

Leytonstone Allotment Holders Co-Operative Association *at Rodding Farm*

Summer 2025 Newsletter

Following what was apparently the driest spring in years, we seem to have progressed to the driest summer in years...here's hoping the autumn doesn't follow suit. At least the spring was warm this year, although the couple of chilly weeks in May held back planting out the tender varieties a fair bit. The ground was still wet from the winter, but dry enough to dig, a nice change from some years. Another plus of the current weather has been the end of the slug and snail plague we saw last year, slug pellet sales are significantly down, which can only be a good thing. There has been some talk of a resurgence of Colorado beetles (a potato pest), and we are all once again asked to keep an eye out for Asian hornets, but nothing has been seen in our neck of the woods so far. All in all, not a bad year so far, bar hefting all those watering cans.

On the subject of watering cans...

As there has been a lot of demand on water at site and numerous questions from members, this seems a useful time to take a look at some of the issues around using the mains water tanks. There are obviously the site rules, which are quite specific about only taking water using hand held containers, as in no syphoning, pumping, hoses, etc. There's also the common-sense things like not watering unplanted ground, not wasting water by spilling and not using containers that leak; all these necessary because wasted water is water someone else could have used, and the site is on a metered supply, meaning wasted water costs us all money. Other than these though, the choices around how we transport our cans or buckets to the plot once filled and how often and at what time of day we water, are very much for every member to make for themselves.

Management Update

After a lot of consultation, consideration and form filling last year the Association gained its new status as a co-operative last November when the FCA confirmed our registration. Since then, contact with LBWF has been ongoing (though a bit slow, as they have staff shortages) and the committee is working towards obtaining a shiny new 20 year lease on the same terms as the existing one. All this obviously doesn't affect the day to day at site, but will make admin and management easier for the future.

Plant Sale

The annual plant sale in May was members coming along to buy and a The sale made a very welcome £280 an opportunity to get together and up some bargain plants.



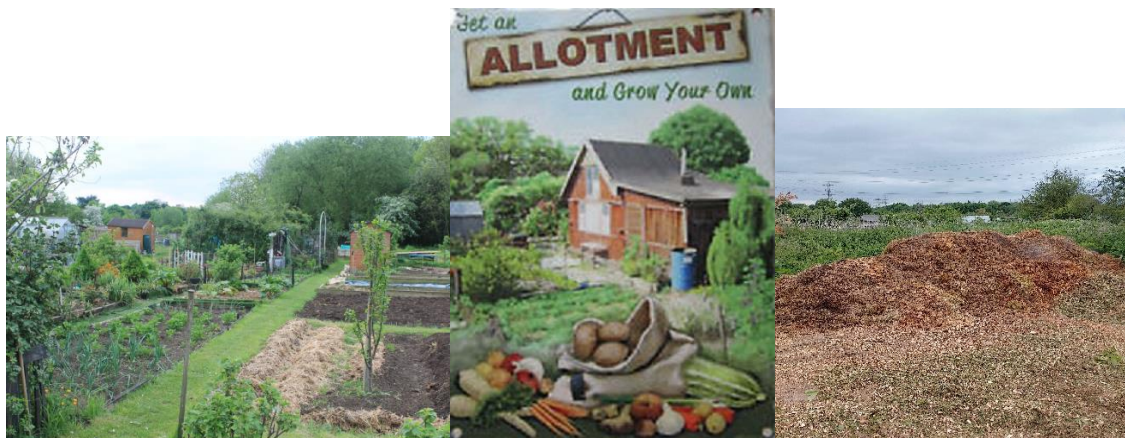
Plant Sale Opens 11am
Plus tea and biscuits as usual!
Any spare plants for donation to the sale are much appreciated, please drop off at the trailing hut on the morning.

very well attended, with a larger number of great variety of plants grown and donated. for association coffers and gave everyone chat over a cuppa and cakes while snapping

Patrolling the Paths

The site inspection team found themselves struggling this year in some places due to overgrown or blocked or extremely lumpy paths, so the committee has decided to do a site wide survey to clarify which paths need work. The narrow paths between plots are, as always, the responsibility of the plotholders beside them, the wide ones the committee takes on. Regular mowing really does help with keeping the paths passable and flat, and many thanks are due both to those members who mow regularly and to particularly to Martin (plot 114) who takes out the big association mower on

a regular basis. This year has also been especially bad for ant hills appearing on the paths. These can defeat even the large mower and quickly make the paths very uneven, so there is a late summer work party in the pipeline to flatten the worst ones - date to be decided



Topical Growing Tips

- Water, water and water, for best results at this time of year, but don't forget to feed too. Sweetcorn will benefit from a feed of nitrogen rich fertiliser like chicken pellets, tomatoes and greenhouse plants such as peppers and cucumbers will fruit very much better if regularly fed with tomato food and squash, pumpkins and courgettes will be happier if given an occasional feed too.
- Early potatoes can be harvested now, the second earlies and maincrops will need longer in the ground to fatten up, and will. If you are composting gone over cabbages and other brassicas that have white fly, make sure to bury them in the heap, otherwise the white fly will just move elsewhere.
- 'Keep the hoes going' appears as advice in so many old gardening books, and it's still good advice – keep weeds and grass from seeding in summer and there will be far less to deal with next year, plus they make great compost for use in future.
- Successional sowings of lettuce, spring onions, carrots, pak choi, radish, beetroot, etc can still go in and will produce crops before the end of the season
- Don't forget to take out those side shoots on most tomato varieties (bush tomatoes don't need this doing) and keep them well secured to their canes.
- Trim up strawberries after fruiting, and either remove or pot up runners if you want more plants for next year.

Dates for the Diary

Annual Show, 7th September – very much a 'bring what you grew (or cooked)' informal event, paired as usual with a bring your own picnic, refreshments at the portacabin and an exciting raffle! The programme and how to enter details will be on the website shortly.

Apple Day, 12th October – A chance to try apple varieties and juice made at site, bring your own apples to juice, or just take the opportunity to sample those on offer.

Mince pies and Mulled wine, 14th December – an opportunity to wear silly hats, laugh at the committee and chew over the doings of the year, not to be missed!

Good growing and best wishes, LAHCA Committee