

Western Wards Allotment Association

Salisbury Site Managers

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Salisbury Allotment Site – A Spring Update

Dear Plot Holder,

Good to see the Spring weather finally arrive and some drier conditions to work at the allotment!

David and I are publishing the Spring Newsletter to bring you up to date with some developments which have taken place over the winter months and some which will take place during Spring.

Vacant Plots

As I write to you, the number of vacant plots at Salisbury has been halved in the past few months. There are currently just **3** vacant plots available. There is no 'waiting list' and we would be pleased to receive any enquiries from interested persons.

Vacant plots currently include 1A, 14B and 19A (1). To improve their appearance and attract potential lease holders, the weeds and grass on 1A have been recently 'strimmed' and arrangements made for rubbish to be cleared. We intend to do the same on 14B.

New Plot Holders

We welcome to the Salisbury Allotment Site some new plot holders who have joined us since the publication of my last newsletter:

Ian and Sonya POWER - Plot 13B;

Lisa LACEY – Plot 22A;

Sarah HOOK – Plot 24A;

Rob LOMER – Plot 25A;

James FEWINGS – Plot 25B;

John HOOKER – Plot 28B (1).

Plot 32A - Church of England Junior School, Allotment Road

During the winter months, arrangements have been made for the Head Master of the Junior School in Allotment Road to adopt Plot 32A on behalf of the school. Plot holders in the vicinity of Plot 32A were consulted about the proposal and were supportive of the initiative. The WWAA and Council officers have been advised.

The work to improve the vacant plot has been undertaken by Mr Ben Kimble (Plot 30B). He is the link with the school's 'pupil gardening club' and the Parent Teacher Association. Pupils will, in small numbers and under his and teaching staff supervision, undertake planting and maintenance processes later in the Spring. Ben tells me that local businesses have provided some practical sponsorship. Risk assessments will be prepared. Access for pupils will be limited to the nearest wicket gate.

WWAA Marketing Initiative

David and I are pleased to support the recently formed WWAA Marketing Committee. This is chaired by Bob Hughes and includes Martin Barnett (Hunts Pond Road) who leads on marketing for the WWAA, representatives of the WWAA allotment sites including me, Rona Neilson and Keith Taylor who maintain and develop the WWAA website and Abigail Harrison a Graphic Designer (Sarisbury Plot 31B). A marketing strategy has been developed to attract future plot holders to allotment keeping from the local community by highlighting the benefits, promoting health and exercise, maintaining the environment and providing education and social benefits.

As a first step, the marketing committee has arranged to take part in a display of community activities at Locks Heath Shopping Centre on Saturday 14th April 2018 between 10am and 5pm. It is intended to establish a small display stand attended by WWAA members to answer questions. WWAA marketing literature will be made available to interested persons, which will include a QR code. (for those like me who have never used a QR code, it is a small square bar code for interested persons to scan into their phones to navigate to websites.) A new 'landing page' has been included in the website to receive QR code enquiries.

Depending on the success of the initiative, future local events are being considered. The support of plot holders at the event will be welcomed.

Review of the Site

David and I have recently carried out a review of the entire site prior to a formal Council inspection. It is that time of the growing year again when I need to draw the attention of all plot holders to a number of key issues in the tenancy agreement.

1. All plots should have a notice clearly indicating their plot number.
2. Grass edges to path ways should be adequately maintained. Where plots have an adjacent hedge, this should be kept trimmed. (We are particularly concerned where grass edges have not been trimmed and maintained. Long grass often conceals holes or obstacles to trip the unwary. This could result in serious injury through trips and falls and I am anxious that persons who walk along grass pathways are kept safe.)
3. Allotments should be clean, free of pernicious weeds and in a good condition, with at least four fifths of the overall plot in cultivation.
4. Plots should not be used to deposit any refuse, or unwanted waste.

Grass Cutting equipment

Where mechanical equipment is needed to cut or 'strim' grass, it will be made available through one of the key holders to the container which are listed on the door. Otherwise, please contact either of us by e mail and we will arrange access and issue.

Hunts Pond Road Allotment Site (HPR)

The HPR site has recently experienced the night time theft of items of machinery by breaking into plot holders sheds. There is no reason to believe that Sarisbury will be subject to a similar attack but plot holders are invited to review their security and the risks involved in keeping machinery on site.

Bee Keeping (Barnes Lane side of the Allotment Site)

I am pleased to advise that Andy Nelson (Plot 10B1) is undertaking his bee keeping course and soon due to complete it. He is currently renovating the bee keeping area close to Barnes Lane and later in the Spring introducing a swarm of bees to the hive. The location has Council approval.

Andy has asked that if anyone has an enquiry regarding the site or bees to get in touch with him on 01489 575280 or his e mail andy64msg@gmail.com.

Bay Leaves

Amy Chandler keeps Plot 9A1 on which are mature bay trees. She has recently trimmed the trees and there are bay leaves available for anyone who would like them. She invites plot holders to help themselves.

Thank you

Finally, David and I in our site management roles would like to thank all of you who have provided practical support to us. It is much appreciated.

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

Best wishes,

Robin GREEN (Plot 32B) and David WHITLOCK (Plot 9B)