

September 2021

Dear Tenants

It's now nearly four years since YACIO took over running the allotments from the City Council. One of the problems we inherited was a Tenancy Agreement that was overdue for review. It has a hotchpotch of clauses, some of which are outdated, and we've been conscious for some time that this needs improving. We did make a few changes last year but we've now given it a complete overhaul.

Ideally, we'd present the revised Tenancy Agreement at a YACIO members' meeting. We had hoped to hold one on the 9th October, but due to continuing uncertainty about Covid and social distancing restrictions on numbers imposed by our usual venue we've decided it's not feasible for this to go ahead.

Instead we've posted a draft of the proposed new Tenancy Agreement on the YACIO website at <https://yorkallotments.org/tenancy-agreement-updates-21/> (print copies available on request). Trustees want to have a Tenancy Agreement that's as clear as possible and has the support and confidence of tenants. We welcome comments and suggestions from members. These can be made by email or via three consultative Zoom sessions we're holding on the following dates: 12th, 20th and 28th October. To comment or for Zoom joining instructions please email [contact@yorkallotments.org](mailto:contact@yorkallotments.org). We look forward to hearing your views.

**-Tony Chalcraft – Chair of Trustees**

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



### *Good News!*

We are very pleased that for the fifth year running we have not had to increase the allotment rents so invoices will remain at the same level for 2022!

[www.yorkallotments.org](http://www.yorkallotments.org)  
[contact@yorkallotments.org](mailto:contact@yorkallotments.org)  
0808 2812642

Charity Registration 1174306

York Allotments  
Popeshead Court Office  
Peter Lane  
York  
YO1 8SU

## *Site Maintenance and Development*

The trustees have been as determined as ever to improve the infrastructure of all YACIO sites. We have worked tirelessly with our contractors in an endeavour to upgrade access, manage growth in public areas, clear neglected plots, improve water supply, repair gates and fences and provide specific items such as notice boards, bird and bug boxes and planters requested by associations and site secretaries. In addition, the trustees have been happy to provide part funding for a number of innovative projects (on the part of associations) aimed at making good use of previously unusable areas.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have helped to keep our sites tidy and accessible and those who have gone that extra mile in making improvements for us all to enjoy. Special thanks to Dave and Rich (our handymen) for being so responsive to requests for clearance and repair and judging by extensive feedback, for being so pleasant and good humoured. Thanks also to White Rose, our main contractor, for their contribution during our first four years. I think everyone is in agreement that the grass and hedge cutting has seen a great improvement as compared to previous arrangements. It is with some sadness that we say goodbye to White Rose (to whom we wish all the best for the future) at the end of this year, as we welcome our new contractor, Oliver's Gardens, who will be working with us from January 2022. If any of you have specific thoughts on maintenance issues, this is the time to bring them to our attention. I would also like to offer one final thank you to all plot holders who have taken the time to attend to their external boundaries keeping them trimmed and accessible for fellow plot holders. You are setting a good example for us all.

- Colin Smith, Trustee

## *Meet The Trustees: Lisa Turner*

I am Trustee and site secretary at Wiggington Terrace. I became a Trustee as I was concerned regarding the future of allotments and also wanted to ensure the smaller sites were represented.

I don't recall being very interested in gardening at an early age but enjoyed being outside running around in my grandparents' garden, climbing and picking the apples from the trees.

I became more interested in gardening when I got older.

Growing up in a house with only a small garden, I dreamt of a large garden with a big pond. However when I moved to York I got a house with another small garden, so when a friend asked me to help her with her allotment at Wiggington Terrace I jumped at the chance. I then applied for my own plot and got the one next to my friend. That was over 20 years ago and I am still there and now site secretary.

I like other sporting activities but find the allotment a place to de-stress even when you turn up and discover all your seedlings have been eaten down to the ground by pesky slugs and snails or blight has taken all your tomatoes. I wish I could talk slug and then perhaps could negotiate a deal where I grow a patch of their favourite leafy greens and they leave the rest alone but I am afraid that will never happen and they will continue to sample all my crops until they find the best. However that is just one of the challenges and I would be completely lost without my allotment and the pleasure it brings all year round.

## *Know Your Winter Onions*

If you want to have an early crop of onions next summer, late September and early October is the perfect time to get planting. Over-wintered onions are special types, bred to grow slowly through the winter then put on a spurt of growth in spring to give a harvestable crop in June or early July.

