



Summer Newsletter 2015

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@raga-leeds.org.uk.

Dear Members

We have brought forward the publication of our summer newsletter to advertise our new venture, the **RAGA Summer BBQ**. More details in Will Jennings' article. We are all keen to make it a success and the more people who come and get involved the better. Tickets will be on sale in the Hut and there will be a signing up sheet for helpers and food options.

Are you coming on Saturday 11 July? Can you help to make it a success? We need at least 8 people at 10am on the day to help put up the gazebo and general preparation. Donations of cold food such as salads, fruit and cake would be very welcome. Please indicate what you are able to offer on the sign-up sheet. We will provide soft drinks but you are welcome to bring alternatives. We do not have an electricity supply so hot drinks are not an option unless someone has access to a camping stove and urn, if you do please let us know.

Changes to the Management Committee - Those of you who came to the AGM will know that we have had some changes to the committee. Margaret Pickersgill has had to scale down her involvement for family reasons. She is still on the committee I am pleased to say and course we are very grateful for all the hard work she has done over the years in a number of roles. We have a new Treasurer John England, Barbara Greenwood who organises the hut volunteers now also deals with banking the takings and co-ordinates the ordering with Ian Martin. Margaret Lattimer organises the stock delivery volunteers. Our thanks also go to Colin Jaggs for his help and support in his second time as a committee member and we are very pleased to welcome Shubbi Seehra to the committee in his place.

Saturday 27th June is the date of the summer full site plot inspection and we are looking forward to having a proper look at all the plots on our site. I have to say that the general impression as I walk about the site is that the majority of plots are well tended and some excellent ones are packed full of fruit and veg. However I am concerned about some of the paths around the site. Many plot holders do an excellent job keeping their paths neatly cut but some are badly neglected. It is every plot holder's responsibility to maintain the paths around their plot. I know it's a chore but weed killer isn't the answer either because drift can damage other people's plants and as much as half the path. The paths between plots should be wide enough to walk down with a wheelbarrow, many are not because plants and fruit bushes overhang the edge of the plot or what is worse parts of the path have been cut away to provide space for a 'little extra planting'. This makes the paths unsafe and you risk injuring yourself and other plot holders. The central roadway is also being encroached on; it needs to be wide enough for a car to be driven along safely. Plot holders on the top roadway, please don't dump compostable waste and rubbish outside your plot, it just creates a hazard and prevents the roadway being cut properly. The Thursday volunteers continue to work hard to keep the common areas of our site in good order please don't make their job harder than necessary. Don't forget new volunteers are always welcome.

A big thank you to the extra helpers who have volunteered to be in the sales hut, we have introduced some additional security measures and as far as I know there have not been any more security issues, all we can do is to be vigilant.

Strimmer Hire - Were you the last person to hire the battery strimmer at the beginning of June? If so please contact Paul on 07914 792 829 as soon as possible to arrange its return. If you are a sales hut volunteer do you recall taking the deposit for the strimmer early in June because no contact details were entered in the book?

Eco-toilet – We have had a lot of very positive comments since the composting toilet was installed, however there have been some ‘usage’ problems. It usually falls to me or Margaret L during the Thursday volunteers’ morning to check the toilet, make sure it is clean and tidy, replenish supplies and empty the liquid waste. This week I discovered the toilet roll holder broken and sawdust spread about with a large amount blocking the front section. I can only assume it was a child, hopefully an adult would not have left it in that state. Please make sure that your child is either supervised or able to cope adequately.

Best wishes
Paul Lattimer (Chair)

Overwintering Onions and Garlic

A list will be in the hut by 28 June to sign. Delivery will be in September. Please note there may not be any spares so please sign-up to make it easier for ordering. List closes mid-July.

RAGA BBQ and Family Fun Day

Hello everyone, My name is Will Jennings (Plot 17S) I have had this plot for 3 years during that time I have met any number of interesting people working away on their allotment offering advice and encouragement. Earlier this year I mentioned to a few other plot holders that I thought it would be good to meet up and have a social get-together to share our growing experience with each other and hopefully have a bit of fun. A number felt it would be a good idea so with the help of the RAGA committee we have arranged for a BBQ and Social Event - you might have seen the notice posted on the Allotment site boards.

So if you are a new plot holder interested in talking to others about what grows best on the site or a seasoned grower with experience to pass on to others and interested in meeting up to discuss vegetable and flower growing then why not come along at 12.00 noon on 11th July for an hour or two to meet others who share a common interest and find out more about what’s going on.

As part of the process we also want to know if this sort of event is what people would like to be involved in or if there are other ideas you have which could improve on what we are suggesting so we will be asking you what you think might get more plot holder involved in such events.

So far the day includes:

- * 12.00 Noon - Bring and Swap Plant Stall
- * BBQ (Ticket required - available in the hut £2, children free)

- * There will be meat, fish and vegetarian options (subject to booking)
- * Children’s fun themed quiz with prize
- * Voluntary Baking/Savoury cooking challenge
- * 2.0 (ish) Close

Finally if you interested in volunteering please get in touch by e-mailing me (jennings.w@sky.com) or put your name on the sign-up sheet in the Hut. It doesn’t need to be anything too time-consuming just helping on the day with putting up and taking down the Gazebo (30 minutes approx.) would be great.

If you cannot get down to the hut when it is open then send an email to Will indicating how many tickets you require and the food options for your party.

Wildlife Area

We have quite a lot of colour in the Shady Bed with campion, columbines and ox eye daisies. The Sunny Bed is developing nicely but mostly with annuals, let’s hope the perennial plants are just taking their time to develop. I am growing some on at home just in case they don’t. They will be planted up in the autumn. The bug hotel has a planted top now, do go and have a look. An area beyond the blackberries has been covered; we hope to develop a stumpery there with real shade loving plants like ferns and iris foetidissima. We are trying to hedge the whole of the perimeter of the site, please don’t come over the fence. It causes damage to plants that we have carefully planted.

Demonstration Vegetable Bed

As you may know this year we have created a number of Starter Beds on plot 59S for members new to vegetable growing. One of these beds has been planted up as a demonstration bed. Next year we hope to do more careful planning and have planting / harvesting times on display in the hut. This year it has all been a bit rushed but the bed is now fully planted with; broad beans, potatoes, carrots, chard, lettuce, courgettes and nasturtiums.

Margaret Lattimer

Hut Volunteers

Barbara Greenwood is now the person to whom you should deliver the hut takings. You can contact Barbara on 07521271633 or via email, cottageside@hotmail.com. She is in the process of compiling a volunteers folder which will be available in the hut. Please contact Barbara if you have any questions or concerns.