

January 2008 Newsletter

Welcome to the new style newsletter. Please let us have your views and suggestions for future monthly editions.

Committee News

It has been a very busy few weeks for the Committee. At the end of last year we received a complaint from one of the members and, while looking into the issues, it became obvious that some of the current procedures need to be revised. This work is underway and proposed changes will be publicised at the next AGM.

In taking advice from the National Allotment Society we were told that our Rules (constitution) and Bylaws were in need of revision too. So we have been hard at work on these matters.

Changes to the Constitution and Bylaws must be voted upon by members at a General Meeting and, as the Annual General Meeting is on 24th April, it is proposed that these two documents will be major agenda items. In order to give everyone concerned time to consider the proposed changes a completely revised set of Rules and a slightly revised set of Bylaws will be sent out to all members during the week beginning 21st March.

There are currently 8 members of the committee:

Marie Baker John Bolas
Dave Cox Ron Hale
Peter Leadbeater Graham Porter
Ralph Pursell Peter Toogood

The newest member of the Committee, Marie Baker, has been appointed by the Committee as secretary to the Society. (This is an interim measure until the AGM.) Please make contact on 01908 585284 or marie@baker.nildram.co.uk (If you email please type 'Allotment' in the subject of your email – to save loss in the spam zapper.)

Web Site

A new website for the society is currently under development by Graham Porter. It should be up and running by the end of March at the latest.

News from the Field

Last year was the wettest since 1912.

In common with most of the rest of the country, we were infected with potato and tomato blight. Perhaps this is a timely reminder to spray against blight every year regardless of conditions. It was not all bad news, as the wet weather ensured excellent quality green crops.

It is most important to incorporate plenty of manure into your plot. We now have a new supplier who delivered many loads at the end of last year. It is still not too late to place an order.

We have received reports of theft of produce from a member's plot. Should you see anything

suspicious, please report it to a member of the Committee so that we can investigate.

January on the Allotment

This will be a new series on what you should be doing on the plot each month. If you have any tips or ideas, please share them.

By now plots should have been dug over in preparation for the busy planting season. If you have got behind you can still work on plots. Make sure the conditions are not too wet and don't work on frozen ground. If the soil sticks to your boots, it is too wet to work.

With the recent high winds, make sure that mulches and covers put on in the autumn are still in place.

It is a good month for a bonfire, but please make sure you chose a calm day so that the smoke cannot drift to Tidbury Close. Also, please watch out for hedgehogs who may have taken up residence in piles of branches.

Seed Sales

Seed sales have been healthy this year and many members have taken advantage of the seed purchase scheme which is run through the National Allotment Society. All members receive discounts and the Society benefits from the number of sales.

Bonfires

At the last AGM a proposal to ban bonfires during the summer was passed by members. Due to the very wet summer and the outbreak of potato blight and following comments from members, the Committee wishes to review this and has made a proposal in the new Bylaws which will be put to the members at this year's AGM.

Dates

Meetings:

Committee Meeting: 7th February
Committee Meeting: 6th March
Committee Meeting: 17th April
AGM: 24th April

Information:

Pole Charge letters to be sent out: Week beginning 21st March
Revised Rules and By Laws to be sent out: Week beginning 21st March
Papers for AGM to be sent out: Week beginning 17th April

Matters for the AGM :

At the AGM, the Committee and its officers are elected and proposals for the revision of the Society's Constitution and ByLaws are agreed. Details of nomination forms will be available in the next newsletter. All forms must be received by the secretary by 10th April.

It is the Committee's intention to publish the dates of all Committee meetings for next year in the May newsletter.

email addresses

We have the email addresses of about 50% of members. If you have not received this newsletter by email, yet have an email address would you please email Marie.

Society Information

Did you know the Society was formed back in 1921? We all have shares in the Society with each having a nominal value of 10p. The land was purchased in March 1921 and the first shares were issued on 4th August that year. We have the books of share certificates dating back to the start of the Society when shares were of the nominal value of 1 shilling.

If you have not yet received your certificate would you please collect, and sign for, it at the AGM.

As the Society was formed so long ago, we are currently working on its history. Some of you have been members of the Society for over 50 years, and some families have been members since the Society was formed. (Graham Porter's Grandfather first worked a plot back in 1924 and Peter Leadbeater has been working his plot for over 50 years.) If you have any information, documents or photographs that we could use would you please contact Marie Baker.

The Society started off with 70 members. As now, some members had more than one plot. The plots were originally numbered 1 to N12 and, although there have been changes to the numbering system, the layout is very much as it

was back when the first certificates were issued. Through the share certificates it is possible to follow the change of occupation from plot to plot over the years. It seems that ladies were not allowed to own plots for the first two or three years, although they were allowed to work them!

The Garden Club Show Dates

Spring Show
Saturday 15th March 2 - 4pm

50th Summer Show
Saturday 16th August 2 - 4pm