

LEYTONSTONE ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION  
RESIDENT AT RODING FARM SINCE 1934  
FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

**AGM Summary and Update**

Since the last Newsletter we held a very well attended AGM to conclude 2023. Members agreed to the increase in fees from 2025, approved the previous year's minutes and financial accounts, and discussed ideas for 2024. Trophies were awarded to winners of the Flower and Vegetable Show. Congratulations to everyone.



The following ideas were discussed and agreed at the AGM :-

- Review and develop proposals on the future legal status of the Association, update the Constitution, Site rules and Code of Practice to ensure they are 'fit for purpose' and reflect current best practice. In doing so we will take advice from the National Allotment Society.
- Explore cost effective ways to improve the main path during the winter months. Due to the heavy rain in January it has 'cut up' particularly badly and become difficult to use.
- Replace the locking bar on the front gate after it was broken and vandalised last year.
- Complete the clearance of Plots 20 and 76 to bring them back into cultivation. We'll be building a 'natural brushwood' fence to run parallel with the existing site boundary on Plot 20 to encourage biodiversity and recycle the coppiced wood.

This work will require some significant effort in addition to the day-to-day management of the site so the Committee would welcome help and support from members. Please email the Secretary Linda on [laharodingfarm@gmail.com](mailto:laharodingfarm@gmail.com) if you are able to assist.

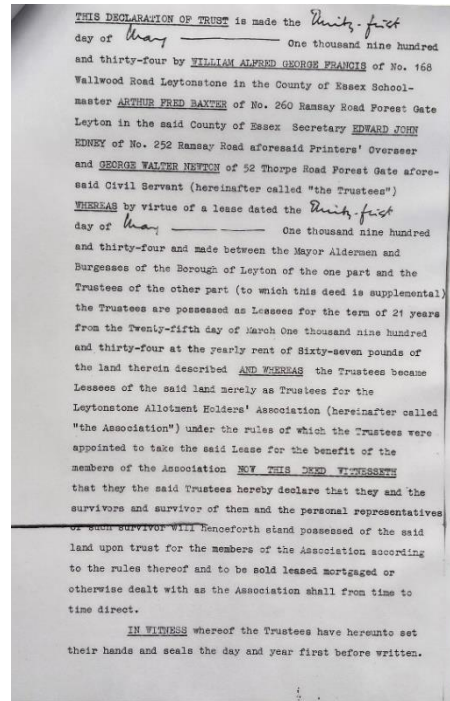
**Happy Anniversary**

On 31<sup>st</sup> May 1934 we took our first lease at Roding Farm which means we are rapidly approaching our 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary. It would be great to celebrate this landmark with a bit of a party or at least a gathering of members with maybe a coffee or something stronger on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June. It would also be nice to be able to publish any old stories and reminiscences people have of times past. If you

LEYTONSTONE ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION  
RESIDENT AT RODING FARM SINCE 1934  
FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

have old photographs please email the Chair on [lahachair@gmail.com](mailto:lahachair@gmail.com) and we'll see what we can publish.

Here is the 1934 lease and an aerial view of the site taken in April 1946.



### Things to do on a wet day

If it's wet and cold out there, how about undertaking a bit of planning and research :-

- John Harrison runs an excellent allotment website - [www.allotment-garden.org](http://www.allotment-garden.org) - and produces a regular newsletter which can be subscribed for free
- As members of the National Allotment Society you can view the website - [www.nsalg.org.uk](http://www.nsalg.org.uk) – access the members area using the membership no. s3122 and login password 9231578
- Our own LAHA website – [www.laha.org.uk](http://www.laha.org.uk) – also provides lots of useful information and advice
- There is also time to order seeds for sowing this year – use the code SUGD230X – to enjoy the discount the Association has arranged with Dobies – order 'on line' at <https://www.dobies.co.uk/>

### Plot Inspections

One of the key tasks of the Committee is to ensure plots are cultivated and maintained in good order and in accordance with the obligations of our lease. The procedure for inspections in 2024 is identical to previous years. Full details are on the website. Inspections will start in March. We aim to achieve a sensitive balance between individual members freedom to cultivate their plot in the way they wish, whilst ensuring what they do, does not adversely affect others across the site. As always, should you anticipate having temporary

LEYTONSTONE ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION  
RESIDENT AT RODING FARM SINCE 1934  
FEBRUARY 2024 NEWSLETTER

problems cultivating your plot due to illness or working away from the area for a while, please advise the Secretary so we can take these issues into consideration.

### **Dates for the Diary**

- **Spring Plant Sale - Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> May** – timed to avoid the last frost of the year (hopefully) and a chance to pick up some bargains from other members with surplus stock. Last year's event was very successful with lots of outstanding donations. As you start your seed sowing this year please put in a few extras to donate at this event. All proceeds go to support the Association.
- **90<sup>th</sup> Anniversary - Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> June** – a 'bit of a do' full details to be confirmed.
- **Annual Flower and Vegetable Show - Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> September** – a similar date to last year to maximise the bountiful harvest whilst avoiding the late summer bank holiday - everyone is free to enter, no expertise required. It's very much about the taking part and having a bit of fun.
- **Wanstead Festival - date TBC but likely to be Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> September** – again if you can cultivate a few extra flowers or vegetables for donation, they would be greatly appreciated. Volunteers are needed to run this event so please let the Secretary know if you can help.
- **Apple Pressing Day – Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> October date TBC** - bring along your apples and we will juice them
- **Mince Pies – Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> December** - we shall be serving coffee, mince pies and perhaps a glass of mulled wine - stop by and reminisce on the successes and near misses of the growing year

### **Topical tips and Cultivation Advice**

- 1) As my old mate 'Decorator Dave' says it's all about the preparation. In our case it's soil preparation and weed clearance. So don't delay, provided the soil is not too wet it's the perfect time to start.
- 2) Lightly turn over the top few inches or so – this allows air in and helps the sun to warm the soil ready for sowing and planting in April and May.
- 3) If you are operating a 'no dig' approach then add a thick layer of compost and organic matter as soon as possible to allow the worms to 'work it in' for you.
- 4) Weeds and grasses are the first 'plants' to start into growth– so any areas you don't have time to cultivate should be covered with ground cover to stop the weeds taking over – it also retains moisture in the soil so when you are ready and able to cultivate it will be so much easier.
- 5) Alternatively sow a crop of 'green manure' – suitable seed mixes including clover, mustard, beans, rye - are available for most seed suppliers including Dobies – sow immediately and 'dig in' later in the season it will add lots of healthy nutrients to your soil. If you prefer flowers, then choose a flower mix which will help the bees and natural predators thrive.
- 6) If you have greenhouse, or even a windowsill at home there are plenty of seeds which can be sown now including tomatoes, chillies, aubergines, and sweet corn all of which need warmth to germinate and a long growing season to produce the best crops. Whatever you do 'harden them off' well and do not be tempted to plant outside until after the 'last frost' usually around mid May on our site.
- 7) Outside, early potatoes can be planted, broad beans, peas, parsnips, carrots, leeks, brassicas and beetroot can be sown from mid to late April if the weather is warm. Runner beans and French beans need a little more heat to germinate, wait until mid/late May before making an outdoor sowing.

### **Finally ...**

If you have any suggestions, or concerns regarding the site please do not hesitate to contact a Committee member – we are volunteers – so offers of help are needed to successfully action ideas.

LAHA Committee