

barnet allotment federation

NEWS & NOTES – October 2015

Please send any page contributions, news or events for News and Notes and/or the Federation website to barnetalotmentfederation@gmail.com

Meeting with Barnet Council – October 2015

On 14th October 2015 Gill Saunders, Richard King and Hushang Balyuzi met Tracy Sawyer and Silvera Williams from Barnet Council Greenspaces to discuss the current state of play on allotment business, in particular developments since the last meeting on 7th August. This note summarises the general points covered – Richard King is reporting directly to those societies who asked us to raise specific points relating to their sites.

Overall progress on essential works

With a few exceptions, the essential site repairs have now been completed. For the few that remain, contractors are being lined up to deal with them.

Lagging on water standpipes

On a number of sites, the lagging fitted to standpipes by the Council's contractor has been damaged by birds pecking and animals scratching. The Council will draw this to the attention of the contractor who did the work and will look for a more permanent solution.

Trees

According to Greenspaces, there are outstanding tree works on 11 sites: The Crescent, Whetstone Stray, Daws Lane, Hospital Fields East and West, Lawrence Street, Sanders Lane, Gordon Road, Brook Farm, Montrose Avenue and Deans Lane. In some cases, works have been deliberately left until the autumn to avoid disturbing birds, bats etc. If your society isn't on the list but has outstanding tree works, please let us know. Greenspaces are waiting to hear from the Council's arboricultural contractor when this work will start.

Property issues

The Council is making steady progress through the list of a dozen or so property and related issues – encroachments, boundary problems etc. – though progress by the Council's Property Services department is painfully slow. We are informing the societies who asked us to raise such issues about the current state of play.

Annual returns to the Council

Most societies have now sent their annual returns to the Council covering the year 1st April 2014 to 31st March 2015. They should have been submitted by 1st July. If you have not sent the annual returns for previous years, please do so as well. The returns are important because (a) they are a condition of the leases and (b) the Council uses the information to update their list of day-to-day contacts with your society. An electronic copy of form for making the annual return can be found on the Federation's website here:

<http://barnetalotments.org.uk/files/selfmanagement/Schedule%204%20Annual%20Return.doc>

Our next meeting with the Council is scheduled for mid-January 2016.

A new allotment insurance offer

We have been approached by Bordengate Insurance (BGI.uk.com), a broker that is offering insurance products specifically designed for allotment societies. Since it has been our practice to bring such products to your attention, the details are given below. In doing so, however, the Federation is not recommending the offering; you must consider it in relation to your existing insurance policies and, if interested, discuss your requirements with the broker.

Package options

Cover	Option 1	Option 2	Option 3	Excess
Public and products liability	£5m	£5m	£5m	£250
Contents	n/a	£15,000	£15,000	£100*
Unspecified machinery (UK)	n/a	£5,000	£5,000	£100*
Trophies (UK)	n/a	£3,000	£3,000	nil
Money (UK)	n/a	£2,000	£2,000	nil
Solar panels	n/a	n/a	£1,000	nil
Buildings	n/a	n/a	£50,000	£100*
Annual premium	£78.54	£209.47	£327.32	

*the excess is increased to £250 in the event of claims arising from theft or malicious damage

Optional package

Cover	Limit of indemnity / capital benefit	Excess
Employers liability	£10,000,000	Nil
Personal accident	£5,000	Nil
Annual premium	£98.20	

The above premiums are inclusive of IPT at the new rate of 9.5% as of November; should cover be incepted before this, the premium will be less for the first 12 months.

The policies are underwritten by RSA, Covea and AIG. Policy documentation is not available yet as the scheme has only just been written.

Enquiries should be directed to Nick Bailey - nick.bailey@bgi.uk.com, 07712 667337

If you want to compare this with the other insurance products listed in the Federation's advice paper, barnetallotments.org.uk/files/selfmanagement/Insurance%20Advice%202013%20FINAL.doc, please note that the paper was published in 2013. We shall be updating it later in the year, but in the meantime you are recommended to consult the listed brokers for the current costs.

Cut your own beanpoles

The Woodland Trust is once again running its "cut your own beanpole" sessions on the Trust site called Belhus Chase, nr South Ockendon, Essex, in partnership with the National Allotment Society. They are on Nov 15, Dec 13 2015 and Jan 10, Feb 7 and Mar 6 2016.

You can find a poster giving further information on our website via a link on our News page at barnetallotments.org.uk/news.php

You can turn up for all or part of the session. It would be helpful if you let them know you're coming so they have an idea of numbers.

Publicising your society's events

You are reminded that you can advertise your society's events on the website – see barnetallotments.org.uk/announcements.php.

Contact details for the Federation are on the website at barnetallotments.org.uk/contacts.php