

# Fairfield Allotment Holders Association

## Newsletter 9

**AGM:** this took place as scheduled on 9<sup>th</sup> February and was again a well-attended event - thank you to all those who turned out. The room wasn't totally full, but if any more had arrived, we'd have had to take it in turns to breathe. Your committee remains the same, i.e. Gillian Allen, Jon Barry, George Burnett, Sid Duncan, Emma Grover, John Lambert, Roy Stephenson, & John Weedy. We had a change of chairperson: Gillian stepped down and, there being no-one else willing, Roy Stephenson became the new Chairman. John Lambert remains the Secretary & George Burnett the Treasurer. If anyone does feel like helping out with the committee, or just coming to the meetings, please do - it's never too late to express an interest and we wouldn't like to have the committee getting stale, would we? All meetings take place on Thursdays at 7.30 at the Farmers Arms, and the dates are:

23.03.06, 04.05.06, 06.07.06, 07.09.06, 02.11.06, 04.01.07,

...and 08.02.07 is currently scheduled as the next AGM. And while you've got your diary out, the first **site inspection** of the year takes place on **2<sup>nd</sup> April**.

There were two hot topics at the AGM, one of which was **vandalism**. Not surprisingly, a lot of members are distressed at the level of attacks to the plots and wonder what's being done. The Association has been advised by the police (a) not to take matters into our own hands, and (b) to report individually - i.e. **not** through the Secretary - each and every separate incident. Like the rest of the public services, the police are driven by statistics so we just have to become part of that. All the same there are still some plotters who've complained that the Committee isn't doing enough. The committee would welcome any good ideas about what it - and the rest of the members of the Association - could actually do, short of spending all their time not gardening but patrolling, armed to the teeth... in the meantime a letter has been sent to the police asking for more to be done. You may also soon notice a trial of a 'green' deterrent in places along the boundary fence.

Come to think of it, there *is* one thing we all can do. That's to do as the committee has requested on the gates, i.e. lock them whether we're coming in or going out. It's distressing for some people to know that their efforts to improve their personal security are being ruined by other plotters who leave the gate unlocked. Not everyone feels able to take on intruders, who can slip onto the plots in a fraction of a second. And if an intruder injures themselves on the plots when the gate is locked, their defence is non-existent, while if the gate is unlocked, the Association is liable. PLEASE LOCK THE GATES!!

The other hot topic was the proposed **extension** to the Allotments. There's a strong chance that this will happen and we'll end up with about a dozen or so new full plots and improved vehicular access. However don't hold your breath, or tell your gardening friends there's lots of space up at Fairfield. Nothing's likely to be finalised before the 2008 season, and the waiting list is already in the mid-30s, most of whom are likely to be really keen to get digging. Still, we shouldn't moan - there are places in the south & the midlands where you have to go on to a waiting list to go on to the waiting list, if you see what I mean. Allotments, clearly, are just what we need to keep us healthy and active, & more & more people are realising it.

Have you paid your **Allotment fees** yet? Please pay by the end of the month or the committee will want to know if you really want to carry on digging and delving, so send in the money to George Burnett, 94 Westbourne Road, Lancaster, ASAP, if you've not already done so. And if you're not coming back this year, please tell John Lambert this - it helps with the re-letting of plots. His contact details are: 6 Carr House Lane, Lancaster LA1 1SW Tel: 01524 849371 email: [john@jlambert.f9.co.uk](mailto:john@jlambert.f9.co.uk)

If you're finding it difficult to find the time to get down to your allotment, perhaps you need to consider whether you really should have a plot right now, or let someone else have a go. As our circumstances alter so can our opportunity to make good use of the ground, and for the sake of others who are keen, it might be best for some of us to let go. Counselling services, I'm sure, could be provided for those who really feel the loss - everyone suffers post-traumatic stress these days...

If you don't like what you're reading, & you think you can do better, the editor of this newsletter would like to hear of any potential replacements. Currently, he is Roy Stephenson, 112 Westbourne Road Lancaster Tel 01524 847617 email: [Jenroys@aol.com](mailto:Jenroys@aol.com). He expects he won't stop being Roy Stephenson, but that doesn't mean you couldn't be a better newsletter editor (have I lost you yet?), so let him know.