

# grass CUTTINGS

OCT:2024

## CHAIR'S REPORT

First of all, I'd like to thank everyone for their interest in being co-opted onto the Committee. It is great to know that we have such an invested cohort of members who are keen to support the future progression of the site. As you know we only had space for two people to be co-opted so I'd like to welcome Tina Cooper and Bernadette Miller as our newly co-opted Committee members. For anyone else interested in joining the Committee, there will be an opportunity to put yourself forward for nomination at the next AGM, the process and date will be confirmed as soon as possible.

The hedge trim which was completed as part of the newly signed lease has been a huge success, and I hope you'll agree it has vastly improved not only the aesthetics of the perimeter but also pavement accessibility. We have also had the tree line canopy toward the back of the site lifted and some of the trees reduced — this will hopefully mean that we can avoid

these trees from becoming an issue that effects the nearby plots and reduces the risk of these plots becoming unusable. There are still some overgrown tree branches on the pavement side which we are in discussion with the council about.

Finally, I'd like to extend my thanks to the Committee for all their hard work over the last few months and a huge thankyou to the newly formed working party set up by Rosemary Budd. Rosemary has done a fantastic job in pulling this together in addition to her already busy role and I know that it has been an incredible help around site.

If you do have anything you would like to discuss with me please reach out at: [chairman@shas.org.uk](mailto:chairman@shas.org.uk).

**Louise Virabi,**  
Acting Chair



## PLOT RENTAL RENEWAL ARE YOU STAYING OR LEAVING?

We will shortly be preparing invoices to be sent out to all our current plot holders asking for next year's plot rental payments. The plot rental charge for 2025 will be unchanged at 41p per square metre, and the plot holders' membership fee will be £10.

If, for any reason, you have decided to give up your plot, please let us know as soon as possible, by emailing: [tonyturnbullxyz@hotmail.com](mailto:tonyturnbullxyz@hotmail.com). This will not only save us sending you a renewal request, it will also give us more time to offer your plot to somebody on the waiting list and complete the transfer before next year's growing season gets under way.

Finally, if you will have reached the ripe old age of 60 on or before the 31 December and would like to pay the concessionary plot rental rate in 2025, please let me know your date of birth by 21 December 2024.

**Tony Turnbull,**  
Membership Secretary



## TRADING HUT

The Trading Hut is now closed for the winter season. Once again, many thanks go to all our volunteers who helped out during the year manning the hut on a Sunday morning and keeping the shelves stocked.

This September saw the introduction of a card payment machine which has proved popular, but you can still pay by cash if that is your preference. Over wintering onion sets and garlic sold out very quickly during September. Seed potatoes, onion sets and shallots are on order and the Trading Hut will reopen in February 2025.

If anybody would like to volunteer a couple of hours of their time to help in the Trading Hut please contact Janet Cripps: [trading@shas.org.uk](mailto:trading@shas.org.uk). We work on a rota so you would only need to volunteer about one week in every four or five. You don't need any specific skills, just an enthusiasm to help out.

**Janet Cripps, Trading Hut Manager**

## NEW PLOT HOLDERS

Welcome to our new plot holders. We wish you all a most enjoyable and productive allotment experience.

Costas Mapana / Plot 25a  
Harvey Davies / Plot 37c  
Francine McMahon / Plot 53a

# WHATSAPP PRACTICAL TASK GROUP

Can you help out with the occasional practical task on the allotment site?

Throughout the year volunteers help with various ad-hoc practical tasks. We use a WhatsApp group to push out a call for help targeted to those members who have volunteered assistance.

Group members have recently helped clear vegetation from the Hoe Down pavement and manure bay; cleared the wet weather shelter, surveyed and started repairs to the wooden supports for water tap standpipes; helped with Apple Day; hedge litter picking and divided a plot. All these things contribute towards keeping our allotments looking good for the benefit of us all.

If you are able to help out in any way please join our WhatsApp group. Email your name and mobile number to [allotments@shas.org.uk](mailto:allotments@shas.org.uk).



## SKIP FOR DISPOSAL OF NON-GREEN WASTE FROM SITE

We have had multiple requests for support in removing rubbish from site and are therefore planning to hire a skip in November for the disposal of non-green waste items currently on the site. If you have something you would like to put in this skip please email [allotments@shas.org.uk](mailto:allotments@shas.org.uk) with brief details of the item(s) prior to 3 November. Not only will this help us judge the size of the skip required, but it will allow us to collate these items and give other plot holders the opportunity to reuse anything destined for the skip — one man's waste is another man's gold!

