

LEYTONSTONE ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION AT RODING FARM - MARCH NEWSLETTER – DRAFT FOR DISCUSSION

Committee Update

A very warm welcome to all our new and returning members from the 2020 Committee. Despite the record winter rainfall and the additional water features on the plots we are sure it is going to be a good growing year.

The new Committee have now met a couple of times since the AGM in January, and have agreed some priorities for action for 2020. These include plans to make improvements to the site infrastructure and to reinstate the informal coffee mornings.

- 999 - Following the January AGM we have contacted the London Ambulance Service and established a clear emergency process in the event of an accident on site. Full details have been sent out to everyone by email and they are also been displayed on the main site Notice Board. Unfortunately the London Ambulance Service do not currently use the 'what 3 words' location identification system so we are reliant on the address of Nutter Lane, post code of E11 2JA and description of the site location as Roding Farm located opposite the Eaton Manor Rugby Club ground.



- We would like to re-instate the informal coffee and cake arrangements on Sunday morning – if there are any budding baristas or home-made bakers willing to lend a hand on Sunday morning please get in contact with any member of the Committee so we can create a rota to manage the service. We are hoping to manage a minimum of one a month and more if we get enough volunteers who can help.



- A revised plot Inspection Process has been discussed and agreed which is designed to ensure appropriate cultivation levels across the site to ensure plots are being 'worked' in accordance with the Tenancy Agreement and Site Rules, with weeds, rubbish, and any nuisance to other plot holders kept to a minimum. Formal inspections are likely to commence in April, if it ever stops raining! Anyone having any concerns about their ability to cultivate their plot or who are facing any problems which might prevent them working their plot this year should contact a Committee Member for some advice.



We need your help!!

Every year we organise work parties to help keep the site in good order for everyone. Please watch out for the notices asking for help or the emails sent out by the Secretary. If everyone does something it will all get done, otherwise we will have to pay contractors to get work done putting a strain on our finances.

- The continued winter deluge has highlighted the need to re-instate some of the drainage ditches which have silted up and become blocked over the past couple of years. We plan to arrange some 'work parties' later in the season – in the meantime if you have any drainage ditches around your own plot it would help immensely if you could 'dig out' and deepen any that have collapsed or become filled in.

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- The grass on the main communal paths has already started growing and we need volunteers willing to cut the grass once a month commencing in April and through into September. We need just 6 volunteers. Using the petrol powered LAHA mower available from the Trading Hut it should take no more than an hour to complete. Again, if you can help here – please contact any of the Committee.
- Currently we are unable to rent out Plot 127b as it is very badly over grown with grass and weeds growing through some buried carpet and plastic sheets – we need help to dig the carpet out – if everyone's 'chips in' it would soon be cleared so we can bring it back into cultivation and re-let it. If you can spare just 30 mins of your time clearing a small area of carpet that would be great. A mattock or pick axe are probably the best tools. Leave the carpet and plastic in a pile for later clearance. The half plot is clearly signed – its half way down the second block of plots to the right of the main path as you walk in – so just pop over and do your bit over the next month if you can.
- If you can sow some extra flower and veg seeds to donate for sale at the Spring Plant sale that would be brilliant. Last year's sale was excellent and it would be great if we could raise even more money this year.
- Help with the Coffee Mornings as mentioned before – all bakers and baristas welcome.

Dates for the diary

- **Spring Plants sale – Sunday 17th May** – hopefully after the last frost and a chance to pick up some bargains from other members with a surplus. Swap tips and gossip as well over some coffee and cakes.
- **Annual Flower and Vegetable Show – Sunday 23rd August** – slightly earlier than in previous years to maximise the summer harvest whilst avoiding the late summer bank holiday.
- **Wanstead Show** – date to be confirmed but likely to be the **second Sunday in September** – please sow a few extra flowers and veg on your plot for harvest and sale at the Show to raise money for the Association. Last year we raised over £400.

Topical tips and Cultivation Advice

Despite the incredibly wet weather this Autumn and Winter there are some tasks which can still be 'got on with' :-

- 1) Whilst it is still far too early for sowing most seeds outside for those of you with a greenhouse on site or at home there are plenty of seeds which can be sown including tomatoes, chilli's, aubergines, leeks, onions.
- 2) Outside if your soil is well drained and not waterlogged broad beans and early peas can be sown.
- 3) And there is just time for garlic to be planted as its needs cold weather and a frost to split the clove.
- 4) Again if your soil is not too wet a light forking over will loosen the soil ready for planting and sowing later in April and May
- 5) Think about creating new wood chip paths on your plot – if the paths are dug out to a spades depth, the surplus soil can be used to create raised beds - this is really good for helping the drainage on waterlogged plots as the path acts as a drainage channel in winter – and its good exercise too.

Further information

Further useful Association information, including copies of the monthly Committee minutes, are available on the LAHA web site :-

<http://www.laha.org.uk/>

And finally ...

If you have any suggestions, or concerns regarding the site please do not hesitate to contact a Committee member – please remember we are volunteers, not paid employees – so offers of help as well as suggestions are particularly welcome.

LAHA Committee 2020