

North Hainault Allotment Holders Association & Protection Society Ltd

Spring Newsletter

March 2009

Registered office: 31b Tomswood Hill, Barkingside, Essex IG6 2HL FSA ref 9792

Welcome to our Spring newsletter

As I write this, my spuds are chitting and I am eagerly waiting to get sowing my seeds ready for the new season. I look forward to seeing you soon.

The Editor

News from the AGM

Many thanks to all of you who attended our AGM in November, and also to Norman and Eileen Hagger for providing the seasonal refreshments.

The existing committee were all re-elected and the major roles are listed in our contact section at the back of this newsletter. Thanks were given to all committee members for their hard work over the past year in fighting the council sell off proposals.

Following changes to FSA rules, as we have a turnover of less than £100,000 per year, it is no longer compulsory for us to submit audited accounts to the FSA. It was proposed and agreed that we stop doing this. We will however continue to audit for our own peace of mind. The committee has always spent what funds it has with the interests of the Association in mind. We are in a very lucky position at the moment in having funds to deal with the maintenance and replacement of equipment and premises to keep us going for several years more and we think carefully about how we spend this money.

It was also proposed that we ask for ideas in the newsletter for seed varieties to be ordered. It is too late for this year, the order had already been placed, but we would certainly do this in time for any future orders. In the meantime, we do use your feedback when we place orders, so it shouldn't be too far adrift.

We were able to tell everyone the very good news that both sites were almost full. New North Road had only one full and two half plots still available. Tomswood Hill has some derelict plots to clear and a waiting list, so was 98% full. **Both sites are now full with waiting lists.**

Copies of the annual accounts are in the Trading Huts should you wish to read them. Please pass any questions onto your Plot Secretary, Wendy or Anne.

- Thefts
- Trading Hut update
- Thank you
- Water & manure
- Competition time!
- Ilford Horticultural Club
- Vehicle access
- Rubbish – rules and responsibilities
- Local site news
- Latest contact list

Reminder of annual charges

Rent per rod: £2.10 full or
£1.70 reduced

Water per rod: £1.80

Subscription £2

ie a 10 rod plot is £42 pa and
a 5 rod plot is £22.50

Associate membership £1

As we have several new ploholders, I have repeated some information from previous editions to make sure that everyone is up to date.

The Editor

Thefts

We have suffered from several thefts in recent weeks at both sites. Both trading huts have been targeted resulting in the theft of several items of machinery. Several plot holders' own tool boxes have also been raided again with the loss of machinery.

Unfortunately the insurance purchased by the Association covers the property, shop stock and communal tools and equipment only. Plot holders own equipment is held on site at your own risk.

Please ensure you notify your plot secretary of changes of phone numbers. After the recent burglaries at both sites, contacting victims was impossible due to the lack of updated information.



Trading Hut News

Our Trading Huts have re-opened for the season with a varied selection of seeds, onion sets, seed potatoes, fertilisers, canes, netting and other horticultural supplies. They are open on Sundays from 10-12am. We try to offer a good selection and be competitive on prices. If you can't see what you want to buy in our hut, please let us know and *if possible*, we will get it as soon as we can put a viable order in.

We still have some seed potatoes at £2.50 per 3kg, but please hurry before we sell out.

Don't forget, if you have too many seeds of one variety, try swapping them with your fellow plot holders. Not only does this get you trying new varieties, but it helps you to get to know more people on site.

Do you have a neighbour, friend or family member who would benefit from getting their supplies from us? Tell them about the shop and encourage them to become honorary members for just £1 per annum.

Thank you

A big, big thank you to everyone who has volunteered to help with the myriad of background jobs that go with managing such busy sites. There are too many of you to mention personally, but I would like to list as much of what you have achieved as I can remember. If I've forgotten something, please forgive me.

Here goes: mowing the paths; helping new neighbours with clearing their plots; tidying up the car parks; planting and trimming hedges; installing fencing; repairing plumbing; bagging up shop supplies; unloading shop deliveries; helping other plot holders with deliveries of big bags to their plots; clearing derelict plots; opening up paths; removing rubbish dumped over the fence; planting up unsold bulbs to sell on as plants; clearing up the shops; making signs; attending council meetings; repairing windows; maintaining the communal equipment; attending our meetings; advertising our plots!

Manure

We have several local stables delivering manure to both site car parks. Please take what you can use. Remember though that it is for use on the plots and not to be taken home for the garden!



Water

All plot holders pay the same water rate, regardless of how much or little you use. While the majority of you are sensible in how you water, some were still overwatering last year which is a waste of time and effort. Please remember that once the plants are established, watering once a week is usually fine, daily bucket chains are NOT necessary! We know who the culprits are and will be checking this more thoroughly this year.



May I also remind you that hoses are not allowed on the sites, except where a proven disability has given you exemption, and even then, there are restrictions as to how they may be used. They should also be disconnected when not in use to avoid contamination of the water supply with stagnant water. This is why most of the taps have been removed.

Vehicle access to plots

Vehicle access along the paths is allowed when ground conditions are suitable, for the loading and unloading of heavy loads and/or where there are issues of physical disability to be considered. Not all paths are suitable for vehicular access and damage to plots has been evident from time to time in the past.

Competition time

Last year I proposed that we have our own competition and asked for a volunteer to organise it. I was dismayed that nobody rose to the challenge. Maybe you thought about it but felt it needed someone with more horticultural experience? I'm sure we can organise a judge or two, what we need is someone to set the date, drum up the support, decide on the categories and make sure that everyone is there on the day. In short a good organiser..... is that you?



