

Summer 2025



NEWSLETTER

THE LATEST NEWS FROM YORK ALLOTMENTS



URGENT CALL TO ACTION

The National Allotment Society is calling on all allotmenters to help secure the future of allotments. They are calling for support for Amendment 4 to Clause 47 of the Planning and Infrastructure Bill, which would require councils to include a clear policy for allotment and community garden land in their spatial development strategies. This simple amendment will help protect and create these vital spaces.

"Without action, we could risk losing these valuable green spaces forever. Supporting this amendment will help safeguard allotments for future generations, promote healthier lifestyles, and strengthen communities."

Please lend your support by contacting your MP and asking them to support Amendment 4 to Clause 47. You can [download the letter](#) the National Allotment Society have prepared and send it to your local MP to show your support and protect our allotments for the future.

Best plot competition

Best plot • Best newcomer • Prizes!
Self nominated
Details inside!



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LOTS AVAILABLE IN RUFFORTH



We're pleased to share details of some available allotments in Rufforth. There are currently eight full plots available, with the potential to split two of the plots in half. Full plots are 25M x 6M and half plots, 12.5M x 6M.

The rent for full plots is £35. A first year deposit of £35 is also required, which is returnable if the plot holder leaves and hands back the plot in good condition. Half plots are £18 + £18 deposit.

Sheds are not allowed but there is a large metal communal shed with individual tool hanging space for plot holders. This is a very high security shed with a police approved locking system. Anyone wishing to use it can rent a key, this is returnable if a plot holder leaves.

The allotments are not managed by YACIO, so for more information, please contact the Site Secretary, Graham Mathers on 01904 738128 or rufforthallotments@gmail.com

COMPOSTING COFFEE GROUNDS

Free
Used coffee
grounds for
your compost

Used coffee grounds can make an excellent addition to your compost pile because they rot down well, contain nutrients that plants need to grow such as nitrogen, potassium and phosphorus as well as being a source of organic matter which helps improve soil quality. If you don't have fresh grounds yourself but want to give them a go, you can collect free, used grounds from Knoop's in Parliament Street, York. Take an empty container to the shop any weekday before 2pm and the staff will be happy to give you some free.



BEST PLOT COMPETITION

If you'd like to get some recognition for all the hours you spend tending your plot, then enter the YACIO Best Plot Competition. All you need to do is fill in a simple entry form on the YACIO website (yorkallotments.org/best-plot-competition)

Plots will be judged in early July by panels of experienced gardeners who are not connected with your own site. The judging criteria will include:

- Condition of the plot.
- Crop quality and range of plants grown (considering the size of the plot).
- Sustainability and biodiversity: composting, wildlife habitat, encouraging pollinators, recycling.
- Where applicable: structures (sheds, greenhouses, polytunnels) in good condition, water harvesting from structures.

The size of your plot will not be a factor in the competition, so please enter even if you only have a small plot. At each site there will be a winner in the "newcomer" category and the "established" category, so even if you are new to growing you have a good chance of picking up a prize. There will be winners in each allotment area. The area winners will then go forward to the overall York-wide winner for each category.

Prizes will probably be given out at an award ceremony during National Allotments Week (12 – 18 August) - to be confirmed. The details of the winners will be published in a future YACIO newsletter and there may be other local publicity. So fill in the form now - entries must be made by 15th June!



MIKRON THEATRE AT SCARCROFT



On Sunday 18th May Mikron Theatre entertained well over 100 people in the beautiful setting of the grassy triangle on Scarcroft Allotments. This was their 15th appearance on Scarcroft and, as always, the theatre group presented a hugely enjoyable musical comedy based on a topical issue. This year it was 'Operation Beach Hut' where the story asked us to think about the decline of British seaside resorts. The four very talented performers introduced us to many characters including a trio of seagulls who hilariously narrated the story for us.

