



Gnosall Allotments & Garden Association Newsletter

Issue 18

September 2013

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

This newsletter is mainly to give notice to all GAGA members of our **Annual General Meeting**

which takes place on

**Wednesday October 16th at 7.30 pm
in The Horns Public House (rear room)**

All members are invited to attend and hear Officer reports of the last year's activities and elect officers for the next year.

If members wish to raise any relevant issues or questions, they should advise the Secretary Lynn Whittick at least 7 days before the meeting (no later than October 8th) either by e-mail (lynwhittick@live.co.uk) or by phone (01785 823466).

A full copy of the notes from the 2012 Annual General Meeting will be available to read before the meeting. Key points were:

That membership fee for our New Year, starting in October to be retained at £2.50, but members would receive a voucher worth £1 discount when purchasing items at the shed.

Tony Barrow was elected as Chairman and Lynn Whittick as Secretary. Other officers were re-elected

There were reports from Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Shed officer.

Discussions took place on the following key points

Our policy to engage with the Parish Council pressing for improvements and issues to be addressed in a polite and non-aggressive manner was endorsed by Peter Davies and members present. Peter continued it will be important to think through carefully before taking on the Management of the Allotments; it is an opportunity not to be simply dismissed and can present the possibility of gaining access to funds e.g. from the lottery. However all agreed we (GAGA) need to research more the terms and implications before making a commitment. Equally, being frank as yet we do not have sustainable committee and engagement by members which also is an important factor to take into account.

A query was raised on the Parish Council's mandate that no fires were to be allowed to which we had had discussions with the Parish Council's Open Spaces Chairman point out the necessity for Allotment Holders to have a fire which they have agreed to; the tenant's agreement on this subject will be modified to permit Allotment holders to have a fire only within their own Allotment area and will be subject to the previous conditions set out in the tenant's agreement.

On addressing the flooding issue Simon and Tony explained the options previously listed in more detail and pointed out

- Raising the bund was thought generally not to be a solution since the water table still rises with severe rainfall.*

- The Allotment Act of provides the Parish Council with the right to compulsory purchase land for Allotments i.e. they do not have to pay the higher market value.*
- The option of halving Allotments but to have a double height; all its implications need to be thought through and all the involved Allotment holders would have to be consulted by the Parish Council.*

Anne Newman pointed out the road leading to the Allotment car park certainly does not currently allow for access by disabled people, a criterion that the Parish Council has set itself. When will something be done to correct this? We are aware the Parish Council who own this road have and are seeking quotations to restore this roadway to a roadworthy conditions facilitating ease of access by the disabled and indeed vehicles in general. A request was made that we should press for this issued to be resolved.

Jane Woodward pointed out that we need to convince all Allotment holders to close the main Allotment entrance gate and that we should have a numbered locked that only members can use to gain access to the Allotments. This was duly noted to be part of our proposal to move the gate which would also include a private notice – Allotments holders only.

Note: Mike Wanless resigned as treasurer during the year and his position has been covered by Susan Howlett who was co-opted onto the committee.

Notice of Change to Constitution.

As a result of a decision by Gnosall Parish Council that all allotment holders are now required to be members of GAGA and that Gnosall Parish Council will collect this membership subscription, it will be necessary for our constitution to be changed.

The following changes will be proposed to the AGM for acceptance:

Para 3.3 The Annual membership subscription will be due on April 1st Note :(Previously was January 1st)

Para: 7.2 will be changed to:

All allotment holders are to honour their tenancy agreement with the Gnosall Parish Council in order to retain their membership of the Association. This includes the payment of an Annual Subscription to GAGA, which will be collected by Gnosall Parish Council.

Notes:

The Para 3.3 changes will apply for all members.

Note Members who have paid subscriptions for 2013 will have their membership extended to 1st April 2014.

Para 7.2 only applies to members who have allotments. Garden members who do not have allotments in Gnosall will still have subscriptions collected by GAGA committee as before.

Shed News

As activity on the allotments and in your gardens has reduced, we will not now be routinely opening the shed until next February.

However members may still purchase items from the shed by contacting one of the committee members, who will try to help.

If you have problems contacting committee members, do phone Bob Colman on 01785 823955.

Many of our members have used their £1 discount vouchers for the Shed, but there are still a fair number that have not been redeemed. You can still use them next season in February or March when the shed opens again, but they will not be accepted after that.

Potato & Seed Orders

We will be circulating order forms for Seeds and for Seed Potatoes after the Annual General Meeting so that we can place orders before the end of the year.

Time to start thinking about what you need for 2014!

Allotment Security

There have been a number of incidents where produce has been taken (stolen) from allotments. This is most unfortunate and we continue to look for ways to improve security. The matter has been raised again with Gnosall Parish council.

There are a number of ways that you can help us:

- If you see strangers on the allotments, please remind them that only allotment holders or people authorised by allotment holders, are entitled to be in the area. The allotments are not a shortcut for walkers, dog walkers or anyone else.
- Keep the gate closed at the entrance to the allotments, even during the day.
- If you have produce or property taken from your allotment or from your garden at home, you should report it to the police using the 101 hotline.

G.A.G.A. Committee members (and plot numbers)

Tony Barrow.....L	Chairman
Lynn Whittick..... 30	Secretary
Susan Howlett.....A	Treasurer
Bob Colman..... J	
Phil Barnes..... 55	
Frank Insull.....10	
Ray Woodward..... 11	
Ann Newman..... 12D	
Betty Clifford.....53B	
Ray Finney.....32	
Simon Whittick.....29	

The committee is keen to help all members and keep you informed on what is happening. If you have any questions, please do contact us at the shed or by phone/e-mail.

Police 101 hotline

Each time an incident is reported using this hotline it is logged and will influence where police patrols focus. If we report several incidents, then the police should visit the allotment area more often. This certainly happened for a period after incidents were reported two years ago.

101 is the number to call when you want to contact your local police in England, Wales or Scotland - when it's less urgent than a 999 call.

101 is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. You should call 101 to report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response. For example, you should call 101 if:

- your car has been stolen
- your property has been damaged
- you suspect drug use or dealing in your neighbourhood

Or to:

- report a minor traffic collision
- give the police information about crime in your area
- speak to the police about a general enquiry
-

101 has been introduced as part of the government's wider work to improve access to the police, ease pressure on 999, and help to efficiently and effectively tackle crime and disorder.

Calls to 101 (from both landlines and mobile networks) cost 15 pence per call, no matter what time of day you call, or how long you are on the phone.

Have a problem with Rabbits on your plot?



- then please contact a Committee member for a possible solution.