



Summer Newsletter 2013

Welcome to the Summer newsletter. If you have any comments about this issue of the newsletter or would like to contribute an item to the next issue please email the editor - editor@ragaleeds.org.uk.

Dear Members

The committee was very pleased with the increased attendance at our Annual General Meeting so thank you to those who came. If you didn't manage it this year we look forward to seeing you next April. We are pleased that the existing committee and trustees were willing to stand again because without their involvement the site could not function. Margaret Lattimer has re-joined the committee after a break and is co-ordinating development of the common areas (see her piece on the wildlife area). Barbara Greenwood has volunteered to work with me to gather information on and options for a toilet onsite. If you have any contacts or information on the subject please contact Barbara (240 3277) or me. In addition to these two major developments the committee is putting together an outline development plan for the year, which we will share with you for comments and offers of help. We can't do all the things we would like to do without all the members getting involved.

At the AGM we unanimously agreed to support the following proposal from the Leeds and District Allotment Gardeners Federation: "That the LDAGF officers negotiate with the City Council on our proposal to set up a separate not for profit organisation within the next 2 years, answerable to LDAGF, which will manage the relevant allotment sites." The intension is that this LDAGF organisation would manage the allotments in Leeds instead of the Council or a private company as has happened in Lincolnshire. More volunteers will be needed from amongst members (we are all Federation members on our site) to help with the current feasibility study and setting up the future model. If you are willing to help in any way please let me know

The Allotments Competition will be judged week beginning 15 July. We will be entering our site so please get your paths cut and plot weeding done before that week. We were marked down heavily last year because of the poor condition of our inter-plot paths! Entries for individual plots need to be sent to Brian Livesey our Secretary by Sunday 23 June.

The improvements to the roadways, car park and entrances now make it easier to for members to get to their plots. It is now possible to drive from the main car park to the other gateway, please make sure obstructions are not left on the roadways. Please do not park on the central path except for loading and unloading. When setting off, after closing the gate on the eastern side please do so slowly to avoid creating ruts in the roadway. If you are having manure delivered please put boards or sheeting down beforehand if it can't be tipped directly on to your plot and then move it as soon as possible.

Note for your dairy; LDAGF Social Friday, 20th September from 7pm until late at Sheepscar Club, Savile Drive LS7 3EJ. Presentation of Leeds Allotment Competition awards, supper, bar, raffle, auction and charity fundraising event, tickets in advance only.

Best wishes

Paul Lattimer (0113 216 0606) - Chair

Parking and Access to Plots

Please note that the top path and the central path are for access only, unloading and loading, not for parking. The central path is a through access road and needs to be available for emergency vehicles.

Hosepipes

This is the time of year when watering becomes a priority for many of us. Please note however that the use of hosepipes is against the Association's rules. Hosepipes can only be used to fill water butts

Wildlife Area

A decision was made at the last AGM to develop the northwest corner of our site into a functioning wildlife area. We already have a small number of wildflowers, dog-roses and some native tree species in the immature hedge on the North and West edge. There are two log piles, a large bramble patch and a developing nettle-bed, the food plant of the caterpillars of the endangered small tortoiseshell butterfly.

Look out for the recently planted wildflowers and the 'bug hotel' using pallets and logs.

Future plans include the development of a summer meadow with plot holders invited to participate via free seeds (available next spring in the Sales Hut) which those of you, especially if you garden with children could grow to planting-out size.

The small notice board on the south side of the Sales Hut will be dedicated to the Wildlife Area, a plan of which will appear soon.

If you have any suggestions or offers of native plants, tree seedlings, animal, bird or invertebrate 'homes' or logs then please get in touch. Also please let us know of any sightings of interest.

Can I please ask that nothing more is randomly planted e.g., conifers or fruit bushes in this area. If you have any spares, plant those in hedgerows on the east side of our site. Also can everyone please refrain from climbing over the fence a lot of damage has been done to the seedling hedge trees?

Many thanks

Margaret Lattimer (0113 216 06060)

Sales Hut

In June and July the Sales Hut is open on Saturday between 2pm and 3pm and on Sundays between 11am and noon. The growing season has eventually begun and so you will now need to visit the hut to buy those hungry plants some sustenance to allow them to catch up on their growing. You may then need to give those luscious plants some protection from the slugs and birds. All requirements available in the hut.

Allotments in Leeds

In recent weeks you will have received a letter from Leeds City Council regarding the future of allotments in Leeds. **It is important that you all respond to that letter by 12 July.** If you have not received the consultation document please contact the Council's Parks & Countryside Department for a copy, tel 0113 395 7400 email: parks@leeds.gov.uk

Paul writes about RAGA's official response in this newsletter.

Members for whom I have a working email address will have also received several other documents from the Leeds & District Allotment Gardeners Federation which provide more information about the issues and their response.

I have placed all these documents on the RAGA website. They can be accessed on the news page, <http://www.raga-leeds.org.uk/news1.htm>.

Brian Livesey

Plot Numbers

Rule 7/16 All Plotolders must have a NUMBER on their plot.

A list of plots still without a number will be going up in the Notice Board shortly!

Primrose Agbamu

Onions

Orders are now being taken for winter onions and garlic, the list closes on 14 July and it may well be that there are not many spares so please place your orders in time.

Prices are given as a guide only.

Garlic bulbs 70p each

Japanese Senshyu onions 500g: £1.60 - 250g: 90p

Silver moon (white) 500g: £1.60 - 250g: 90p

You may order by email stating variety and quantity or sign up on the list which will be in the hut from Saturday 15 June 2013. Remember - deadline is 14 July either by signing up or by email. onions@raga-leeds.org.uk

We are also trying to assess interest in **blue alcathe** **water pipe** for use as hoops along with **green scaffolding net** as protection against pigeons etc. Any interest in **used scaffold boards** useful for containing raised beds (around £4 for 8ft board). An indication of interest of all or any of above would be appreciated.