If you missed this performance the troupe also perform in several other venues around North Yorkshire and details can be found online at www.mikron.org.uk.

Mikron return to York on September 21st at Clements Hall on Nunthorpe Road with a new production called "Hush Hush!". This musical comedy that tells a story about the secretive world of Bletchley Park.

A special thanks to Willy Hoedeman, a plot holder on Scarcroft, for his tireless work in bringing Mikron Theatre to our allotments.



Do you have an event or piece of allotment news you'd like to share? Let us know by 20th August and we'll publicise it here.



Save the date

HOLGATE SUMMER CELEBRATION



Holgate Allotments hold their Summer Celebration at the allotment orchard and carriage garden on **Saturday 21st June, from 1pm - 4pm**. There will be lots going on including:

Dancing with Acorn Morris;

Live folk music from Toni and friends;

Tombola;

Design your own wooden plot sign - materials provided;

Cakes and refreshments;

An allotment trail.

All proceeds from the event will go towards the Allotment Association. Everyone is welcome and we would love to welcome allotmenters from other sites, so hopefully see you there!



AGM - VIEWS AND FEEDBACK

Thank you to all those plot holders who attended the YACIO Annual General Meeting and Members Forum at St Clement's Hall on 22nd March and for sharing your views and ideas. For those plot holders who missed the meeting, but who'd like to catch-up on proceedings, the AGM draft minutes are published on the YACIO website here: <https://yorkallotments.org/agm/>



WASTE ON OUR ALLOTMENTS

Those of you who have taken an interest in the maintenance reports presented in previous newsletters will be aware that YACIO spends a huge proportion of its income (i.e. your rent) on plot clearance following the closure of a tenancy. Where plot clearance is necessary, the departing tenant will forfeit their deposit of £40 paid at the beginning of their tenancy. However, this sum falls very short of the cost of a clearance which on average runs at around £200-£300 per plot.

Several plots, which have been seriously neglected over a long period of time, cost YACIO a great deal more. Two such plots, cleared in the past six months, cost between £1500 and £2000 each. I'm sure you will all agree, these unacceptably high costs are not a reasonable way to spend our limited resources which we would much prefer to see being used for development initiatives. As a consequence, YACIO trustees will be spending some time this year looking at ways to deter the build-up of unnecessary materials on plots. As an obvious starting point, we will be looking at ways to reinforce rule 8 of the tenancy agreement which says, "The Tenant shall not bring to or keep on the allotment any materials or objects that are not necessary for its proper maintenance and cultivation".

As this issue affects all of us, including trustees who are also tenants, YACIO would appreciate hearing your thoughts on how we might take this forward. If you have any practical suggestions about how best to tackle this problem, please let us know by contacting us at contact@yorkallotments.org. We look forward to hearing from you.



THE BEAUTY OF FRENCH BEANS

Lots of plot holders grow runner beans, but fewer seem to try French beans, especially the dwarf types. This is surprising as the quality of home grown is far superior to the often tasteless and, usually, imported French or 'green' beans sold by supermarkets. Compared to runner beans, French beans are quick to crop. This is especially so for the dwarf types which will provide a worthwhile haul even when sown as late as early July. Squeeze them in during summer, perhaps into space vacated by crops like early potatoes or maybe empty ground you've not got round to filling.

Dwarf French beans can either be started in pots and planted out or sown directly into the soil. The latter can be a bit hit and miss, but often works well in summer when it's warm. To get quality harvests several 'successional' sowings are best. That way you can pick tender, string free beans from early July (if started in mid-May) through to October. If you've not grown these beans before you'll be amazed by the quantity one plant can yield. Well grown dwarf types can easily provide twenty or so beans. There's lots of varieties to choose from. Tendergreen and The Prince have stood the test of time. Stanley is another green bean favourite. There are also yellow and purple types, but be warned, the purple ones turn green when cooked and neither colour is quite as prolific as the green varieties.

CONTACTING US

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