

Alers Road Leisure Gardens Association Summer Newsletter – June 2021

Chairman:	Adrian Hawthorne	Plots 94B/99
Secretary:	Debra Collins	Plot 5
Treasurer:	John Hollands	Plots 62/110

Message from Secretary: This is my first Newsletter since taking over as secretary from John. I am very grateful that John is still around to help and advise me in this role. I have enjoyed meeting and getting to know more members on the site. When I have shown prospective members around, they are all very impressed and admire the flowers and crops growing.

If anyone would like to write a piece for the newsletter, to share top tips, knowledge / experience, what has worked well, or not worked well to help beginners and new plot holders. Likewise, if anyone wants to ask a question or want advice, they can be sent to me via the email address. Lawrence and Sarah (new plot holders) have written a small piece which you can read at the end of the Newsletter.

Plots: Our site is now fully let and we have 14 people on the waiting list awaiting a plot, I would like to welcome Angela (68b), Hugo (68a), Ricky (19A), Andrea (34), Angelina (64b), Sarah (98b), Paul (101), Patricia (103b) and their families to the site and wish them all well with their allotment plots.

Main Gate – Should be locked at all times except Sunday AM. There are other times when the gate does need to remain open – Deliveries to the Shop; Delivery of Machinery; Visitors to site. If this is the case there will be a notice on the gate asking for the gates to be left open – they will be closed once the delivery has finished. If there is no sign, please ensure that you lock the gate as you enter and leave the site. Recently, it has been noticed that the padlock has been left open. Having the gate locked makes the site secure and can be reassuring for some of the ladies working on site alone, knowing they are in a safe environment.

Toilet Block – We are very lucky to have a toilet block on site. Unfortunately, despite all the notices including the large banner that is now in the toilet block it continues to be misused. Please, Please DO NOT put anything other than toilet paper down the toilet. We continue to find that nappies etc are still being dropped down the pit. John has reported that disinfectant and t-rolls keep going missing from the Toilet Block. Please do not take any of the products from the toilet block.

The toilet block is in need of some essential maintenance. The floor needs painting and the structure needs treating. The boards to the pit also need replacing. The toilet block will need to be closed for a few days to allow this work to be completed. Eddy, John, Richard and Roy (committee members) will be carrying out this work and would like anybody who is able to offer some help with this maintenance to contact them so that a working party can be put together.

Pathways: When the cultivation survey was carried out it was noted that several paths are not being maintained. Please can I remind everyone that it is their responsibility to maintain the path to the right side of their plot in good order. Grass must be cut and the paths free of clutter to allow them to be used safely. Another cultivation Survey will be carried out again at the end of July 2021.

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Thefts: I am sad to announce that there have been some thefts from some of the plots. Members have reported plants, compost, nets etc being taken. This is very sad and leads to distrust around the site. I am sure if people were that desperate for these items someone would have offered them rather than stealing them. Please be vigilant and respect each other's property.

Best regards

Debra Collins (Secretary)

Sarah & Lawrence have recently taken on a plot on our site. They have kindly written a piece for the newsletter sharing their experience of taking on a plot.

Hello to everyone from Sarah and Lawrence, a couple of newbies. We became custodians of plot 98b a few weeks ago and have been busy clearing the ground, constructing cages and supports, and getting crops into the soil. Things seem to have gone pretty well so far despite the somewhat extreme changes in weather conditions. Initially we developed nice sun tans but these seem to have morphed into rust patches as a result of all the rain.

Whilst working we did hope to dig up the odd rare coin, Roman sword or maybe a gold ring, but have been obliged to settle for a fine collection of stones and cable ties! Maybe we'll put them in a display cabinet in the shed. We have mostly used traditional stakes and netting to keep out the pesky birds and bugs but have strayed 'off piste' occasionally. For example, we have utilised auntie Cindy's old rotary washing line to help form a net cage. Luckily she had removed her 'smalls' beforehand. The latest acquisition is a gazebo frame that Sarah found online for a bargain price and is earmarked for use next year as a taller cage. Mmmmh. Anyway, we have now cleared and planted about 50% of the plot, based on minimal experience, so time will tell how many crops will come to fruition. Whatever, happens we 'will take it in the chin' and learn from any failures.

It is fair to say that we have sometimes been a little unsure about how best to construct crop supports, how much space to leave between plants etc., but we have received some friendly advice from our neighbouring plot holder Martin and our neighbour on the other side is the Chair, so we often have a sneaky peak at what Adrian has done and copy him. We just hope he hasn't got a copyright in place, as we don't want to wind up in court. It could turn into another bust up like Sainsbury's V Aldi over their 'Cuthbert the Caterpillar cake!

Joking aside, we have been made to feel most welcome and met some friendly plot holders. We are also very impressed by how well organised the site is and the facilities available. Even on the odd day when we arrive feeling a little jaded, the atmosphere of the place seems to lift our spirits and 'put a spring in our steps;. With that in mind, we bring this article to an end so that we can get back to the joys of allotmenting

Lawrence