

LEYTONSTONE ALLOTMENT HOLDERS ASSOCIATION AT RODING FARM - OCTOBER 2022 NEWSLETTER

Autumn

And then suddenly it's Autumn. The time of mists and mellow fruitfulness. The squash and courgette leaves have been blackened, the potatoes are harvested and it's time to get out the seed catalogues and order the seeds for 2023.

Committee Update

The Committee has met 'face to face' on two occasions since the last newsletter. We have looked to complete on the last of the main projects for the year. Work has commenced on the clearing and reinstatement of the drainage ditch along the eastern perimeter of the site. Unfortunately, in years gone by a great deal of rubbish has been dumped in the area by members. This has made the task a challenging one, and we would ask all members to be mindful and conscious of future generations and dispose of any rubbish they have carefully and offsite in the future.



The ditch has now been reinstated and scoured and we will monitor and see to what extent this helps with the waterlogging higher up the site particularly in the North western areas through the Autumn and Winter.

We have also discussed the best timing for the AGM. After much debate we have decided to continue with a meeting in early January. This allows time for the Officers to complete their written reports and for the Accounts to be compiled and fully audited. It also a time of year when 'not a lot is going on' and we have usually had a very good attendance from members. We will notify members of the date later in the year when we send out the annual reports and nomination forms for the Committee. Please do think about joining the Committee – we are a group of volunteers and we need members to put themselves forward to help out with the running of the Association. If you want to know more about what being on the Committee involves please contact any of the Committee or email the current Chair on lahachair@gmail.com for a discussion.

Willows

At some point in the distant past someone may have suggested growing willows would help with potential waterlogging and drainage on site. Unfortunately, this is not the case. Willows do take up water – but only in the Spring and Summer - when flowers and vegetables need it most. This has left the site with a legacy of huge trees which shade some plots and grow at a prodigious rate. It has cost the Association a considerable amount of money and the efforts of a tree surgeon to remove them. Recently we have noticed there are number of small and medium sized willows growing on some plots. It would be greatly appreciated if members would cut these down, or at least severely coppice them before they become a major issue.

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Annual Flower and Vegetable Show

The Show took place on Sunday 4th September and we had a very good 'turn out' with around 60 members present throughout the day. There were lots of great entries – it's all about taking part – and it was great to see a number of members entering for the first time. Congratulations to all the winners and here's to another successful growing season in 2023.



Seeds Orders – Kings and Dobies

Discounted seeds are now available through :-

- 1) The annual Kings seed order – completed orders must be returned to the Trading Hut by Sunday 23rd October together with a cheque made payable to LAHA or cash. Please don't forget to add postage. Unfortunately we cannot accept any 'on line' payments as this has caused complications with the accounting in previous years.
- 2) Seeds can also be ordered directly from Dobies <https://www.dobies.co.uk/> at any time of the year using the discount code SUGD1204Z.

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Plot Number Competition

Thanks to everyone for adding new numbers to their plots and congratulations to our winner Anna Farish on Plot 17B who will receive a seed voucher for £20.00



Topical tips and Cultivation Advice

- 1) Now is the time for the Autumn clear up and digging, moisture levels should be just right – moist enough to allow a spade or fork in easily but not so wet that it all turns into a ‘claggy mess’
- 2) It is well worth composting any green waste – if you mix 50% green waste (grass cuttings, stalks, etc) with 50% brown waste (wood chip, card paper) in layers around three to four inches deep you should have very usable compost to spread on your soil by the Spring.
- 3) Squashes and pumpkins have grown well this year – and should be ready to pick – ensure you retain about one inch of the stalk on the fruit when you cut them as this will help the fruit store well through the winter. They should be kept in a cool, dark, frost free place.
- 4) Any remaining potatoes should also be harvested – they can stay in the soil – but I find they are much more likely to be subject to slug damage and its so much harder digging them in the wet and cold.
- 5) Garlic, onion sets are available from the Trading Hut and can be planted any time now through to late November. Broad beans can also be sown and they will germinate and grow though the Winter producing beans early in the Spring.
- 6) And don’t forget to complete those seed orders!

Finally ...

If you have any suggestions, or concerns regarding the site please do not hesitate to contact a committee member – please remember we are all volunteers, not paid employees – so offers of help as well as suggestions for improvement are needed if we are to action your great ideas.

LAHA Committee