Dear Members,

**Newsletter No 17**

Autumn is upon us, many crops have been harvested, and as usual there are a number of different communal tasks which have to be carried out to maintain and improve our allotments.  Remember that these are your allotments and some effort by all members is essential for them to continue being a success.  If you have not helped in any of the previous work parties the committee and I hope that you will be able to do so in these.  Hot drinks and biscuits are provided and it is also a good opportunity to meet up and chat with fellow plot holders.

**Work party dates have been set for two weekends – 19/20th October and 2/3rd November with the necessary work being carried out between 10am –1pm and 2pm- 5pm on each day.  If a further weekend is required that will be on 9/10th November.**

A major task this year is to improve the entranceway and parking on the lower field which became a muddy quagmire during the last wet winter.  This will involve removing 4/6” of soil which has accumulated over the past 25 years or so to get down to the original hard standing, and then spreading and tamping down scalpings over the whole area - as we did previously on the upper field parking area.  Obviously this cannot easily be done by hand and plot holder Andy Dodds has volunteered to do the first stage with a digger on Saturday morning 2nd November, but then more hands will be needed to spread and plate down the scalpings.

A schedule of other activities for the lower and upper fields will be prepared and sent out by Ian prior to the workdays so that you can see what needs to be done.  If you have any suggestions please send them to Ian as soon as possible so that they can be considered by the committee.

**The annual bonfire party and BBQ will be held on Friday 1st November at 6.30pm on the lower field to coincide with the firework display at Kingsmeadow.**   Mulled wine and soft drinks will be provided and there will also be a charcoal BBQ where you can cook your own food.  Please bring your own alcoholic drinks, fireworks, sparklers etc.  There will be a designated area on the lower field where you can pile up any unwanted timber (after 20 October) and the bonfire will be built just before the party.  Please note that timber with plastics/formica attached cannot be burnt.

The manure scheme commences from October each year and there has just been a fresh delivery.  If you are already part of the scheme or wish to join it (to pick up 30/40 barrow loads each year) please pay the annual £5 subscription directly to me or Joan at 9 Grove Lane or at the Allotments.

Also, everyone can help themselves **freely** to as much wood chippings as you need for paths, mulching etc.

The latest (and past) copies of the NASLG magazine ‘Allotment and Leisure Gardner’ are available to borrow in the two sheds.  There are many useful and interesting articles in the magazine and you can see what happens in other areas.

Finally, as I mentioned in my last message, many people enjoyed Phil Chapman and Janie Churchyards’ music duet at the summer BBQ.  Phil is organising another Spring Grove Acoustic evening in St John’s Parish Hall on Saturday 19th October at 7.30 pm (entrance £5) as part of the nationwide Oxjam Festival raising money for Oxfam.  If you are interested please contact Phil on pjaandt@hotmail.com.

I look forward to seeing you on some if not all of the workdays, and at the bonfire party.

Karol Smal

Chairman

On behalf of the AGAA Committee