



# Gnosall Allotments & Garden Association Newsletter

Issue 43

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## NEWS UPDATE

*The article below will appear in March GPN summarizing the benefits you get as GAGA members.*

....After what seems to have been a long, cold, wet winter, spring is on the way and now's the time to start thinking about getting outside and preparing, sowing and planting in the garden or allotment! As a member you can buy from "The Shed" which can be found by the entrance to the allotments. We sell various goods related to gardening and allotments at competitive prices and it's much handier than a trip to the garden centre. This includes a selection of fertilizers, netting, canes, fleece, compost and other similar goods. The shed opens most Sunday mornings in the growing season. The first opening this year will be on March 7th. We are also hoping to hold our usual spring open day when conditions allow. Opening times and prices will be displayed on our web site, Facebook page and the allotment notice boards. For those who can't or prefer not visit the shed at the present time we are happy to take orders by email and deliver to your home. We have a strimmer, scarifier and rotavator to borrow (cost of fuel only) by members to help with those bigger jobs.

Membership also gives you 10% discount at Swanpit Nursery for those things that we can't offer.

Our membership year is 1st April in one year to 31st March the following year.

Membership fee is just £3.50 (**with 2 x £1 vouchers for the shed this year!**).

New members don't need to wait until April, you'll still get membership until April next year if you join now. To join us simply download the membership application form from our website or contact the secretary, Lynn Whittick (823466). Subscriptions for allotment tenants are collected by the Parish council when you renew your tenancy.

## SEED & POTATO ORDERS

The seed orders were delivered to members before Christmas. We are currently chasing a small number of items that were not delivered with the main order. Our wholesaler is preparing the potato orders for delivery in the next two weeks. They have advised us that there may be shortages or substitutes as the seed potato harvest was poor. We will be contacting members if this affects their order.

## COMMITTEE NEWS

As we reported in a previous newsletter, two members of our committee had to stand down and we have two vacancies. The committee normally meets once a month, usually for less than one hour (currently using Zoom), to discuss items for the coming month and agree on tasks we need to do. We are looking for some new blood to help us with this and ensure that GAGA keeps serving our members.

**HELP NEEDED** We are looking for a qualified electrician who can PAT test our scarifier. Can you help.

### **SHED UPDATE**

We plan to start routine shed opening on Sunday March 7<sup>th</sup> and every Sunday morning until mid-summer. If the weather is good we may open the shed earlier, so watch your emails and our noticeboard.

We will be adopting "COVID safe operating practices with only one member running the shed.

As the number of committee members is down, we would welcome help from other members to run the shed.

As mentioned in the news update, we will deliver orders to those who don't feel safe coming to the shed.

Just email [lynnwhittick@live.co.uk](mailto:lynnwhittick@live.co.uk) or [simonwhittick@gmail.com](mailto:simonwhittick@gmail.com)

or phone 01785 823466.

They will then arrange for collection or delivery of the items you want. You can find a full list of what we sell and our prices on our website:

<https://gnosallallotments.org.uk/>

### **WHY WE SELL IT**

Members often ask why we sell certain items in the shed. In the next few newsletters we will be explaining what they are for, starting with Vermiculite and Perlite

Vermiculite, added to potting compost, increases water and nutrient retention and aerates the soil, resulting in healthier, more robust plants. It is particularly good for covering small seeds as it allows light to reach the seeds.

Perlite is used in soil mixes (including soilless mediums) to improve aeration and modify the soil substructure, keeping it loose, well-draining and defying compaction. Perlite is great for rooting cuttings, either mixed with compost or by itself as it fosters strong root formation.

### **THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH**

As soon as the ground is dry enough it is time to tidy up the borders and prepare vegetable plots for planting, but don't go on the ground if waterlogged.

Start early seeds in the greenhouse or on a windowsill. Peppers and chillis need a long growing season.

Prune roses and shrubs such as dogwood.

### **DISCOUNT OFFER FOR MEMBERS**

Have you taken advantage of the discount offered at Swan Pit Nursery yet. GAGA members can get 10% discount on all purchases. Just show your membership card when you pay.

### **EQUIPMENT FOR HIRE**

This season we are offering our hire equipment **free of charge** (except for petrol charge)

We will run through how to use the equipment safely before you take it to use.

*Petrol rotavator - for*

*cultivating/"digging" ground*

*Petrol strimmer- for cutting back long grass and overgrown areas*

*Electric rake/scarifier – for removing thatch, moss and weeds from lawns.*

If you need more information about how and why you would use any of this equipment, talk to Ray Finney or any other committee member.

### **GAGA ONLINE**

Have you visited our FACEBOOK site or our website where you can find our latest news and information?

<https://www.facebook.com/gnosallallotmentsandgardens>

<https://gnosallallotments.org.uk>

It contains information on current events, shed opening times, prices and useful safety information about the chemical fertilizers and other products we sell.

### **COMMITTEE**

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Lynn Whittick.... Secretary

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Ian Smith ..... Q Treasurer

Sallyann Brannon ..... 51

Liz Gardner

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 by phone/e-mail.