

Walmley Ash Allotment Association Newsletter

V7

SUTTON TAKEOVER

Some of you may be aware that the establishment of Sutton Coldfield Parish Council was secured by the Birmingham City Council (Reorganisation of Community Governance) Order 2016.

The creation of the Parish Council brought with it a change in some land ownership, governance and management responsibilities. One of these areas is Allotments and the land they occupy.

Therefore, the allotment sites operated by BCC as at March 2016 within Sutton Coldfield Parish boundary automatically vest in the Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council. There have been no changes since then.

The BCC, BDAC and officers of Sutton Town Council have met to discuss the proposals, process, suggested timescales, and likely future management arrangements etc. These are very early days and the details of the transfer have still to be agreed. They will be engaging with Allotment Associations and plot holders at some point.

Timetable for transfer by 1st October was considered to be "tight" so it is expected that 2020 rents will still be paid to BCC and Sutton Coldfield rents would be transferred to SCPC. For October 1st 2021 rents will be negotiated with SCPC. It is expected that Management Committees will continue to collect rents.

The sites affected by this are: - Boulevard, Donegal, Falcoln Lodge [2 sites], Forge Farm, Four Oaks, Hill, Newhall, Sheffield Road[2sites], Walmley Ash, White Farm.

GAZEBO, EXTRA PARKING AND RAISED BEDS

The ground work has been complete on plot 8 thanks to funding from Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust. The parking area has been extended allowing for cars to now turn and park safely.

The installation of a communal Gazebo is yet to commence but hopefully will start in August. This has been funded by Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council's Community Grant Programme.



Hopefully when we are all able to socialize again and the Gazebo is in place, we can have another Meet and Greet.

WAAA COMPETITIONS



We were hoping to re-enter some of the BDAC competitions again but this year's show has been cancelled so maybe we can try next year. However, we have decided to keep the interest going by having our own internal competitions for The Best Plot and The Best newcomer.

REFURBISHMENT OF THE TOILETS.

While the lockdown has been in place, we have managed to get the toilets refurbished. Good news is that funding for this was provided by Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust. Unfortunately, the toilets have been locked on recommendation and guidance from the NAS and BCC. We will reopen them as soon as we can.

Hopefully you will all be pleasantly surprised.

Before



After



PLOT VACANCIES

We currently have over 20 people waiting for a plot to become vacant. We do encourage you to let us know, in confidence, if you are unable to tend to your plot for any reason or are struggling to maintain all of it. If you are struggling to maintain it all we can half the amount you have and enable someone else to benefit.

At the moment we do have ploholders that are self-isolating and if you are one then please let us know as we will, with your permission, and where possible cover the plot until you are able to return.

PLOT NUMBERS

Everyone should be displaying their plot number. There are many different styles available or you can of course make your own.



This will help us all to know which plots are being cultivated. It also helps our new members find their way around.

Thank you to those who have already displayed your number.

GRASS BY SPINNEY

The area around the spinney gate has now had its first few mowing's and is looking better than it has done for many years.



COUNCIL MAINTENANCE

Due to the ongoing covid-19 situation and lack of council staff we are getting the occasional cutting of grass on the communal walkways.

If you can help to keep the grass walkways cut then please do.

Grass paths between you and your neighboring ploholder are jointly maintained by yourselves.

STRAW and CHIPPINGS

Delivery of straw is on hold until the COVID-19 lockdown is removed.

We are getting the occasional delivery of wood chippings,

The price for a wheelbarrow of straw, manure or chippings is 50p.

Alternatively, you can pay a yearly subscription of £10 if you have a full plot, £5 if you have a half plot or £2.50 for a quarter plot.

WOODCHIP USES

Anyone wishing to check what can be done with wood chippings might like to have a look at this webpage

<https://learningandyearning.com/wood-chips>

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

As agreed at the AGM and introduced into our WAAA Constitution each plot can now nominate a secondary person as an Associate Member based on the following terms: -

Associate members: A spouse, partner, son, or daughter etc. that actively takes part in the cultivation of a named members plot and will have voting rights and the right to be a member of the Committee but to be limited to one associate member per plot.

If you wish to nominate a second person for your plot then please email waaasec@gmail.com your plot number, named person and if possible their email address. Alternatively post the details into the site letterbox.

PROJECTS AND FUNDING

The following is a project we are running with that all need to be externally funded. They are things we are aiming to achieve to improve the site.

Project 1 – Funding from Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council’s Community Grant Programme and Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust.

Communal gazebo, raised beds and extension to parking area.

Due to joint funding from the Royal Sutton Coldfield Town Council’s Community Grant Programme and Sutton Coldfield Charitable Trust we have now cleared the overgrown area originally known as plot 8.



The ground has been prepared ready for the expected Gazebo. Raised beds are already in place and the extra car parking space is being used.

We hope to start work on the erection of the Gazebo in early August.

MORE OF THE FLO!!

The Flo Pickering Fund is a fund set up to help allotments throughout the city. The revenue is from the sale and development of allotments. So, every time an allotment is sold off the money is supposed to go to the upkeep of remaining allotments. Particularly roads, fences and asbestos removal.

The BDAC (Birmingham & District Allotments Committee) has been trying for years to get some of this money released. After a protracted battle they have now got approval to carry out work on all sites that have requested it.

We have put in a new application for extra fencing along the Ashurst Road boundary and some hard surfacing by the straw and wood chip bays.

UNINVITED GUESTS

We have had our first bout of burglaries this year. A couple of sheds were broken into and items taken. We are hoping to extend the boundary fencing if we can get sufficient funding.

FORAGING of FRUIT

There seems to be a spate of fruit picking going on around the site.

Various soft fruits have been disappearing.

If you spot someone or indeed an animal or bird taking fruit from a neighbours plot please let them know or email the secretary so that we can ensure it doesn't happen again.

AND FINALLY, something light

"The best way to garden is to put on a wide-brimmed straw hat and some old clothes. And with a hoe in one hand and a cold drink in the other, tell somebody else where to dig."
- Texas Bix Bender, Don't Throw in the Trowel

"A weed is a plant that has mastered every survival skill except for learning how to grow in rows."
- Doug Larson

"Gardening requires lots of water - most of it in the form of perspiration."
- Lou Erickson

When weeding, the best way to make sure you are removing a weed and not a valuable plant is to pull on it. If it comes out of the ground easily, it is a valuable plant.