



# GOLDERS GREEN ALLOTMENT & HORTICULTURAL ASSOCIATION

November 2012 Newsletter:

Dear Member,

**Self-management:** We seem to be back on track for self-management, Barnet have been very slow at its end of the process but over the past few weeks that all seems to be changing and the good news is our site survey is being done next week which is very positive.

As you know Barnet had announced a huge hike in rents for April 2013 but as we are a little more confident we will be self managing by then, this will not apply to us.

However, if Barnet have not fulfilled their pledge to have us all up and running by April, we will fight the council if they try to insist we have to pay the higher rents in the eventuality that leases are not signed by next April but we are quietly confident that it won't come to that.

We will keep you posted as things develop in an updated newsletter posted on the trading hut notice board and the notice board in the car park nearest to Tesco.

**Free Composted Waste:** This is very popular and is usually delivered during the week. We try to alternate between the two car parks. However this year most of the loads we've received have been in the main car park. This compost is supposed to be for the benefit of the whole site, but we have had many complaints from plot holders that this compost disappears within an hour or two of its arrival, with a handful of ploholders regularly taking far more than their fair share. If this continues, the deliveries may be halted and all plot holders will have to collect the free compost from the council sites instead.

**Bonfire Reminder:** Bonfires are permitted between November and April. After 4pm in October and on the first Wednesday of July,

August and September. Please think very carefully before lighting a fire. Dense smoke (ie from wet stuff) and fumes are forbidden and if seen will be put out. Do NOT leave your fire unattended. Plot holders who persistently do this may be evicted. We get more complaints from our neighbours about this than anything else!!

**Security:** The nights are drawing in again and this is the time historically when we get some security problems on the site. The good news is that the Hendon Football club building has virtually been demolished – last year various groups of squatters moved in and were the probable cause of a lot of our break-ins. However we should never be complacent and we are looking at a special camera with the intention of mounting it in a camouflaged place. These cameras take video when they pick up something moving. They are extremely effective and mainly used for catching wildlife, which ours would as well. Will keep you posted on that.

**Trading Hut:** The hut is open 2.30 - 4pm on Saturdays and 10.30 - noon on Sundays during spring, summer and autumn. During winter we don't usually open on Saturdays but try to on Sundays except over Christmas. More volunteers are needed to help staff the hut. It's good fun and you get to meet and chat to other plot holders. If you think you would like to help share the load it would be very much appreciated and so please let someone know in the trading hut if you can help during the times above. Training will be provided.

If you have any queries of your own, or helpful suggestions, ideas and or requests for stock or wish to volunteer, we will put a comments box on the counter in the hut. Please put your name, phone number and email with whatever query/request you have

and one of the committee will endeavour to answer you promptly.

**July – Summer BBQ:** If you didn't manage to come to our summer BBQ you missed something really nice. It was a great success again, with twice as many plotheholders and their families attending. Make sure you try and come to next year's. Thanks again, Jeremy, for doing the cooking and organizing the event.

**Chicken run!** You may have heard that we have been considering the possibility of allowing chickens to be kept by some plotheholders. We had a request and are currently running a trial experiment (for a year) with one plotheholder who now has chickens. We will let you know how it goes and also canvas your opinions about this for discussion at our next AGM in March. Nobody else can keep chickens until the end of the trial. We still have to defer to Barnet Council on all such matters but once we go to self-management, we can make our own rules about this as an association and we will put this on the agenda for our next AGM in March 2013.

However, we would always need to ensure the following rules:-

1. Chickens kept in conformance with RSPCA welfare standards on size of run and on their day-to-day welfare before the chickens are installed and regularly inspected afterwards.
2. You must get permission from the committee in writing and have a signed agreement between the plot holder and the association and accept the rules and regulations governing the keeping of such livestock. **Any breach of that agreement would involve immediate removal of chickens and potential forfeits.**

**Annual General Meeting:** This takes place in March each year (a letter is sent out announcing the venue and date about a month before and there will also be a notice on the boards at the trading hut and bottom car park). This is your chance to propose and elect new officers and new committee members, make suggestions for improvements to the site and to meet other plot holders. If you are a new plot holder,

you can find out more about the association as well. Please make the effort to come. Once we are in self-management, we, as an association, effectively run ourselves. That means every plot holder has to play their part, on some level, in making sure that we do the best for ourselves and future generations of plot holders. **Next year's AGM will be a very important one because of moving over to self-management!**

You will be rewarded with a glass or two of wine!

**Loos on Plots:** We have had some complaints about a plotheholder having built a loo on their plot. This is NOT allowed and we have already asked the plotheholder to remove it immediately and sanitize the area. This is a health and safety issue and simply not acceptable. If you have built yourself your own private loo, please get rid of it before we have to ask you to.

**Thanks:** We would like to say a huge thank you to the following members:

To Lee, for his unstinting help with the machinery and with the various jobs that need doing using it.

To Brian, for his brilliant work improving the planting of the common areas of the allotment.

And to Nick, for laying the cement on the trading hut floor – vast improvement! And for getting the website (see below) up and running.

Please feel free to email us on [sarathbell@gmail.com](mailto:sarathbell@gmail.com) if you have any questions about anything.

And lastly, if you have access to the internet please have a look at the association's website [www.ggae.org.uk](http://www.ggae.org.uk). If you have any suggestions for the website please let us know.

We are going to email this newsletter to those we have email address for. **If you didn't receive this by email** but did by post please would you be so kind and email [sarathbell@gmail.com](mailto:sarathbell@gmail.com) if you have an email address which you haven't passed onto us. Many thanks.

Sara Bell, Chair and  
Susan Berry, Vice Chair