Ilford Horticultural Club

This lively club organises talks for local gardeners at the Fullwell Cross Library in Barkingside. Their annual membership is very reasonable at £8 per year but they always welcome visitors to their meetings at £1.50 per person. We have put a list of their dates in both huts but thought you might be particularly interested in their May 27th talk on the 'humble spud'.

Rubbish

You've all done really well in clearing up the plots and several people have kindly volunteered to help clear the car parks and empty plots, so that both sites are looking so much better. We know that several new plot holders have inherited and dealt with some pretty nasty collections, especially residual carpet, and they cannot be expected to overcome these problems without assistance.

Now that the bulk of this has been dealt with, we thought it was a good time to confirm what arrangements and responsibilities there are for dealing with rubbish on site from now on.

- **All green waste is your responsibility to compost or remove as you see fit.** If you have too much to cope with, it can be taken to the Sunday collection point at the Fullwell Cross council car park or to the depot on Chigwell Road. At Tomswood we do not have a communal compost area. At New North there was one but it has been regularly misused and is no longer available. Please see page 5 for more details.
- **The council has in the recent past, supplied us with two skips each year for dealing with other waste.** When the need arises we pay for more skips to be delivered. This is for non-compostable waste from within the site – not for items brought from home. We will try to let you know when they are due so that you can make use of them.
- **The car parks are for parking, they are not waste sites.** There was a lot of broken glass and wire to deal with after the December skip delivery to the Tomswood site that would damage tyres. We have spent a great deal of time clearing this up and it is nearly fit to safely park along the entire length of it. We do not want to have to do this again! If there is not a skip there, please keep your waste at the end of your plot until one arrives, or remove it yourself. Plus, if we leave stuff there it encourages members of the public to dump over our fence and we want to deter this.
- It is your personal choice how you deal with weed control on your plot, so long as it does not cause a nuisance to your (largely organic) neighbours. Some of you opt to use carpet, but please remember that it is your responsibility to remove it from the site when you no longer need it. If there is a skip available, then please use it, but please put the carpet in yourself and not leave it for someone else to lift it in. Several large rolls were left by the skip that had to be cut up before Diane and Anne could get them in.

Stop Press

Since this newsletter was written, we have had a skip delivered to Fullwell Avenue primarily to take the carpet from some newly let derelict plots. One skip has proved not to be enough and we need another. That's fair enough.

Unfortunately some of you thought that it would be ok to dump other rubbish around the skip. Now we cannot get access to tow the skip away and we have the job of clearing other people's rubbish – again! Please be more considerate in future.

What's on my patch?

New North Road

I would like to wish all our members at New North Road a very happy and productive new season. A sincere and warm welcome to our new members and I look forward to seeing you soon, digging and preparing your plots for a glorious harvest later in the season.

Brian and Jim have been working very hard to improve our site. Brian has carried out extensive work at the bottom end of the allotment clearing two virtually abandoned plots which some of you had decided was the extension of the compost heap. As a result of all the hard labour it has been decided by the committee, that all compostable vegetation must be the responsibility of the plot holder and either composted on owners' plots or taken away and disposed of outside of the allotment. Brian has also undertaken considerable work on the main gate and increased the height to deter would be thieves and trespassers.

Disposing of rubbish or vegetation is no longer permitted on our site at what was the compost heap. Members found contravening this rule will be requested to leave the allotment.

Lastly, I want to remind everyone that Rule 3 and Rule 5 on membership cards **are to be strictly adhered to** and if not, Rule 16 will be applied. If you are unsure what these are, refer to your membership card. If you have lost your membership card, then you need a new one and should speak to me as soon as possible.

I hope that my comments won't leave you with the impression that the committee is being too authoritarian in its approach to our members. It's certainly not that. The enforcement of our rules has become necessary because the selfish actions of a few have resulted in the loss of cultivable plots and has made our site look untidy and uncared for.

I hope to see you all soon and as Alan Titchmarsh would say, enjoy your allotment. (Well, he said enjoy your garden, but what does he know!)

Wendy

Tomswood Hill

Let's admit it, our trading hut is getting pretty shabby. Norman and Terry have checked it over and reckon that although there are some parts of the timber that need replacing, the windows and roof are in good repair, what it really needs is a lick of paint. Would you be able to spare a hand with this? Since starting to write this, we have had to install a new door after burglars damaged the old one stealing all our trimmers and that's really shown up how bad the rest of the hut is.

We are also proposing to install more water butts underneath the guttering on the shed and adjacent buildings. These will then be linked via a pump to supplement the main water tank network when needed.

The rest of the site is looking really good for the time of year, and we know that you're all itching to get started with the new crops, so we look forward to seeing you soon.

Anne



Tomswood Memorial Garden Plot

Work is still progressing slowly here. I am installing a path around a central square to bring some structure to the newly cleared end of the plot. If you can help with any spare paving stones or bricks to finish the new path that would be great. Also, if you have any plants you are removing from your gardens that I could make use of, please let me know.

Diane

Contacts

Management committee

David Sevant	Chair
Ken Coe	Secretary
Norman Hagger	Treasurer

New North Road

Plot Lettings Secretary	Wendy Rowe
Plot Stewards	Wendy Rowe
	Brian Watkins
	Jim Smith
Garden Plot & newsletter	

Tomswood Hill

Anne Sevant
Terry Byrne
Norman Hagger
Diane Meakin