

Glasgow Allotments Forum Newsletter

Issue 2009 - 2010.

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Glasgow Allotments Forum (GAF) was set up by and is run by plotholders. The meetings are held six times each year and provide the opportunity for plotholders from the different sites across the city to meet, share information and discuss issues related to Allotments. The Glasgow City Council (GCC) Allotments Officer usually attends. The meetings are open to all plotholders and to anyone else with an interest in allotment gardening.

Please see over for dates and times of GAF meetings 2010.

GLASGOW'S ALLOTMENT STRATEGY

This long awaited document has now been approved and is official. Booklet copies are not yet available but the document can be viewed on either the Council's Allotment website, or on GAF's own website. We look forward to hearing that a date has been set for the official launch.

GAF's SPRING EVENT: Growing Glasgow.

This very successful event was held in the Trades Hall, Glassford Street. It was made possible by a combination of the generosity of the Incorporation of Gardeners of Glasgow who provided the venue and the organisational skills of a team of GAF members.



World Cafe discussion on establishing a new Allotment site.

From 10am until 4pm on Saturday 28th March, two hundred of Glasgow's allotment gardeners came along and clearly enjoyed their visit. They listened to presentations and demonstrations from a number of gardening experts; they participated in 'world cafe' style discussions; they examined many new – and some old - products and met some very green-fingered children from the Primary schools which have established links with their local Allotments.

THE ST MUNGO TROPHY



A view of Stephen's winning plot 2009

The winner of the Trophy this year, was Stephen Malcolm, Berridale Allotments. Stephen also won last year. Second place was awarded to Max Hartman, Merrylee Allotments and the third place to Alan Murray, Berridale Allotments. The two sites which had the three top-placed plots had 'Open Gates' during the weekend following the judging. These sites were well worth visiting and we hope that more Allotments will participate in 'Open Gates' next year.

The Trophy was presented on the Saturday afternoon of the Glasgow Show, Glasgow Green, where photographs of the winning plots were displayed at the GAF stand.

This year, seventeen plotholders from six sites entered the competition and while this was good, the organisers would love to see more people participate. Next year the criteria will be unchanged for the St Mungo Trophy. But there will also be a Trophy for plotholders whose plots reflect some of the less traditional approaches to allotment gardening.

John Fearn who has done so much to establish the successful childrens' programme at the Merrylee site has donated a Schools Shield for the best schools plot on an Allotment site.

NEWS FROM THE SITES.

Balornock: small section of new secure fencing erected with repairs to existing fence.

Hamiltonhill: removal of large quantities of old waste from site with clearance of four vacant plots

Kennyhill; Social Work Services & Land & Environmental Services (LES) with support from plottolders & other partners cleared an area, built raised beds & a polytunnel and created a wildlife and sensory garden.

New Victoria Gardens: new gates installed for security & to provide access for e.g.skips.

Trinley Brae: new fencing erected; part palisade, part chain link to preserve hedge/tree boundary.

Westthorn: compacted gravel pathway laid.

Oatlands: has had a difficult year during this last year on their old site. Because of vandalism it was difficult for plottolders to be positive; Richmond Park Primary School and another community group opted out because they felt the site was unsafe. Finally, with support from the City Council and Gladedale Developers a new fence was erected which has reduced vandalism. With publicity from the Southside News, the Glasgow Herald, the Evening Times and Scotland on Sunday two new greenhouses have been built and after a successful Open Day in August there is again, a waiting list for plots. Relocation to the new site is scheduled for Feb/March 2010

Please take a virtual Oatlands tour at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=elskldYC2Yo>

LINK TIP CAGES.

It is now possible for Council sites to request one of these cages for disposal of their green waste. This service is free and should be requested via the Allotments Officer. The waste which is removed is recycled so does not go to Landfill. The possibility of this service being offered to Independent sites is being explored. There may be a charge made for this service. At present if Independent sites wish to dispose of their green waste separately, they need to find a skip hire company which guarantees greenwaste recycling. Not all hire firms do this.

RE-CYCLE BINS.

LES Waste Disposal are to set up a pilot project to provide waste and re-cycle bins to Allotments. Budhill & Springboig and Hamiltonhill Allotments will trial these bins and be informed about what can / cannot go into each.

If the bins are successful the service could be provided to all Allotments with the aim of reducing and possibly removing the need for skips.

ALLOTMENTS' OPEN DAYS.

An Allotment Open Day is often the only opportunity for local people to take a good look round one of the best amenities in their area. Sometimes too, it is the only chance for

plottolders from other sites to see how the 'other half' grows.

When – and if - site secretaries notify GAF of the dates and times of their Open Days, they are added to the 'Diary' on the website and included in the Minutes of the GAF meetings.

Open Days must now comply with GCC's Community Events Guide which can be accessed via their website. See also GAF May 09 Minutes for advice on jams, chutneys etc. A very useful document is the guide to organising an Open Day, written by Holmlea Allotment Association. It is on the GAF website.

A NEW ALLOTMENT.

This summer it was a delight to see that the LES Pollok Park gardeners have constructed a **demonstration allotment garden** at Pollok House. It has a greenhouse and is within the walled garden. It will be a most useful resource for both new and experienced gardeners and a welcome *practical* addition to their annual programme of talks on gardening topics. *When we have the programme, we'll put it on GAF website.*

SAGS. (Scottish Allotments & Gardens Society)

www.sags.org.uk

This year SAGS have been overwhelmed by the interest in allotments with over 70 new groups across Scotland looking for land to start growing. The Minister for the Environment, Roseanna Cunningham addressed the SAGS annual conference in June and has promised an 'Allotments Summit' very soon.

There is a strand of 'Grow your Own' in the Government Food and Drink Policy and we hope there will be a working group to implement the proposed actions.

SAGS is involved in three conferences next year: an Allotments Officers Forum with ARI in the Spring; a two day conference in June on the theme of health and allotments and finally an Autumn event in Holyrood with an update on the COSLA guidelines.

If GAF members could collect information about Allotments from around Scotland or from other countries when they are on holiday SAGS would be most grateful.

A.R.I. (Allotments Regeneration Initiative)

www.farmgarden.org.uk/ari

Scotland now has two mentors. Ian Welsh continues to be Glasgow's local source of help.

GAF MEETINGS 2010

Wednesdays, 7pm – 9pm. In Woodside Hall, Glenfarg Street off St Georges Road.

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| 1. January 13 th | 4. July 7th |
| 2. March 17th | 5. Sept. 1st |
| 3. May 5 th | 6. Nov. 3 rd + AGM |