



Charity Office: 10 Fairfield Road ♦ Market Harborough ♦ Leicestershire ♦ LE16 9QQ

Telephone: 01858 419128
Email: admin@mhbcharity.co.uk
www.mhbcharity.co.uk

ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER NO. 2

AUTUMN 2015

This is the second in a series of half yearly newsletters to let everyone know the up to date position concerning various matters relevant to the two separate allotment fields. We hope to produce similar newsletters each Spring and Autumn and would welcome any responses and further input from allotment holders.

ONGOING WORKS

You will have noticed that during the course of the last year we have continued to carry out various works of maintenance and improvements to both allotment fields and it is our intention to keep these matters under review during the course of 2016. We are in the process of preparing budgets in respect of both allotment fields and following the next meeting of the Charity's Estates Committee in February 2016 we will be able to advise you as to whether any further works are proposed.

These matters are to some extent linked in to our medium term aspirations to pass on management responsibilities for each field to an elected and formally constituted allotment association in respect of which we will comment further later in this newsletter.

The management and maintenance of the allotment fields must however be a two-way process and we will be consulting with all allotment holders over the next six months in order to put together our proposals for the future, we encourage you to participate in this consultation process.

SITE SECURITY

We are conscious of the increasing importance of site security and it is pleasing to note that allotment holders at Stevens Street are now keeping the access gate closed at all times, thus making a major contribution towards site security.

At Northampton Road we would like to think that a similar policy can be adopted but understand that prior to this we may need to carry out some works of repair to the gate itself.

It is good to note that the installation of the height barrier at Northampton Road has gone some way to controlling unauthorised access and tipping, allotment holders are reminded that should they need special access at any time, a key for the barrier is available to be borrowed from the Charity Office. Whilst at Stevens Street we shortly expect to erect an additional length of fencing around the duck pond in order to address any issues of personal safety.

COMMUNITY GROUP

During the course of the last four months we have arranged for various works to be carried out at Stevens Street through the "Community Pay Back Scheme", whereby people ordered to undertake community service have been carrying out works whereby each Sunday supervised teams have been onsite doing things such as clearing rubbish, strimming overgrown areas and general tidying works. It is likely that in early December the group will move on to carry out similar works at Northampton Road, starting with clearing the bank of rubbish and then strimming back vegetation to leave it clean and tidy. Once these works have been completed we would ask that



Charity Office: 10 Fairfield Road ♦ Market Harborough ♦ Leicestershire ♦ LE16 9QQ

Telephone: 01858 419128
Email: admin@mhbcharity.co.uk
www.mhbcharity.co.uk

allotment holders do not dump any form of rubbish (including green vegetation) on the bank so that the area can be kept presentable and easily maintained in the future.

SKIPS

Over the last few months we have arranged for skips to be placed on the Stevens Street field and this has resulted in the removal of vast quantities of rubbish and vegetation. We think it is likely that we will continue this process and extend it to the Northampton Road field if we learn that there would be sufficient demand for this facility. It is our hope that by providing a skip at Northampton Road we will address the problem of rubbish and vegetation being dumped arbitrarily around the site. We invite your thoughts concerning this.

TREE WORKS AND CHIPPINGS

By the time you read this newsletter we hope that the works to raise the crown of the now famous Walnut Tree at Stevens Street will have been completed. We have also carried out various other works to remove and tidy other trees on the site.

Tim Alden, who undertakes these works for us, has in the past delivered quantities of wood chippings for allotment holders to use as pathway coverings and/or a mulch. It is likely that we can arrange for this to be continued and would be interested to hear whether or not allotment holders at Northampton Road would like to be given the opportunity to have a similar free of charge supply.

RAISED BEDS

During the course of the last few months we have been investigating the possibility of providing some raised beds on one or other of the allotment fields, such that these can then be used and enjoyed by those that may be less able or restricted to a wheelchair. We have visited other sites with similar installations and will be bringing forward some proposals for a scheme during the course of next year. As ever we would welcome allotment holders thoughts and suggestions concerning this project. As yet no decision has been made as to where any such installation may be sited.

ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

The Charity remains of the opinion that if there is sufficient support, the establishment of separate allotment associations on each allotment field would be hugely beneficial to allotment holders and the Charity. Within the next week we will upload onto the Charity website a brief outline of the implications of establishing allotment associations and would invite you to read these and come back to us with your initial thoughts. The document may be found at www.mhbcharity.co.uk and then proceed to the Allotments section.

Before the start of next season we intend to formally consult all allotment holders concerning this matter and if there is then an adequate level of support the Charity will actively facilitate the establishment of the necessary management committees and supporting structures and policies with a view to the allotment associations taking over day to day responsibility for onsite matters with effect from 1st April 2017. Watch this space!



Charity Office: 10 Fairfield Road ♦ Market Harbourough ♦ Leicestershire ♦ LE16 9QQ

Telephone: 01858 419128
Email: admin@mhbcharity.co.uk
www.mhbcharity.co.uk

WINTER MAINTENANCE

Allotment holders will be aware that during the course of the last year we have tried to encourage all allotment holders to properly cultivate and maintain their plots so as to minimise the degree of nuisance to other plot holders and also to maintain a clean and tidy appearance of the allotment fields.

We intend to continue to do this by contacting individual allotment holders where we see some degree of lack of maintenance and in such cases we will also investigate whether or not the allotment holder would benefit by giving up all or part of their plot. However, in extreme circumstances we will retain the right to terminate an agreement where little or no attempt has been made to comply with the husbandry obligations set out in the Allotment Agreement. We think that this approach is in the best interests of all allotment holders.

CONTACT DETAILS

This newsletter is one part of our process of improving direct lines of communication with all allotment holders, however this is only possible if we have your up to date contact details. Would you therefore please ensure that any change of address, telephone number or email address is notified to the Charity office.

WE ARE HERE TO HELP

Finally, in the unlikely event that there are any disputes concerning any matters, all allotment holders are encouraged to contact the Charity office immediately whereupon we will be pleased to try and assist. Our contact details are as above and the Charity office is manned five days a week. As part of our ongoing management of the allotment field, we will be carrying out regular inspections in the hope that we can quickly identify any problematic areas or issues.

We hope that you have all enjoyed an excellent season and look forward to working with you all in order to continue to improve the amenity and productivity of the allotment fields.

This Newsletter has been sent to all allotment holders who have registered an email address with us. If you have not received electronic copy please contact the Charity Office and we will make arrangements to add you to the Distribution List for future newsletters and other general information.

25th November 2015