

June 2019 Newsletter



Carnival

I would like to thank Becky Minshall (and her sister), Helen Craig, Veronica Windmill, Clive Phillips, Ronessa Cooper, Andy Bell and Debbie Coope for all their help setting up the Association's carnival stall, and for manning the stall throughout the day. Big thanks also to Bob Peggs for donating the hanging baskets for the raffle. We made £144.50! Apologies are due to the lady who arrived before the main team and waited for an hour, I am so sorry for your wasted time, and thank you for making an effort to come.

New Padlocks

I am sure you have all noticed that the padlock suite on site is now very old and starting to fail. The committee have been looking at options for replacements for a couple of years now and have been in the process of obtaining quotes for the last couple of months. Due to the amount of keys we need, it hasn't come cheap, but as the old padlocks are obsolete and we cannot buy new locks to match the current keys we have no choice. From a security perspective, we were due replacements anyway as there are a lot of ex-plottolders who did not return their keys. The cheapest option was also the local option, which is always nice, so we have ordered a new suite of titanium locks for all gates and the containers from City Locks in Peterborough. We also obtained quotes from Pecks at Ramsey, and from padlocks.co.uk but neither were competitive.

There will be one key for each named member and these will be distributed before the locks are changed. The locks will be changed at a set time that will be advised beforehand, and this will be confirmed once the locks and keys have been delivered – hopefully in the next couple of weeks. We have ordered some extra keys, if you would like to purchase an additional key for £5 please let Vicky know as soon as possible. These will be allocated on a first come, first served basis and will only be confirmed upon receipt of the £5.

The committee have also decided that in order to better police the keys, any member leaving the association will not receive their share/husbandry/key refund until the key has been returned. Hopefully this will encourage people to give the keys back when they leave.

Somersham & District Smallholding & Allotment Association
www.somersham-allotments.co.uk

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Asbestos

Unfortunately, there is another large expenditure on the horizon. The association has been collecting asbestos from across the site for a couple of years now, but recently it has been noticed that extra asbestos has been appearing, we suspect, from outside of the site. The Committee have decided to clear the pile to discourage any more dumping. We have instructed Cambridge Asbestos to clear and clean the area of any remnants, we will receive a proper waste transfer note and Environment Agency certificate to show we have cleared it responsibly. We estimate that this will cost somewhere in the region of £3000 from the quote we have received.

As a committee we have a responsibility to use association funds for the benefit of the site, and although this is a large expenditure there is no other way around it. Whoever has been adding to the pile is now costing all of the other members money.

If we were to leave it and it was to be discovered or reported by the Environment Agency they would clear the pile leaving us with their costs and a substantial fine so it is better to clear it ourselves now before this becomes an issue.

We would like to remind members that it is an offence to dump asbestos and firm action will be taken against anyone seen to be dumping asbestos on the site. They will also receive the bill for any future removals!

Dogs

I'm sorry to have to ask, but can I please remind all members that you must clean up after your dogs. Dogs' mess is a health hazard, and I know the majority of you are responsible pet owners, but sadly there are a few letting everyone else down. I have witnessed myself people kicking the mess onto verges, which is incredibly unfair on the committee who maintain the verges and footpaths as they then have to clean it off their mowers. It is disgusting and won't be tolerated.

Community Hub

In case you have not yet heard, Vicky Moseley recently won an award from her employer Eversheds Sutherland for her environmental and charity work. Part of the prize is a £500 donation which Vicky has asked to be paid to the allotment association. It is Vicky's wish that the money be used to renovate the container and landscape the plot around it to make it nicer to use as a community space for barbecues and other social events. If you are interested in joining a Hub sub-committee to help with the work and decisions please let Vicky know and we will arrange a meeting in the near future to talk about plans and ideas.

Best wishes,

The Allotment Committee