

GROUND BREAKING!



2019

NEWSLETTER

of THE LOW MOOR ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

www.lowmoorallotments.co.uk

@LowMoorAllots



ASSOCIATION AGM JUNE 2019

AGMs can be tedious and boring occasions – but necessary so that your elected Officers and Committee can account for their activities to the membership. We try and keep the tedium to a minimum, try and locate the AGM in a convenient place and at a convenient time, even offer juice and nibbles to follow, but we seem to be unable to attract a large attendance. Perhaps we on Committee should be reassured; if members are happy with how things are, there is no need for them to come to an AGM. But the attendance of 15 on this occasion was disappointing, although there were 14 people who sent their apologies.

So for the boring bit first, to get it over with.

- As Chair I started the meeting with an overview of the year. It included our developing relationship with YACIO, our concerns regarding how the proposed development of Frederick House for student accommodation could affect the allotment site, GoodGym's visit in September 2018 to help clear some overgrown plots and the ongoing volunteer hedge-layers who are nearing the end of the southern boundary work. I recorded the thanks of the Association for all the voluntary work done on the site – not forgetting Committee members themselves, for all they contribute.
- Christine, Site Secretary, spoke of the good relationship with YACIO and her role in inspection and the action process to deal with plots that were being neglected leading ultimately to termination of tenancy.
- The Treasurer's report showed that the Association's finances are healthy.
- A written report from Chris (shopkeeper) was read out, but there were queries raised by members which we were unable to answer. The Committee are planning further discussion with Chris about his role and the level of communication between him and the Committee.
- Election of Officers and Committee. All existing Officers and Committee were re-elected and two new members were welcomed on to Committee – Christine Robertson and Richard Ward.

We then moved to the more interesting part. Three matters had been submitted by members for discussion.

- Should the shop be selling peat-based compost as non peat alternatives were available? (More about this in the next issue.)
- What can a neighbour do if the plot next door is neglected and overgrown?
- Would members consider allowing a significant % of a plot be left uncultivated and let nature have a free hand?

These items stimulated a lot of discussion and differing points of view. The Committee will be returning to some of these issues during the coming year.

Almost the end of another year on our plots. Perhaps next year a few more of us can try and look beyond the fences of our own plot and consider the site beyond. (AJ)

PLOT CRAWL

This took place on the first Sunday in August. Undeterred by the prospect of a 70% chance of a thunderstorm, a dozen of us met in the car park in the afternoon. We visited ten plots and each plotholder talked to the rest of us about what they'd done since taking over the plot, what they were growing, successes and failures and generally gave us lots of information about their plot.



While most of us have been growing the usual favourites, some unusual crops were in evidence, such as tomatillos and quinces. After we'd finished our tour we went to the Kids' plot where we enjoyed a well-earned cuppa and some food.

We thoroughly enjoyed ourselves. It was an opportunity to meet other plotholders whom we didn't necessarily know, to swap experiences and also to be reassured that the problems we each encounter on our plots are not unique to us.

The plot crawl is an annual event and I would recommend it to all plotholders at Low Moor; do join us next year! Up to now, we've always done this in the summer, but the idea of holding one in April has been suggested, so we can see plots at a different stage – what do you think? (John Gower)





Seems amazing to think that the Kids' Allotment is nearing the end of its 16th year of operation! Over the years we've seen a number of kids pass through our hands, but this year's membership ranks as perhaps the most enthusiastic and hard working of them all. We have also benefited this year from a set of parents who have also been very supportive of the plot, helping at sessions, working with the children on their tasks or doing the myriad of things that need to be done to keep up with weed growth, watering, pruning of higher branches and even minor repairs – tasks that the children would struggle to do. Involvement and organising this year has been a pleasure for Robina and I.



We have also seen success. At Fulford Show, Kids' Allotment exhibits gained awards, even against the produce of grown up gardeners, as well as featuring heavily in the children's categories. But it is not the quality of the produce we grow that is most important. Rather we feel that the key successes are the interest in gardening we stimulate, the children's enthusiasm that is nurtured, the skills and knowledge of gardening and the natural environment that they acquire and the enjoyment they get from their Saturday morning gardening.

In the It's Your Neighbourhood category of the RHS In Bloom competition, we again were awarded Level 5 "Outstanding". The judge commented that the Kids' Allotment "enables the children to interact with each other and learn different skills. As well as shared plots the children have



their own plots which they maintain, preparing, seed sowing, planting and cropping.... Both Angela and Robina should be congratulated on their dedication over the years and the number of children they have encouraged into learning horticulture.Their work is invaluable. The parents I spoke to on site much appreciate the work they do."

The pictures illustrate what the Kids' Allotment is all about. Prospective members for next year's group should contact Angela for more information, or to register an interest.

BITS & PIECES

- Anthony has been over to Helmsley walled garden to see about hiring their apple crusher and press. We left it a bit late this year to get enough people with enough apples, but we'd like to do it next year if the demand is there, probably on a Sunday in autumn. Please let us know if you have surplus apples and if you'd be interested in converting some of them to juice.
- For a long time now Stephe and Sarah have stored the petrol tools the Association owns at their home – rotavator, hedge trimmer and strimmer – and been responsible for hiring them out and briefing people on their safe use. As they can no longer do this, we are looking for someone to take over the task. Please contact Angela if you'd be prepared to take this on.
- There's now a foot pump in the shop, bought at the suggestion of an Association member, which members are welcome to use to inflate their wheelbarrow tyres during shop opening hours.
- Over the winter the hedge-laying team will be swinging into action again: contact Simon if you'd like to get involved. sammy.wild@live.co.uk.
- Another task we'd like help with during the quieter months is to tidy up the pétanque area, specifically to cut down brambles and the hedge around the area. It shouldn't take long and we'll probably do it on a Saturday morning.
- YACIO has recently sent an informative newsletter to all tenants by email. If you didn't get a copy, you can find it on their website.
- You can't have missed the new notice boards YACIO have provided for the site, we've got three, one at each entrance to the site. Keep an eye on them for updates.



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York Allotments Charitable Incorporated Organisation (YACIO)

✉ contact@yorkallotments.org

www.yorkallotments.org; for general information such as how to pay for your plot and reminders about aspects of your tenancy agreement, such as hosepipe use and bonfires.