



KASHS Newsletter

June 2023

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Annual General Meeting

The AGM, held on 19th April 2023 at Knaresborough Working Men's Club, was well attended by sixty members, with eighteen apologies. The atmosphere was very upbeat and positive, with members chatting and enjoying the evening.

You should have received a summary of the meeting, via email. The finances are in good shape and we have ambitious plans for the future. Hannah Gostlow, as the Knaresborough Town Councillor responsible for the allotment, gave a talk about how KASHS and the Town Council are working together. Our lease is up for renewal this year and we are in the middle of negotiating a new lease.

Although our rents will continue to increase, the rate of increase has been halved, compared to the old lease and the money we pay for our rent, which last year was £2490, is the sum that we can recoup for the allotment. Last year Knaresborough Council paid for the hedge cutting, along the cinder path. We have schemes to improve the site, such as road repairs, fence improvements and path laying, but if you have any ideas for improvements, please contact the committee.

New Site Shed

We had no idea on how difficult it would be to get permission for a structure that would serve as a large store for the allotments. Harrogate Borough Council blocked our plans for a shipping container near the car park, so we changed our plan to a 12 foot wide wooden shed. The new North Yorkshire Council seemed to think we would still need planning permission, which was hugely frustrating.

However, we are please to report that we now have the go-ahead, so will soon be able to securely store tools and offer an improved site shop.





Site Entrance

As those of you who travel to the allotments by car know, it is increasingly difficult to turn right into the site from Stockwell Road, as the entrance is often blocked by traffic. We are working with Hannah Gostlow to get a 'Keep Clear' sign on the road and have urged NYCC to improve the road surface, as it particularly dangerous for cyclists. We have also submitted an objection to the demolition of 12 Stockwell Road, to make way for 19 apartments. We are worried this will further congest an already busy road.

New Accessible Toilet



As you are aware, our existing toilet is not working and we need to replace it with an accessible toilet.

A lot of hard work has gone on behind the scenes and we are delighted to report that commuted sums have been granted.

Committed sums are monies given to the council by the builders of local new housing estates and is ring fenced for allotment use.

There are a lot of toilets out there, with various technical differences and a price range from £5000 to £15000.

Many thanks to Maggie Boyd and Matt Coley for working hard to research the best option. We hope that our new 'SheepShed' toilet will be delivered in time for FEVA!





Hawthorn Avenue

This year, five of the six plots at the Hawthorn Avenue site have new members who have been experiencing problems with general management at the site, so a group from the committee went to the Hawthorn's to meet member's and discuss an action plan. As a result of this meeting, a WhatsApp group was started and now the plot holders are communicating well and working together to run their site as a community. On the back of this success, the committee is now considering setting up a KASHS WhatsApp group, as we feel it would be a more efficient way to organise little things, such as sharing produce, and getting advice. Please let us have your views on this.



feva

Sunday 13th August

is the date of the

FEVA Open Day

The basic structure of the event remains the same, with a quiz trail round the site and visitors choosing their favourite plot, Community Stars will once again run the café, there will be a KASHS plant and produce stall, outside agencies, such as Yorkshire Rotters, will be running their stalls and there will be activities to engage the children. This is a community event and as always, we ask all members to get involved in some way. Plots should be in a good condition and if possible, we like plot holders to be on site to engage with visitors. We will need members to set up the site and put up and take down gazebos, stalls will need staffing and we will need volunteers to run activities for children and welcome visitors at the gate. More details and requests nearer the, but please put the date in your diary!

Plot Inspections and Changes to the Disciplinary Procedure

We currently have a waiting list of 60 people and the KASHS committee is determined to ensure that plots are used productively and are well managed. At our last committee meeting, we changed our disciplinary procedures to bring them in line with guidance from the National Allotment Society, making them more efficient and fairer to all.

When an inspection highlights a problem, we will contact the tenant by phone, in the first instance. This will be followed up with an email, detailing any conversations. If we don't get a satisfactory response, we will draft a letter. The tone of this letter will be formal and will again explain how the tenant is breaching their tenancy agreement, for example excessive weeds or lack of cultivation. The tenant will be asked to respond within 14 days with an action plan of how they intend to bring the plot back up to an acceptable level of cultivation, or an explanation of extenuating circumstances. If after 14 days we have not had a response and the plot remains in poor condition, we will issue a final warning. If after another 14 days the necessary improvement has not taken place, notice to quit will be issued.

