

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2014



above: ash sapling, small enough to be weeded;
left inset: pruned ash, kept as bush; left: mature ash tree

this expenditure is unavoidable, as we need to be responsible in managing the mature native trees on our sites e.g. pollarding the poplar on Aden Terrace every three years or so.

- However, we need your help to avoid unnecessary expenditure through:
- removing self sown saplings while still small enough to weed (see ash sapling in between the strawberries, spinach and forget-me-nots in photo 2)
 - pruning small trees and shrubs on our plots ourselves before they grow large enough for this to be a professional job (see ash kept as bush on bottom right of photo 1, which unattended would become like the mature ash tree top middle of second photo)
 - ensuring any fruit trees planted are on dwarf rooting stock, so that they remain manageable

If you are unsure about when and how to prune, or would like any help or advice, please do ask your site rep. Any prunings of under 8cm(3") in diameter can be put in the Hackney Council brown bins for garden waste recycling - another reason to prune before growth gets too large.

Tree management

Prune tree growth to prune fee growth

“Great oaks from little acorns grow” is in many ways a very positive proverb, but trees can be a mixed blessing on allotments. While trees can be useful, fruitful and beautiful, they do limit the light and water available to other crops. Thus a balance needs to be struck, particularly on our small Hackney plots. Each year, a substantial amount of HAS funds is spent on professional tree surgery, leading to expenditure exceeding income. Some of

WORKING GROUP ON THE PROMOTION OF ALLOTMENTS

We will soon think of a better name, but this is the group set up by the AGM to both promote allotments in general in Hackney, and to see what can be done to acquire new sites and get some movement on the waiting list. The group is open to all members, and anyone wanting to get involved, please email Steve Newcome at : newstokeysteve@yahoo.co.uk

ATTENTION ALL PLOTHOLDERS

NEW GROWING SEASON

Despite the rather soggy start to the year, all plotholders are expected to show signs of getting started by the end of March. The Neglected Plot Policy is being operated with renewed vigor in the face of the long waiting list. Site reps are required to do an informal review of their sites by the end of March and to be in contact with any plotholder who is not showing signs of plot cultivation. They will be reporting back to the April meeting.

2013 AGM

The 2013 AGM took place on 6 November, a month later than usual due to problems over the hall reserved at the beginning of the year. It is the intention to revert to October for this year's AGM.

There were two important issues discussed at the meeting. The first was the continued frustration over the length of time those on the waiting list were having to wait for plots. The meeting agreed to the setting up of a small working group, drawn from those on the waiting list, to try to

promote allotments in general in Hackney and to champion getting new sites. Steve Newcombe, who is a waiting list member, has been co-opted to the Managing Committee to ensure that this issue is kept in mind throughout the year.

Secondly, the new Constitution and Bylaws were approved. These are largely a re-write of the existing documents, but better organised and expressed in general terms to that any new concerns can be subsumed under broader clauses.

The new Constitution, Bylaws and AGM minutes can all now be found on the Hackney Allotment Society website.



Eugene's pumpkin

From Spring Hill site, Eugene Clerkin and his rather large pumpkin. If you can match this or even beat it this year, please send a photo to hasnews@mac.com.

ARE YOU THE COMPLETE KITCHEN GARDENER?

Is your garden, allotment or window box your pride and joy?

Do you grow your own fruit, veg & flowers and do you know what to do with them?

We are looking for talented amateur kitchen gardeners who have the skills and the dedication to compete in

BBC2's 'THE BIG ALLOTMENT CHALLENGE'. Someone who can cultivate the perfect carrot, make their green tomatoes into award winning chutney and turn their dahlias and sweet peas into floral arrangements fit for a Queen.

We are offering successful applicants

the chance to turn a plot of land into a patch of beauty so if you have the skills to compete and are interested in featuring in our series, please contact grow@silverriver.tv or call 0207 907 3401 for an application form.

The deadline for applications is 12pm on the 13th of March 2014

FREE ADVICE TO HAS MEMBERS

There is a lot of free advice about growing vegetables and fruit available on the web. Some of these are listed below, but if you know of others, tell us about them.

» ROYAL HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY (RHS)

Over the last few years, the RHS has expanded its interests into the growing of vegetables, and has become involved in the Master Gardener programmes. You can tap into their advice at: www.rhs.org.uk/gardening/grow-your-own.

This has lists of vegetables and fruits to plan, monthly tips on what to do, a section on allotments and some useful videos.

» NATIONAL SOCIETY OF ALLOTMENTS AND LEISURE GARDENS (NSALG)

Hackney Allotment Society is a member of the NSALG, which gives tips on what to do, has a section on allotments and some useful videos. You are also entitled to use the members area, which you can access through: www.nsalg.org.uk.

This has an e-voucher booklet which may interest you; for this you need to use our username (K3729) and password (nsalg12).

» GARDEN ORGANIC

Garden Organic has one of the best websites for advice. HAS is a member and you can access both the general advice available to the public and the members' area: www.gardenorganic.org.uk/members. You then need to log in to the members site. The username is **hackneyallotments@hotmail.com** and the password is **HAS2014**. The username is a fictitious email address but only an email address could be used as the username. This is probably one of the best advice websites available so do some browsing.

Plot Awards 2013

And the winners were...

ADEN TERRACE

Best plot: Chris Coe, plot 5

Best varied plot: Sofia Craxton

LEASIDE

Most productive: Nick Middleton, plot 5

Best plot: Patsy Hans, plot 13

SPRING LANE

Best plot: Justine Armitage, plot 10

Best newcomers: Helen Bishop and Kate Elander, plot 8

SPRING HILL

Best plot: Claire Tyler, plot 22

Most productive: Maris Frasca, plot 8

Most improved: Liz Riddell, plot 37

SMALL SITES

Most improved: Cara Philips, Plot 2, Queensbridge Road

Best plot: Annie Wilson, plot 4, Spingdale Road

HAS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR

Penny Miller - pmshrink@yahoo.com

VICE CHAIR

Hilary Kerr

SECRETARY

Nancy Korman - secretary@hackneyallotments.org.uk

TREASURER

Hugh Naylor

SITE REPRESENTATIVES

ADEN TERRACE

Vikki Yapp

CHURCH WALK

Valerie Shepherd and Caroline Gilchrist

LEASIDE ROAD

Diana Whitworth and Jack Eldon

OVERBURY STREET

Anna Harding and Amanda Scope

QUEENSBRIDGE ROAD

Phillip Turner

SPRING HILL

Phillip Pearson and Jason Cole

SPRING LANE

Simon Hughes and Helen Bishop

SPRINGDALE ROAD

Rosanna Preston

ST KILDA'S ROAD

Henrietta Soames

INVITATION

WE'RE LOOKING FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE NEXT NEWSLETTER

Can you think of anything you would like to share with your fellow HAS members? Is there anything that's been bugging you for ages? Do you have any questions you'd like to 'put out there' or have you had any gardening news/successes you want to announce? Like Sarah Kissack's article on Tree Management, we welcome contributions from members - with or without pictures. Please send your thoughts to hasnews@mac.com - thank you!