

ALLOTMENTS

Spring 2015 Newsletter



Change in the way Water usage will be charged

You will be aware that the cost of water has increased considerably over the last year which has prompted us to consider water usage across the 7 allotment sites. Our sites vary in size in the number of tenants on each site and historically water charges have been charged equally between all 7 sites.

Therefore we have arranged with Southern Water to take an actual meter reading in April, when the water is turned on and again in October, when the water is turned off. In the interest of fairness to all our tenants, it has been decided that each site will be charged for the water that it uses.

Misuse of Water

It has been reported that some tenants have been seen washing their vehicle or even filling water barrels from the stand pipes and driving away from site with the water. If you see any such activity please report this to your warden or directly to the office.

It is vitally important that we all conserve water where possible.

Changes to waste management

Waste Accumulation – Disposal

Over the last two years or so there has been an increase in the amount of household waste appearing on the allotment sites which is putting a huge drain on financial resources. In the interests of Health and Safety we would ask all our tenants to help us to maintain a clean and presentable allotment site by keeping your plot clean and tidy and by recycling unwanted waste to the recycling centre. We believe that by working together we can improve our allotment sites and keep costs to a minimum. Should large amounts of rubbish continue to appear on the sites the costs incurred for the removal will be passed onto tenants by way of an increase in allotment rent for that year?

Proposed closure of lower gate Vigo Road

Many of our Vigo Road tenants will have noticed a large amount of household waste that has accumulated on the plot beside the lower access gate, it has been reported to our offices that some tenants and local residents have used the lower gate as an access route from Seville Crescent to Vigo Road and leaving their rubbish on the allotment site. In an attempt to deter such activity it has been decided to lock the lower access gate during the winter months (December through to end February).

Parking

Parking at, and on, the allotment sites is always limited, please park responsibly and safely by allowing a good space between cars and by not blocking access paths or causing any obstruction.

Hazardous Material - Glass

The accumulation of broken glass on all the allotment sites has become a serious issue. Our maintenance team has been working really hard to identify and dispose of all glass that we are aware of. Glass is classified as a hazardous material and as such requires professional disposal which is very costly. We would ask that our tenants do not bring glass to the allotment site under any circumstances... The installation of future greenhouses made of glass is under consideration in favor of UPVC greenhouses in an attempt to manage the situation.

Site Maintenance

This year we are introducing a rigorous vermin control programme, we are confident that this approach will have a marked impact on the current situation. The programme will start in April this year and we will put Warning Notices on the entrance gates and at the point of treatment.

Furthermore there are plans to roll out a programme of regular maintenance of the security locks which we believe will extend the use and life of the security locks.

Access Gates – closure

Our offices have been receiving an increase in the number of reports that access gates are being left open. The result is that members of the public have been seen on some sites, an increase in dogs running loose on site and fouling the area have been reported. Requests to close the gates on entering and leaving the site are posted on all our site entrances and we would ask that you make every effort to close the site gates at every opportunity. By making sure the access gates are closed it will deter anyone from entering, who should not be on site. In the interest of site security and the security of any property and that of every tenant, please make sure you close the gate behind you and **scramble the code**.

Allotment Sub Committee Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for June 30th, a surgery is held at 7pm, before the meeting, for tenants to meet the Allotments Sub Committee members and have an opportunity to discuss any allotment matters you wish.

The Sub Committee Meeting will commence at 7.30pm and you are invited to stay and listen while agenda items are being discussed. All meeting agendas are published on our website, and on your site notice board, 4 days prior to the meeting.

Vacant Allotment Plots

In an attempt to improve the condition of our allotment sites for tenants, we are actively maintaining vacant plots by clearing, strimming and covering the plots as soon as possible, after they become vacant.

Please do not remove any belongings left on vacant plots without written permission from the exiting tenant or permission for our officers. In many cases exiting tenants can take several weeks to clear the plot of their possessions. In the interest of tenant safety we have changed the way allotment applicants can view the vacant plots, your site warden/association member will accompany applicants when they visit the site. This has proved very successful with strong feedback from our applicants.

Personal Details

Please help us to maintain accurate records by advising us of any changes to your contact details.

Community Champions

Hampshire County Council is looking for volunteer community champions and wondered if you might be interested in the opportunity below.

Could you be a community champion?

Would you like to meet new people, learn new skills and share your knowledge and know-how with your local community?

Champions will be involved in passing on tips and advice to help local residents make the most of the food they buy, in turn helping to reduce the amount of waste disposed of in the county.

The type of activities you could be involved in as a champion are:

- Giving talks to interested groups, such as community groups, students and businesses.
- Identifying and attend suitable local events to promote food and garden tips and advice.
- Leading groups in activities to show how they can reduce food waste through smart shopping, meal planning, storage and using leftovers in new recipes.
- Demonstrating how to make compost.
- Contributing to articles for websites, community newsletters and the local press.

If you are comfortable speaking to groups of people from all backgrounds and believe that you could use your enthusiasm to help change their habits, this could be a great opportunity for you.

Volunteers will be asked to commit around 30 hours over a year, which could include some evenings and weekends. An interest in food and/or prior experience of home composting would be helpful but not necessary as full training will be given. You will be supported by staff and other volunteers.

Applicable travel expenses will be paid and volunteering can be a rewarding way to learn new skills, gain confidence and obtain references to help with further career development.

For more information email: waste.prevention@hants.gov.uk, or call Zoe Cooke on 01962 832286 or Mike Culver on 01962 846764.