It is important that everyone understands this process, so that problems can be solved amicably. Most people respond positively and politely, however we do have occasions when people take offence and/or ignore our correspondence. As a committee, we endeavour to respond empathically to ill health, work, family commitments and other mitigation; however abusive, threatening or intimidating behaviour, towards any member of the committee, will not be tolerated.

If you find you are struggling with your plot, please be proactive and contact us as soon as possible. We do not like to lose tenants and will help wherever we can and always try to grant requests to reduce the size of a plot.

Pizza & BBQ Night!

On Saturday 17th June, we used our pizza oven for the first time, along with the BBQ.

The event was well attended and everyone had a great time! The pizza oven really produced an incredible heat and, under the expert eye of Neil Crossley, cooked a pizza in just a couple of minutes!

We will be organising further events, with the focus on families with children.

The pizza oven and BBQ are available for any member to use with family and friends and we can provide tools and instructions. Please contact Neil Crossley or Rob Snow, if you would like further information.



Water Use

It has been very dry and the forecast suggests a continuing lack of rain. It is better that our



plants get watered, than shrivel up through lack of care, however, please be mindful of your water use and use your water butts wherever possible to reduce waste and keep the water bill down.



Break-Ins

Unfortunately we have at least three cases of youths coming onto the site causing damage. Locks have been smashed, sheds broken into and tools removed, as well as attempts made to damage the camera. The good news is that we have clear images of the youths involved, which have been forwarded to the PCSO who visited us. Progress has been made and the tools have been returned.

Most of the events are happening between 18.00 and 21.00, so we hope that the presence of members on the site at this time will deter intruders. If you feel confident enough, please shout at them to go and record evidence of their presence. However, the priority is your personal safety, so take care to avoid physical confrontation and call the police immediately if you feel threatened in any way. We will continue to develop the security of the site and hope to install more cameras soon.



Two Shows to Enter

On 28-29th June, Rob is involved in judging the eight allotment sites in Harrogate, which is organised by Harrogate and District Allotment Federation (HDAF). To prepare they had a dry run by marking our Stockwell Road site and the judges were very impressed with the tranquillity of the site and the flower borders, alongside the main track. We were judged as having a gold standard allotment!

On the afternoon of Sunday 20th August, HDAF have their wonderful show in the Valley Gardens and we really need entries. For £3 you can enter as many classes as you want and you are likely to end up in profit, as there are cash prizes. There are 88 different classes, including **Vegetables and Fruit, Novelty Vegetables, Flowers, Cakes and Preserves**, if you have never entered the show, there are also **Novice Classes, Children's Classes and Photographs**. We have Show Schedules that explain everything, or you can enter online. See Rob Snow or our HDAF Rep. Beth Sarmiento for more details.

Knarborough in Bloom have a Best Allotment category that they are judging on 3-4th July. The closing date for entries is Friday 30th June, we have a number of superb plots on site and we really need entries. Either apply yourself online or see Rob, who will try to get your plot entered.

Other News

The HIVE

The building materials in the car park area are for 'The Hive' (Plot 7b). We are now working closely with Amanda to ensure that the improvements to the plot will not affect the peace and tranquillity of others. The aim of the HIVE is "...to educate, engage and empower children, youth and the community in re-imagining a creative, resilient, adaptable and a thriving place for current and future generations to live, work, learn and play in." I am sure that KASHS members will approve of these principles. If you would like more information, visit the website to further understand the principles of the group. The committee will monitor the practices of the group, to ensure that it has a positive effect on the site.

Gardener's World

Gardener's World are returning on 2nd July to visit Maggie Boyd on her plot (7c). Please let's have people down working on their plots, however when they are recording, we need to be quiet and give them a bit of space.

CONTACTS

In order to help us continually improve the site, we would like to hear from you if you have any ideas, issues or if you are interested in joining the committee.

Please contact one of the committee members below.

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