

grass CUTTINGS

APR:2016

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Time has passed very quickly since our last newsletter. I am sure you are welcoming this improving weather after our very wet but not too cold winter. Our ground is still very wet and heavy; looking round at our local fields there is still standing water.

Despite the wet soil most gardeners and plot holders have started to prepare or have already planted, my onions and shallots are progressing well, plum and pear trees are already in blossom, lawn mowers can be heard, Roger has already given our main allotment paths their first trim. Our Hoe Down building has been painted inside courtesy of Roger and Elaine; many thanks to them.

Your committee has accepted a quotation to construct an additional manure bay near our Trading Hut and we are near a decision to have a new floor covering in the Hoedown.

Our AGM held at St Mary's Church in March was very well attended with quite active discussions. I am pleased to report all our committee agreed to continue and were voted in by the attendees.

Elaine has thankfully found some additional helpers in our Trading Hut, and opening on the morning of the first Saturday in the month is proving helpful for the members, thanks to all.

This year's Plant Sale will be on Saturday 7 May, we have retained the same prices again for another year, please place your orders early to help Jonathan and his helpers.

Overall SHAS is progressing quite well, we still have 11 on our waiting list, a few plots need some attention, Louise and I will be having our first plot inspection at the end of April.

Trafford have advised that three local allotment sites have been vandalised recently so we are asking plot holders to lock our gates when entering and exiting!

Could I close by wishing you all an enjoyable and productive summer, not forgetting to thank your committee for their hard work on your behalf.

Regards, Don Jackson



SHAS ANNUAL PLANT SALE

This year's plant sale will be held on **SATURDAY 7 MAY**, order forms have either been posted or emailed to all members. Our supplier, Halmans of Peover, provide us with a wide range of competitively priced, excellent quality bedding plants, hanging basket and planters.

PLEASE SEND YOUR COMPLETED ORDER FORMS TOGETHER WITH PAYMENT TO: JONATHAN RICHARDS, 24 CARLTON ROAD, SALE, BY SUNDAY 1 MAY.

Alternatively, orders can be left in the Trading Hut which is open on Sunday mornings from 10.30am until 12 noon. Orders will be ready for collection from the Trading Hut on 7 May between 11am until 12 noon. The Trading Hut will also be open for sales of compost and fertiliser during this event. Please support your society in this event.

FREE TO A GOOD HOME!

Following the refurbishment of the Hoedown we have available a selection of gardening magazines and books, if these are of interest please come along to the Trading Hut on a Sunday morning – they're free. We also have a small selection of seeds, including some for quite unusual vegetables that have been donated; again these are free and available from the Trading Hut.



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TRADING HUT UPDATE

While the majority of the onion sets, shallots and seed potatoes sold extremely quickly we still have a few bags of main crop potatoes left, it's still not too late to chit and plant so if you're behind schedule and haven't yet bought any potatoes please call in and pick some up from the Trading Hut. Once again we'll operate our seedling swap table from the Trading Hut where we can 'bring and swap' surplus plants that we've enthusiastically cultivated at home.

Don't forget we also stock an extensive range of organic fertilisers and lawn treatments.

TIPS:

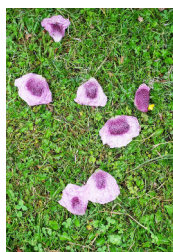
Pollinator friendly plants for an allotment include: borage, marigolds, cosmos, sunflowers, poached egg plant. Plant in between vegetable patches.

To improve the health of your strawberry plants and encourage fruiting, treat with a mixture of potash and sulphate of ammonia (2:1).

To encourage leaf growth on brassicas treat with a mixture of potash and sulphate of ammonia (1:2).

PATH MAINTENANCE

Now that the growing season is underway paths around the site have to regularly mow. Can everybody please be mindful of keeping paths tidy and free of stick, stones and brambles which can make cutting difficult and potentially damage the mowers which are costly to repair.



AGM SUMMARY

Don Jackson (Chair) gave his welcoming address and noted that the Society had had an exciting and financially successful 2015 after working with the television production team. The extra funds will be used to purchase topsoil to help plots affected by extensive flooding and refurbish the Hoedown. In November SHAS participated in the Remembrance Sunday commemorations; following the ceremony we received several interesting articles about the society and will use these as a platform to continue to build a historical picture of SHAS.

Jane Lucas (Secretary) thanked all the committee for their dedication in helping manage the site on members' behalf and special thanks were given to Steve Bingham for his work in upgrading the society's newsletter, Jonathan Richards for organising the annual plant sale and Jane Leicester for organising the talk given by David Metcalf.

Louise Black (Plots Secretary) reported that 11 plots had changed hands during the year with a waiting list of 10, most people waiting less than one year for a plot. Plot inspections took place in April, June and September and letters were issued and plots monitored that were considered neglected.

Peter Baggaley (Treasurer) thanked Jim Howling for auditing the accounts. The annual accounts were presented for the year ended 31 December 2015.

Tony Turnbull (Membership Secretary) presented a summary report of SHAS members which total 162, of which 103 are active plot holders. Tony confirmed that any increase in rent by Trafford would be phased in to avoid members receiving a steep and sudden increase. It was proposed and agreed to keep the membership fee at the same rate of 2017.

Elaine Watson (Trading Hut Manager) reported a successful year and confirmed that prices for stock had remained stable. New regulations meant the slug pellets had to be sold in commercial packaging although prices will remain competitive. Elaine thanked all the volunteers, with special thanks to retiring volunteers Brian King, Hazel Pritchard and Olga Odabashian.

COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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Louise Black Plots, Plot 36
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Elaine Watson Trading Hut, Plot 43a
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David Taylor Equipment, Plot 27
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Jane Lucas Newsletter, Plot 39a
T 973 9704

SHAS Website www.shas.org.uk

SHAS ANNUAL AWARDS

Congratulations to the following whose cultivating achievements were acknowledged at our AGM.

Peter Jackson	(Plot 62b)
Sean and Barbara Riley	(Plot 53a)
Tony Worthington	(Plot 49a)
George Wilkinson	(Plot 2)

A special mention was given to Alan and Janet Wickham (Plot 33a) and Liz and Adrian Horn (Plot 49).