The easiest way to start over-wintered onions is from sets (baby onions). There are several varieties available. Two of the best are Senshyu, a yellow skinned type, and Red Winter which, as you might guess, is red skinned.

Planting is the same as for onion sets in spring. Put the sets in the soil so just the tips are showing, spacing about 10-15cm apart. Be patient, it may take four or more weeks for the sets to sprout. Growth will remain slow until mid-March but then the sets should 'wake-up' and grow away strongly. From late April bulbs should begin to swell with most varieties reaching full size around mid-summer.

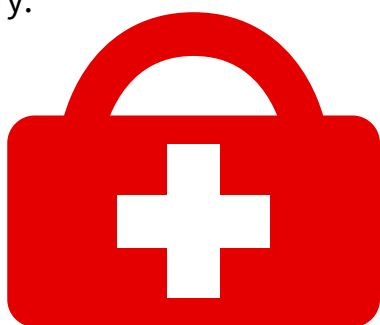
An advantage of over-wintered onions is that they are less susceptible (but not immune) to white rot, the fungus disease affecting alliums (onion family vegetables) lurking in the soil on many allotments.



### *Staying Safe On Your Allotment*

Staying safe has become even more important in recent times, so here are a few top tips;

- Keep a first aid kit handy with a few plasters and antiseptic just in case of cuts and grazes.
- It's a good idea to let someone know that you are on your allotment plot, especially on locked sites.
- Keep up to date with your tetanus jab- you should get a booster every ten years and these are available for free from your local GP surgery.



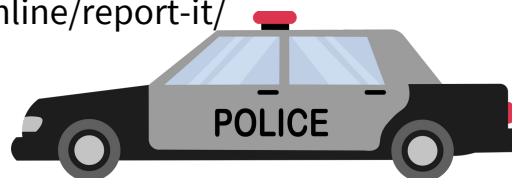
### *Reporting Issues to the Police*

North Yorkshire Police have recently introduced a new facility to report non-emergency issues using an online form rather than having to phone the 101 non-emergency number.

We urge all tenants to report all issues of antisocial behaviour, theft or vandalism, no matter how small, so that the Police can form an accurate picture of hot spots and allocate their resources accordingly.

With this new form it should be easy to make a report and keep them informed.

You can find it here:  
<https://www.northyorkshire.police.uk/do-it-online/report-it/>



## *Out With The Old, In With The Green Manure*

It's that time of year when everything you've grown on your allotment is either eaten, frozen, pickled or so oversized that only the compost heap seems the right place for it. Some things have worked out; my carrots have been sweet and have largely escaped the pests and my french beans have been prolific, but I've had some disasters; cauliflowers that have turned seemingly overnight from promising, white golf balls, to yellowing, pockmarked footballs and not a single edible radish. The brilliant thing about allotment gardening is you can just chalk it down to experience and start again.

In the coming weeks, I'll be removing all of my old crops and piling them onto the compost heap. Chopping them up really helps the crops to decompose and I try to do this especially to woody stalks - I'm looking at you cauliflowers. If any are diseased - blight has swept across our allotment site this year - I'll be disposing of them at the tip.

I always give my beds a quick fork over and try to remove as many weeds as I can because I feel like it gives me a bit of a head start for the new season and then it's time to replenish. Beds which I intend to use later in the season for crops like courgettes, will be covered with a thick layer of pure manure. As well as being nutrient rich - courgettes are hungry beasts - the manure helps to keep the soil moist and suppresses weeds. For the other beds, I'm going to sow green manure. Last year I had great success with Caliente Mustard which you can sow for over-wintering until mid-October. It replenishes nutrients and best of all has biofumigant properties which means the gases it produces when chopped and dug back into the soil, help suppress soil borne pests and diseases - take that blight!

-Helen Butt, Holgate

## *Ending Your Tenancy*

Should you need to end your tenancy with us please let us know in writing, you can send this by post or email, whichever you prefer. As per the tenancy agreement we need 30 days notice to end your tenancy so if you're moving house do let us know before you go so that your plot isn't standing vacant for too long! We do not grant rent rebates for tenancies that end during the year. If you know that you are not going to renew your tenancy come January you can let us know in advance and we can sort out all of the paperwork ahead of time.

### **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.