

BALGA Newsletter – Autumn 2013

Our AGM will be on Monday 20th January 2014 at 7.30pm at St Mary's Church Hall. Please put this in your new diary as soon as you get it!

Issue No 6

Allotment Shop

The last opening day of the Shop is Sunday October 20th. Sales this year are almost £6,000, well ahead of last year, helped by a much wider range of products. Next year we will be opening on Sunday 26th January for the sale of composts. Last year this was well received, and lots of members came to stock up before the season started. We buy in bulk, so you get the best prices, but it fills the shop, and we need room for the potatoes! We will let you know later when the potatoes will be on sale.

Membership

Membership numbers have reached 192. This is a new record, and shows that nearly two hundred people think that our membership fee of £5 is good value!

BALGA Barbeque

This year's BBQ could not be held at Clothall Road site, so we again went to North Road on Sunday 8th September. We had a good turn-out, and lots of interesting conversations and a few allotment visits. We were joined by Phil's Friends of Baldock Green Spaces, as they were working on Ivel Springs. Phil hopes to put his photos up on the website!

Compost

There are supplies of brown bin compost at both sites, at 50p per wheelbarrow load. We have also had a delivery of horse manure at North Road, which has almost gone. We have been promised some more, and will get some delivered to Clothall Road when there is space.

Self-Management

We now have proof that Clothall Road is a Statutory Allotment Site, thanks to excellent research at the County Records Office by Frank Foy. We offer him our sincere thanks, because this should remove the blockage stopping us from taking on Self-management. We only have to get North Herts Council to accept the evidence! The site was leased by Baldock Urban District Council from HCC in 1919 to provide allotments for soldiers who had returned from the Great War! The original site was 7.6 acres, but is now only 3.3!

North Road

Track and Car Park

North Herts Council have agreed to pay for the improvements to the car park when we sign the lease.

Social Programme

Following the success of last autumn's quiz evening, we will be putting on a show called "**You must remember this**" on Friday 15th November at St Mary's Church Hall. The cast are all Hitchin Thespians, and one of them, Andy Johnson, is a BALGA member with a plot at North Road. Please support us on this evening, and bring your friends. Tickets are £10 and include a ploughman's supper. There will be a bar for beers, wines and soft drinks, and we hope also to have a raffle. This is a fundraising operation, and will help us to raise grants for improvements to both sites.

Scaffold Boards

Several members order boards, and we had a delivery in late September. However, our supplier could not give us as many as we wanted, so Phil will place another order in a few weeks. Please let him know if you want any, and it is money in advance.

Best Kept Allotment Competition

Congratulations to the following winners of this year's competition:

Clothall Road, Plot 16A, Ina Siebold-Armitage

North Road, Plot 73/74 Michael Gearing

Best Newcomer, Plot 43A North Road Kevin Smith

Overall Winner, Ina Siebold-Armitage

Once again we must thank our judge, Jo Tofts, for spending the time to judge over 20 plots, and a team of 3 of our members from each site who shortlisted the plots for the other site.

Presentations will be made at our AGM in January

Seed Orders

Please remember that seed orders need to be with Mick Camp by the end of October to receive the extra 7.5% discount. The Catalogue is a special for Allotment Societies affiliated to NSALG, and already gives almost 50% discount over their prices to the public. Try comparing prices at garden centres! Catalogues and order forms still available from Mick Camp.

Working Party CR

As we go to press, a working party has been arranged for Clothall Road to fill a skip with the rubbish from the spare plot, so that this plot can again take deliveries of brown bin compost and hopefully farmyard manure. It is on Sunday 20 October at 12 noon.

Website

Maurice Bickerstaff has now started to maintain our website. The site is www.our-shed.co.uk/ and it is shared with BHS. He has started to remove some of the older material, and replace it with current stuff! Hopefully there will also be some BBQ photos!

Working Party NR

Phil has a donation of another 100 trees to be added to our North Road hedge, and they should be delivered in early November. We will arrange a planting party as soon as they come, and might get some Scouts to help!

If we delivered this it is because we do not have your email address. If you have one, please send a message to Phil (phil@charsley.org.uk) with your name.