

Fairfield Allotment Holders Association

Newsletter 6

I'm not sure which is harder - keeping up with the plot, or keeping up with the Newsletter... once you start to think about it, the similarities between the plot & the newsletter are quite striking - but perhaps we don't *really* want to go any further with extended analogies...No? Oh, all right then...

We've *still* got a **Waiting List**, of 21 people who'd like to come & dig with us. And this despite the fact that nine new people started this year - welcome to each and every one of you. I suppose it continues to show what a useful service we're filling, keeping the citizens of Lancaster smiling, etc, etc. One of the new plots has been totally transformed in next to no time, putting old men like me to shame.

Actually, the majority of plots do look as if someone cares about them, and on the whole we present a well-kept face to the town. A few of us, though, don't seem to have caught up with the fact that the weeds don't need a great opportunity to start rampaging, and some discouragement of the blighters is necessary before they make an escape bid. So if that's you, come on down and make your neighbours on the site happy!

While we're in **moaner's corner**, let's get the rest of them away... In some places the **trackways** are being eaten into by plots - my own particular trackway is as straight as a dog's hind leg - and one of our plotholder's duties is to maintain the trackway that we border... and please don't throw your stones on to the trackway, or allow your dog to foul it without clearing it up, because both of these actions are in their different ways dangerous, for the person who mows the track, and for children particularly. And another thing: people have taken to **dumping** 'useful stuff' by the gates, in the hopes that others will find a home and a purpose for it. Please don't - it only gives someone else the job of disposing of it at the tip. This applies to surplus plants, just as much as to your unwanted plant trays. Oh yes, and while I'm around the **gates** - don't forget to **lock** them! Everyone who should be on has a key, so they can all get off, and leaving gates unlocked only asks for vandalism. Right. Thank you. I feel better for that.

On the brighter side - **Fairfield Fun Day** fast approaches - it's on **July 2nd**. John Weedy has booked up a stall and plants, produce, & jams would be received with gratitude on the day, either by bringing them to the main marquee, leaving them by the white cottage, or by contacting John beforehand. His address is 10 Sibsey St, his phone number is 60131, and his email address is j.weedy@lancaster.ac.uk. Helpers would be appreciated - both for the stall and, maybe, for the plots themselves. I'll explain.

The committee's wondering about an **Open Afternoon** to coincide with the Fairfield Day for a couple of hours, from 2-4pm. The idea would be to make a charge for people to come round, but we can't do it without people to take the money on each gate, patrol the trackways, & be available to talk to visitors. If you're interested in taking part, contact Jon Barry by 27th June. Contact details: 16 Cromwell Road, Tel 844113. If you've any other money-spinning ideas you'd like to try running, contact John Lambert, 6 Carr House lane, Tel.849371, email john@jlambert.f9.co.uk.

Please remember that by contributing plants and produce to our stall and helping with the open afternoon you help raise the money which pays for things like the skips, the mowing and the new water supply. So please do whatever you can.

Just a week later, the **Garden Competition** is on the **9th/10th July**, so now's your chance to garden for glory - well, there's no fantastic prizes on offer, so glory is all there *can* be. And you're not going to win if no-one can make out your plot number - they wouldn't know who to give the prize to. So there's another job to go alongside the weeding, edging, pruning & picking... If you're interested in doing well, the judging will be looking at general tidiness of plots, health and variety of planting, interesting or unusual planting, and the renewables - composting, and water collection.

If you're happy to share your **secret tips & hints**, we can all become better gardeners. I'd like us to use this newsletter to share our bright ideas, so please send them in to your editor - contact details below. Here's something I find useful, to start us off: in the autumn, I cover my beds with thick card, covered with manure, compost etc. It suppresses the weeds right through into the spring & by then the card has broken down & only needs light forking-in to ready the bed for planting-up. Well, I'm sure you can do better, so send in your ideas.

This has been a FAHAC production, put together by your editor, Roy Stephenson, 112 Westbourne Road, Tel: 847617, & email: Jenroys@aol.com.
FAHAC? **Fairfield Allotment Holders Association Committee**, of course...