

October 2020

Dear Tenants,

It's been an odd year. On the plot the growing season has been mixed. Although we had some warm spells it wasn't exactly a vintage summer. Dreary days in July seemed to be the price paid for the cloudless skies of April and May. Overall though, most crops seem to have fared well. My sprouts and purple sprouting broccoli look especially good. If the slugs and pigeons can be fended off there should be a good harvest through the winter. I hope you've also been enjoying the produce from your plot.

Everyone at YACIO has tried to keep the allotments ticking over during these difficult times. One thing we've been unable to do is hold an Annual General Meeting this year. It's now three years since we took over from the City Council and we very much want to consult and involve tenants more. As it looks unlikely that we will be able to hold a meeting in the normal way any time soon, we're looking at online options. In the meantime if you have any thoughts and comments, either horticultural or about how the allotments are run, please share them.

-Tony Chalcraft – Chair of Trustees

tony.chalcraft@yorkallotments.org



REMEMBER!

Covid-19 is still an issue so please keep washing your hands and remember to keep your distance from others on the allotments. Please follow all current government guidelines. Together we can help to keep all of our members safe!

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Amendments to the Tenancy Agreement

In order to bring the Tenancy Agreement up to date YACIO has made a few changes to the Terms and Conditions set out as standard for all of our Tenancies. The full text can be found on our website at: www.yorkallotments.org/updated-tenancy-agreement

A summary of the changes is as follows:

Clause 1 - Your deposit may be withheld if the plot is not in a lettable condition when your tenancy ends.

Clause 3 - YACIO's policy on antisocial and abusive behaviour has been clarified.

Clause 5 - Confusing wording has been amended. (Fruit Trees can be pruned without permission, all other trees still require permission.)

Clause 8 - Hedges and fences should not exceed 1.5m. Tenants should gradually reduce the height of existing boundaries where this limit is exceeded.

Clause 9 - No barbed wire is to be used anywhere on the allotments.

Clause 10 - No sprinklers should ever be used for watering crops and water supplies should only be used for watering crops.

These changes will come into force from the 1st January 2021. Payment of your annual invoice (sent to you by post in January) will be deemed acceptance of the new terms and conditions. If you feel for any reason that you are unable to comply with these amendments then please let us know as soon as possible that you wish to terminate your tenancy as of 31st December 2020.



Meet The Trustees: Maria Lewington



I have studied and worked within the food and agriculture sector for 15 years, and took on my allotment almost 4 years ago. I enjoy growing fruit, veg and flowers, the more unusual the better! An unexpected side of taking on an allotment was the many new friendships that have developed, with people of all ages and walks of life that I would never have met otherwise. My allotment really has anchored me in my community, and I look forward to many more years of happy times there. I decided to become a Trustee of YACIO two years ago as I am passionate about the benefits of allotments to individuals health and wellbeing and to society as a whole, and wanted to make a contribution in this area.

Favourite fruit: Jostaberry- this fantastic thornless fruit bush produces juicy berries with a taste between gooseberry and blackcurrant.

Favourite vegetable: Chioggia beetroot- I love the colours!!

Favourite month on the allotment: September- you can finally enjoy the produce without worrying how much more there will be, and how much more weeding you have to do!

Clubroot Beaters

Many plotholders will know about clubroot, the fungus disease affecting brassicas (cabbage family) crops. Stunted and dying plants in late summer are the tell-tale signs. Dug up the plants have malformed and distorted roots, hence the name. There's lots of advice available on how to reduce the damage caused by clubroot but what's often not realised is that there are now a number of brassica varieties with good resistance to the disease. For cauliflowers there's Clapton, a strong growing summer and autumn type. For sprouts there's Crispus, an early variety producing crops in the autumn. Monoclano is a clubroot resistant broccoli. Perhaps best of all there's Kilaton, an easy to grow white cabbage. It's also worth remembering that most kales aren't normally bothered by clubroot. Pentland Brig is a favourite, far nicer, dare it be said, than the fashionable Tuscan types. And, if you like them, there are also resistant swedes. Marian is the type usually offered.

Autumn Tidy Up

Autumn is the perfect time to have a bit of a tidy up on the allotment. As crops die back and beds need clearing for the winter it is a great opportunity to look at other areas of the allotment and sort out any issues.

If there are items you are storing outside of the boundaries of your allotment plot please make sure that these are removed, this includes compost heaps. Things left blocking the pathways make it harder for our contractors to do their jobs properly and untidy pathways can be a hazard to other allotment holders.

All tenants are responsible for keeping the shared pathways between allotments clear. If you have a hedge, make sure this is well cut back, including brambles, to less than 1.5m and that there are no sharp branches pointing out along the path. If you have a fence make sure the posts and rails are solid and make any repairs before the winter storms cause damage.

Greenhouse and polytunnel owners will want to make their winter preparations now. There's nothing worse than getting down to the plot after a storm only to find that your structure has landed three plots over!

Think you can help?

YACIO would like to add more Trustees to help make decisions about the running of the allotments. If you are interested, get in touch to find out more about the role.

Gratitude

"I so appreciated having my allotment over lockdown and beyond (not that you would necessarily know it to look at it) and I can tell from some of my neighbours' plots that they have had more time to devote to theirs this last spring, some looking better than ever! Some, like me, having less time than normal due to increased commitments at home but snatching a couple hours here and there when possible. Having a bit of green space and a distraction has been so lovely and I don't think I will ever get over the pure joy of sowing a seed and watching it grow and eventually (hopefully) bearing fruit, it's almost magic. It has been nice to see the familiar faces over the last few months and to share a friendly, distanced, word or two. Happy harvests all!"

-Katherine Lancey (Hob Moor Site Secretary)

YACIO's Annual Report and Accounts

Unfortunately, it was not possible to hold our scheduled AMG in March this year due to the coronavirus outbreak. The Annual Charity Commission Report and Accounts are available on the website for all to view. For the time being all Trustees will be remaining in the current roles and continuing to steer the charity through this challenging time. Trustees are looking into options for holding a virtual meeting next year to enable Members to have their say on allotment issues but if you have any questions in the meantime please do get in touch.

The YACIO Team

YACIO is run by a diverse group of volunteers, along with one part time member of staff.

The board of Trustees is made up of six allotment holders who make management decisions about the running of the allotments. (If you think you could contribute then we are looking for extra Trustees, get in touch!)

Each allotment site is represented by at least one voluntary site representative, called the Site Secretary, this is probably the person you met when you first rented your plot. They help YACIO run efficiently by being on site to let plots to new tenants and let us know about any issues such as maintenance work or other problems. If you want to erect a structure or add livestock to your plot then you should speak to your site secretary first and complete the application form with them.

YACIO has one part time administrator to process the paperwork like tenancies and invoices and act as a central point of contact for everyone.

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 this 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.