

October 2019

Dear Tenants,

It's now two years since YACIO took over running the allotments from the City Council. We hope you'll agree that there's been an improvement during this time. The priority has been to improve basic services, for example, we've increased the frequency of grass cutting. Behind the scenes there's been a lot of work to streamline administrative systems to make it quicker and easier to let vacant plots and deal with those that are neglected. Perhaps most importantly, we've also honoured our undertaking not to increase rents. We can confirm the cost of plots will remain unchanged for 2020. There's a lot more we'd like to do. Over the next year we'll be looking further at how we can simplify and standardise administration, support and develop allotments associations and improve the condition of sites and the facilities provided. Some of the things we'd like to do may require fundraising. It's important to remember that the only income we currently have is that from rents. YACIO is a membership led charitable organisation. To help us develop our plans, we'd like to hear from plotheolders (everyone with a plot is a member of YACIO) on how you think the allotments should be improved. We'll be having our AGM and Members' Day in the Spring, but in the meantime we'd be pleased to hear your views.

**-Tony Chalcraft – Chair of Trustees**

[tony.chalcraft@yorkallotments.org](mailto:tony.chalcraft@yorkallotments.org)



## *2020 Invoices*

Invoices will be sent out by post in the first week in January.

If you've moved house in the last year, please update us with your new address!

[www.yorkallotments.org](http://www.yorkallotments.org)  
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## *Allotment History*

We are delighted to be able to share a publication about York's Allotment Heritage on our website. This research, conducted by Prof Ross Wilson, shares some fascinating insights into how York's allotments developed, and you may be surprised to learn some interesting facts about your own allotment site.

[yorkallotments.org/yorks-allotment-heritage](http://yorkallotments.org/yorks-allotment-heritage)

## *Watch Out For Leek Moth!*

Leeks have always been one of the easiest and most useful crops to grow. There aren't many other vegetables you can harvest fresh from September to the end of April. Unfortunately, in the last couple of years, a new pest has reached York that looks likely to make trouble for free leek growing a thing of the past. This is the leek moth; as the name implies, a moth that lays its eggs on the foliage of leeks. Caterpillars from the eggs hatch out and begin feeding, initially eating the leaves but eventually working down into the shank of the plant. The first sign of attack is white patches on the leaves. On close inspection the creamy brown caterpillars or, more likely, their greyish cocoons may be seen. Usually it's the caterpillars boring into the leek stem that causes the most damage. This encourages rot so that leeks harvested later in the season are often an unusable slimy mess. Preventing leek moth is tricky. The only feasible option on allotments is to try and prevent the moth reaching the plants by using moth proof mesh. As the moth can be active from April through to autumn, although worst damage usually occurs from August onward, covers should be in place throughout a leek's growth, including as seedlings. Are you having problems with leek moth? Have you found a way of preventing its damage? If so, we'd like to hear from you.

## *Antisocial Behaviour and Abuse*

The YACIO trustees manage 1200 allotments in York with the assistance of Site Secretaries on a voluntary basis. We employ an Administrator to manage all the communications between Tenants and the Trustees across the City. Mostly this goes very well, with our aim to continually improve as we progress, providing better amenities and maintenance over the coming years. Inevitably things do go wrong or disputes arise for a variety of reasons. These instances are thankfully few and far between and generally the issues are addressed and resolved as quickly as possible. When we have cause to intervene, we do so by taking a neutral approach and listening to all sides of any situation. That said, there will be times where Trustees and or Site Secretaries have been subject to abuse. We will not tolerate this behaviour. We want to make it clear that we will consider abuse of Site Secretaries, Trustees, other Tenants or the Administrator as a breach of the tenancy agreement. Persistent offenders or gross violations of this policy could result in the immediate termination of any tenancy agreement held with YACIO. In case of any concern, we will add this subject to our Agenda for the Annual General Meeting, next year.

## *Hempland Lane - Creating a Community Space*

Hempland Lane allotments are pleased to announce that our community space 'Hempland Haven' was completed on time and our summer fair on 14th July 2019 was an absolute triumph. 4 weeks before the event, it was looking doubtful to some allotmenters that the event would be taking place, but the committee stayed focussed. The Community Payback Team had done such an amazing job creating our community space every Sunday, but we were running out of time and key skills. However, with some help and support from businesses and the local community, everything, and I mean everything, slotted into place. The day of the summer fair was phenomenal. We were blessed with an amazing sunny day and were all set up by 9.30am including a fully licensed bar, courtesy of our local public house, The Walnut Tree, Heworth, plus stalls from local nurseries, charities, craft stalls, raffle stall and tombolas, etc. We were all buzzing and excited for the day, but nothing prepared us for the volume of people that came to support us. We were unable to do a head count, but we made nearly £2500 on the day, including £1,100 on our raffle (the prizes were fabulous, all donated by the local community and all of them were won by locals). The money we raised on the day covered the cost of the materials that ARCUS used to help finish off the project. We only went over by a small amount due to legalities, licences, portaloos hire, etc to ensure that the event ran smoothly. All in all, it was an absolute success and we are all so proud of what has been achieved. It doesn't stop there, as we now have easy access raised beds to rent and continue to celebrate our centenary.

*-Hempland Association*



## *Green Lane – Easy Access*

Thanks to a core of enthusiastic volunteers, along with funding from the City of York Council and the Police, two purpose built plots adjacent to the site's car park have been created on Green Lane. One designed for the children of the Oaks School on Hob Moor and the other for adults with mobility difficulties. One plot consists of raised beds of varying heights for the school children and they share a purpose built compostable toilet with the mobility plot. The adult plot has space for six tenants, who each have one wheelchair accessible raised bed inside a polytunnel, together with a locker, and one accessible raised bed in the open air. All of the raised beds in the adult section have a mains water tap attached to them. The Oaks School are now well established on the site and make regular visits during the growing period. Both plots continue to be supported by Green Lane Growers, who keep them in good order. These special facilities on Green Lane Allotments complement similar initiatives on other allotments around the City turning aspirations into reality. Anyone with mobility difficulties, who would like more information about these plots, can contact YACIO.

## *Waste Disposal*

For many years now, allotment sites have been provided with skips for the disposal of landfill waste. Unfortunately, due to changes in the regulation of waste disposal, it is no longer possible for YACIO to arrange for skips to be delivered. In the short term, we understand that this may be disappointing for some tenants. However, we hope that in the long run we can encourage everyone to think about what they bring on to allotment sites more carefully with a view to how to dispose of it and encourage more sustainable gardening practices.



If you have anything you'd like to contribute to the next newsletter, please get in touch!

### **Keep In Touch!**

If you change your contact details please don't forget to let us know! Just drop us a quick note and we can update your records so that we don't lose touch.  
If you didn't receive any emails from us last year, then we do not have your email address on file, so let us know so we can keep you up to date with important notices throughout the year.