

## **Autumn 2020 Newsletter**



**Hi All! Well, what a strange year it has been! I hope you have all been able to make the most of the lockdown period and lovely weather we had over the summer on your plots. The site is now fully let, and we have a waiting list for the first time since I became secretary. I hope you all decide to stay on now a lot of the new members are returning to work. See you all soon! – Vicky Moseley, Secretary**

### **Rent Day**

Rent Day this year will be on Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> October at the container by the King Street gate. We will be socially distancing, with masks and sanitiser to hand. All the details of how to pay will be in your rent letter.

### **Chairman's Report**

One of the points raised at the last AGM was that not enough was spent on site maintenance which we took on board and have improved on this year.

We have had a grab lorry in to remove approx. 26 tonnes of unusable rubble from across the site, we have cleared 1.5 tonnes of scrap metal, at no cost to the association, that had accumulated over the years. We ordered two 20 tonne loads of road-scrapings to repair the roads around the site.

CF47-50 have also been cleared, ploughed, and subdivided into half size plots which are all fully let. We would like to thank Alan Underwood for all his help with this project! We would also like to thank Alan for his help after one of the gates was stolen back in May.

We have removed a big trailer load of tyres from the site, importing waste such as tyres, carpet, rubble, and especially asbestos is not allowed for any reason and may result in your tenancy being terminated. It has cost the association a fair chunk of the budget to clear all these areas and we do not want any area to become a dumping ground.

We will be implementing a site risk assessment to provide evidence, should it ever be needed, that certain areas such as wells, pest control are checked periodically.

We are aware of an issue with badgers undermining the Chapel Field trackway near the Old Rectory so we will be contacting the Diocese of Ely, who own the land, to see if there is anything we can do about it.

Finally, I would like to thank the Committee for their hard work this year. They spend their own free time on site maintenance and it is often a thankless task. Please can I remind members not to leave wire/rubbish in the verges as this causes damage to the committee members own mowers.

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### **AGM**

The Committee have taken the decision to postpone this years AGM because of the pandemic situation. We were unable to secure a hall booking, and now with Boris' "Rule of 6" the committee are unable to meet all at once, let alone have a full AGM. It is our responsibility to keep our members safe and we believe that a postponement is the most sensible course of action in these unprecedented times.

### **Site Security**

Please can I remind all members that security is everyone's responsibility. We are still seeing padlocks left unlocked on the gates and gates being left unlocked after people have left the site. All members have keys so even if you are not sure if anyone else is still on site you can lock the gates behind you.

We have had reports of members speeding on the roadways around the site, please bear in mind that a lot of pedestrians with dogs and children use the roadways so would ask you to drive sensibly.

Some antisocial behaviour has been reported regarding a group of teenagers throwing apples, walnuts and stones at a greenhouse on the King Street footpath side. We would encourage any members with damaged property to report it to the police, as we are unable to report it on your behalf.

We have also had some difficulties with a resident on King Street causing a nuisance by bombarding us with letters and e-mails about a tree he wants cut down because he thinks it will block his light as it grows. He has also been harassing the chairman by waiting outside his home and filming him. This is now being dealt with by the police so if you see anyone acting strangely on the site please let us know as soon as possible!

There have been reports of people stealing fruit from the trees on the site. If you see somebody that you don't recognise on a plot at any time please do let us know about it. Only challenge them if you feel safe and comfortable to do so.

### **Pest Control**

Members are responsible for pest control on their own plots. We have started to see increasing numbers of rats on some plots, particularly those with chickens. Please store any chicken feed in a suitable container and keep the runs as clean and tidy as possible. If you need poison or bait stations please contact Paul O'Hara who will be able to help you.

### **Social/Community update**

Unfortunately, we have had to make the decision to not run the pumpkin stall this year. With the cancellation of the carnival earlier in the year it has been a quiet one for us. Hopefully we will be able to do more next year but this is largely dependant on the COVID situation! It is the site's centenary next year so it would be good to hear some ideas from members on how we could mark this occasion!

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[www.somersham-allotments.co.uk](http://www.somersham-allotments.co.uk)

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We are still hoping to move the other container from CF14 to KS2c to keep them both in one place. We will also be moving the toilet to behind the container on King Street. We will be landscaping around the containers when they are both in situ, with some fencing, planting etc to make it a bit more appealing.

There are a few places available on the Allotment Management Committee so please let Vicky Moseley know if you are interested. We usually meet for a couple of hours on the second Tuesday of each month.

Stay safe, and we'll see you soon!

**The Allotment Committee**