The skip is not for any form of vegetation/soil and we would ask that you do not bring items to site from home for disposal. We would also remind plot holders that whilst we recognise that on occasions there are circumstances which make the removal of waste challenging, all plot holders agree as part of our Handbook that removal of waste from site is the plot holder's responsibility.

This is not set to be an annual expense — use this opportunity if you need it and while it is available. If anyone is an 'expert' at packing skips please let us know through [allotments@shas.co.uk](mailto:allotments@shas.co.uk).

## COFFEE MORNING AND SWAP SHOP

Our September coffee morning and swap shop proved very successful for those who went home with a piece of 'treasure' or left things to be swapped. We had donations of surplus plant cuttings from peoples' plots and gardens, and tools and other gardening sundries which were no longer required but still had a useful life. All donations bar a few plant pots found new owners. We intend to hold another swap shop next year for those unwanted gardening items in your shed which a fellow plot holder or newbie on site would be grateful for. Thanks to all those who came along.

## UNWANTED COMPOST BAGS

Please put any unwanted compost bags in the black bins with green twine on the lids by the Hoe Down. These should be in good condition so that they can be taken by other plot holders and used to transport unwanted vegetation to home green bins, or the tip, and then returned to the bins for others to use. Please compost green waste as much as possible on your plot.

## SHAS WHEELBARROWS

SHAS wheelbarrows for plot holders to borrow are kept in the white shed with the green door in the middle of the site which is always kept locked. Please return them when finished using so they are available to others. If you don't have, or have forgotten the padlock code, email [allotments@shas.org.uk](mailto:allotments@shas.org.uk).



## KINGS SEEDS

As part of our membership of the National Allotment Society we are able to purchase seeds from Kings Seeds discounted at around 40% of their normal website prices. If you are interested in ordering from Kings Seeds, and do not have an account, please contact our Seed Secretary Janet Cripps, email: [janetcripps@ntlworld.com](mailto:janetcripps@ntlworld.com) who can set you up with an account where you can view and download the catalogue and order online.





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## APPLE PRESSING DAY 15 SEPTEMBER

You may recall that day as perhaps the wettest day in a very wet year, it's certainly one that I won't forget. Many thanks to Matt and his wonderful family along with Rosemary Budd who came and braved the foulest weather conditions, erected 2 gazebos and 2 trestle tables, drilled the apple press down, juiced and then cleared away and washed up afterwards.

What did I learn from this first experience of apple pressing?

**Wait until later in the year when apples are softer**

**Encourage more plot holders to come along**

**Recruit more helpers**

**Most importantly — don't pick the wettest day of the year!**

Would I do it again? Most certainly, I will organise a similar event next year only do it better.

Thanks also to Jill Little who loaned a fruit press and a juicer which saved the day.



## PUMPKIN COMPETITION 13 OCTOBER

The categories for this year's competition were the same as last year: Heaviest, Fattest, Smallest and Ugliest. We know it has not been a good growing year, particularly for squashes, but sadly despite notices in Grass Cuttings and email/Facebook reminders, only two pumpkins were entered, both from Randel Barrows who won the Heaviest category with a 6kg whopper and at 3.3kg his other pumpkin was the Smallest.

If there are more entries in this competition next year I will continue to organise it in future years. However, if it is not of interest to the membership then sadly next year will be the last pumpkin event.

If there is anything else that members would like me to organise please get in touch via email, when I am on Plot 8 or if I'm in the shop. Details of future talks, the Scarecrow Competition and annual picnic will be in the next edition of Grass Cuttings.

## COMMITTEE CONTACTS

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**Janet Cripps** Trading Hut/Newsletter, Plot 44  
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**Louise Virabi** Social Media  
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**SHAS Website** [www.shas.org.uk](http://www.shas.org.uk)



## BURNING RUBBISH

Fires are allowed from 1 October to 31 March

The Council do receive complaints from neighbours of allotment sites so can we remind everybody that in the best interests of plot holders and neighbours you adhere to the rules which are laid out in our Handbook and if you decide it is really necessary to have a bonfire:

- Only burn dry material, to avoid creating excessive amounts of smoke
- Do not light bonfires if the wind will blow smoke over the surrounding houses
- Keep the duration of the bonfire to a minimum
- Bonfires must be attended at all times while lit
- Ensure that bonfires are completely dead before being left unattended