



NADCAA

Newton Abbot & District Co-Operative Allotment Association

Dear Member,

I would like to start by wishing you all a happy and productive 2022. The weather has been hit and miss recently, however if it's too wet or cold to cultivate, it's a good time to plan what you'll be growing this year. If you have yet to buy your seeds, compost and other gardening necessities, the shop on Decoy Field is fully stocked and can usually be opened on demand so long as one of the shop volunteers is available. Those of you who are not on Decoy can contact the shop manager who will be pleased to open up for you by prior arrangement. Regular opening on Saturdays & Sundays will begin on the 29th / 30th January 2022 and on Wednesdays on the 2nd February 2022.

At last year's AGM several significant changes to our association rules and procedures were agreed by the membership and before discussing our plans for the future I will briefly summarise the changes which now apply:

Pesticides and Herbicides

- No slug pellets containing metaldehyde can be used or stored on any of our plots. Please check your sheds for old stocks and remove them.
- Glyphosate weed killer cannot be used on any shared paths.

Cultivation Standards - New more detailed cultivation standards will be used to assess plots this year. Please ensure that shared paths around your plot/s are kept clear of obstructions, reasonably flat and safe to walk on. If you have any queries regarding the cultivation of your plot /condition of your paths please speak to your Field Manager.

Equality and Diversity Policy - A new Equality and Diversity policy was agreed by your committee at the end of last year. As stated in this policy ensuring accessibility for individuals with certain physical disabilities is very challenging given the nature of the allotment fields that we manage, but we would ask that any member or occupant who feels disadvantaged for any reason to contact us with their concerns.

Social Media and Safeguarding – New policies were agreed at the end of last year.

Lapse In Cultivation - With new cultivation standards now in place and being mindful of the difficulties we have all faced over the past twenty months or so in connection with COVID-19, it has been decided that all outstanding lapse in cultivation letters will be cancelled to enable everyone to start 2022 with a clean slate so to speak.

A significant procedural change agreed at last year's AGM that will apply this year, is that any member who has been sent a warning letter during the year with respect to poor cultivation or any other breach of association rules will not automatically be invited to renew their membership for 2023, bringing us in line with other allotment associations.

Looking Forward - The changes referred to above will hopefully help your association to be more resilient, aid biodiversity and soil health on our fields, essential if our plots are going to remain productive. It is perhaps not only healthy communities of wildlife and soil microbes that we should nourish. We are a social community of like-minded individuals, and during the first lockdown the support that members gave to those who were shielding and asked for it, was very heartening. It would be wonderful if we could build on that spirit of support and care for fellow members.

New social areas have been created on several of our fields and at the end of last year two very successful workshops were held on pruning techniques (thanks again to Clive), it is hoped that more events both social and educational can be arranged this year. Your association is, however, only as strong as its members and if we are to build a stronger community we need volunteers to step forward to take on specific tasks. An excellent example is the new group set up to manage the Association's Facebook page. We now have a Social Media Administrator who sits on your committee but she is supported by other members in the day to day management of the Facebook presence.

To conclude there is no doubt that this is an exciting time for the allotment movement with interest in having an allotment higher than it has been for many decades. Your association has strong relationships with the Town and District Councils and is developing new links with local community groups. That said we do need to reduce our reliance on the small number of volunteers who sit on your committee and look after the day to day business of NADCAA. We recognise that everybody's circumstances are different and that many members have busy lives but we do need more people to engage with the association either in general or to support specific projects and initiatives. All new policies are on the website. Please email us with any ideas you may have.

Best wishes and happy gardening in 2022 from Tim Callard on behalf of all of the NADCAA Volunteers

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