



West Wickham Allotments Ltd

www.wwallotments.org.uk

Newsletter – June 2023

From our Chairperson



Tony is away so we look forward to hearing from him next time.

Notes from the Trading Shed

We finally have some sunshine to encourage our baby plants but it's a shame about the cold northerly wind howling across the allotment site.



Nothing new to report from the Trading Shed except to say that we have our normal stock of net, Enviromesh and Tendermesh to protect your crops.

Talk to the very knowledgeable people in the shop on a Sunday morning if you're unsure what to buy.

We still have some onion sets in the shop and the very last of the potatoes are waiting to go in the ground - now at 20p a bag. There must be someone out there who needs another row of spuds!

Thanks to everyone who helps out with the shop and if you'd like to put your name forward just let us know. We still need more volunteers to help with deliveries - the more helpers, the fewer bags of compost each person needs to lug into the shed or off the lorry.

Liz and Viv

Topical Tips from Paul

Paul is away for a well-deserved holiday but we have some interesting items from Committee Members Gareth Sharpe, Peter Eustace and Judith Holder.



Grass Cutting

The cutting of the grass paths between plots has been well underway over the last month or so as it has been wet and warm, conditions conducive to grass growth. The cutting team of 20 volunteers have, in addition to working on their plots, regularly cut the paths in and around the allotment; the Committee is extremely grateful for their time and commitment to this task. Almost 2 years ago, we purchased 2 battery operated mowers and installed recharging facilities in the mowing shed. They have proved to be a great investment for the future as we move away from a reliance on heavy, cumbersome petrol mowers.



As a consequence, the take up of female members offering their help in mowing the paths with these lighter mowers has increased - which is great!

In the meantime one of our new committee members, Ian, has been very active and successful in selling our old petrol operated machinery so boosting our accounts. Well done Ian.

If any plot holder is concerned about the state of the paths near their plot then please message me on 07445 776156.

Finally, it would help the path cutting team if plot holders cut their own internal edges regularly so that boundaries are clearly defined and keep the adjacent paths clear of discarded items including debris which can damage the cutting blades.

Many thanks

Gareth

Maintenance team.

Every now and then you'll see the odd person walking around fixing taps, mending wheel barrows, painting the toilets and doing odd jobs. This is the volunteer maintenance team. We are always looking for more volunteers to join us either long term or on an ad hoc basis as keeping the site up to scratch is a big job!



BTW - on a Social Note - the next Social Sunday will be on Sunday 18th June. Bacon rolls, veggie sausages, tea and coffee 1030 until 1200.

Peter

It's great to see the site looking so well used by all the plot holders and when Paul (Lettings Officer) did his recent inspection he reported how well the site was looking. It is worth reminding everyone that the reason that we were able to keep the fees so reasonable for the plots is because of the work the Committee and volunteers put in for free. When you see the mowing, the maintenance, removal of rubbish and the stocking of the Trading Shed it's all because of the work and time put in by the volunteers.

The water costs have been increasing and I would ask everyone please to ensure that taps are turned off when not in use and any leaking taps reported to a Committee member or on the WhatsApp group - every little helps!

We have been struggling with the restocking of the Trading Shed with the numbers of volunteers dwindling and it would be a shame if we had to stop stocking bulky items because of the lack of support. So if Liz and Viv ask for help it would be good if we all did a turn and not leave it to the few stalwarts who have been supporting this. The Committee are making huge efforts to try and get more plot holders involved as we emerge from the Covid years when we were not being able to do as much as we wanted to as a community.

We are converting plot A13 (by the Shed) into a communal area and we are looking to offer bacon rolls and coffee/tea once a month on a Sunday - the next Sunday will be June 18th. Please support this as it helps with both fund raising and getting to know fellow plot holders and using the Trading Shed.

We have been experimenting with placing both bark and manure on the communal areas for use by all and this seems to have been well received and we will continue with this - for free!

The potato planting competition is in full swing and we await the results with huge interest!!

We put a minimal mark up on all goods in the Shed as we don't have the overheads the garden centres have to cover so, before you wander to Coolings or Dobbie's, take a look on a Sunday between 10.30am and 12.30pm at what is on offer - I think you will be pleasantly surprised by the variety and the costs.

Finally, don't forget the plant sales on a Sunday - thanks to Ian and Paul the strong plants are very reasonably priced as we use the stock from the shed to grow them to keep down costs. They do this voluntarily and we all benefit from the super variety that they produce.

Judith - (Treasurer!)



From the Secretary's desk

At last summer seems to be on the doorstep! Thank you to Paul and Ian for all the plants that are being sold at the Trading Shed.

You will notice around the allotments numbered metre-square black patches which are hiding places for invertebrates and have been placed on our allotment as part of Bromley idverde's new research. Please let me know (wwalsecretary@gmail.com) if you see anything hiding

underneath as I have a spreadsheet to fill-in and return at the end of the year. Thank you. Adam the knife/tool sharpener's visit was a great success, if you wish to have him on site at the Allotments towards the end of the year please let me know.

We have had some school trips on the site recently and nursery children will be attending later in the summer. If you are free at any time to help with this, please let me know. 50 Year 5 children from a local primary school came for a trip to the allotments They were very interested in all the plants growing although it was a little early in the season. They surveyed what the most prolific plants growing were (Rhubarb won) and drew lovely sketches of the plants. See photo below.

Tickets are on sale in the Trading Shed for our most enjoyable allotment barbecue on 16th July. It's a great afternoon. Adults £8, children over 12 years old £2.00 under 12 are free.

The WhatsApp group seems to be providing lots of information that we are sharing amongst ourselves. This is a really good place to find out tips and the latest news so please join up. Either search for our site on WhatsApp or scan the QR code in the Trading Shed.

Daniel, a local tree surgeon, has been delivering good quality wood chips to our site. However, someone has dumped a lot of garden rubbish on the same area, this could easily have spoilt a facility that we are lucky to have. Thank you to Doug who cleared away lots of the rubbish. Please do take your rubbish home and dispose of it at the tip. Please always **CLOSE THE ENTRANCE GATES AFTER YOURSELVES**. If you are awaiting a delivery this is just as important so that an opportunistic person does not drive in and dump their rubbish. Sorry to moan but **please escort all children when on site to the toilets**. I have had to clean both containers that have been filled with inappropriate items so they had become unusable - not a very pleasant job.

After that cri de coeur! I wish you all a productive and happy summer.

Viv

