pests and disposing of waste as well as a source of potash. We do not want to lose this valuable amenity.

Parking across Gates

There has been an issue with cars being parked across the access gates making entry/exit difficult, particularly with wheelbarrows and trailers. This is a particular problem at the southern end of the site. Plot holders have suggested putting signs on the gates asking people not to block the gates and this is being looked into. The problem is that the worst offenders are probably the plot holders themselves. If you do park across the gate perhaps you could put a card on the dashboard with your plot number on, so folk can find you if they need to get in the gate. Not sure if the signs will work but we will trial the gates that are the worst affected.

Drainage

Please find attached the proposal for a drainage scheme to help ease the flooding. Flooding has been an issue for many years and last winter was particularly bad. We feel now that action must be taken and want to put drainage into the worst affected areas as a trial. The WWAA committee have agreed to fund the cost of materials, but the whole scheme is based on volunteer labour. The work is to be carried out during September/October 2016 and before the monsoon starts, hopefully. If you can spare a few hours or have experience/expertise in land drainage please get in touch. We can't do it without you.

Security

Most of you will have heard about the break-ins and vandalism suffered by some plot holders recently. The thieves seem to be looking for petrol driven small appliances and fuel. It is recommended that you do not keep these in your shed unless it is very sound and secure.

Children's Competition

We will be running a competition for plot holders' children. **Make an Animal from vegetables.** This was suggested from a plot holder, more details soon.

Social Events

Several folk have enquired about any social events that may be held. Over the last couple of years we have had outdoor talks and social events, but traditionally there does not seem to be much of an appetite for any activity at HPR other than cultivation. Plot holders come and go but maybe today allotmenters are a bit friendlier. If you are interested in a social event please give us your ideas. Someone suggested a hog roast; we have a venue in mind but it would need to be well supported, more details later if viable.

If you have any suggestions or ideas that you think would work at HPR they would be most welcome.

As always, we value your comments.

Martin Barnett rows 1-13

Keith Johnson rows 14-27

Alastair Burnett rows 28-40