



Newsletter

October 2014. Autumn blows in with unwelcome news from Edinburgh Council.



You may be aware that annual fees for Council allotments have doubled over the last five years from £50 to the current level of £100 for a full plot. This was because FEDAGA agreed a strategy with the City of Edinburgh Council to increase rents in order that allotment provision be improved. The Allotment Service now pays its way and is no longer subsidised.

The Council now have their eye on allotments as a source of extra revenue in the years to come. Currently the total annual rental collected from all Council allotments across the city is £80,355. Most of this is used to pay for the allotment service and maintain existing sites.

The Council are proposing to increase their income from allotments by £150,000. Put simply - allotments are to become a method of revenue generation.

Please take time to read page 81 of their budget [proposal](#) (or look at the text reproduced below). You are invited to make your own comments directly to the Council. Do bear in mind that the additional money collected will NOT be spent on allotments. The level of service we get from the Council will at best remain the same - or get worse as any goodwill to self-manage our own sites evaporates.

FEDAGA will be making representations to the Council and will be asking for your support in the months to come so we don't end up with the highest rents in the UK.

In the meantime, if anyone has any legal experience with unfair rent increases like this please get in [touch](#).

Text of proposals for allotments:

Increase allotment charges

Forecast savings £150,000

Description of savings proposal:

Increase allotment charges to generate additional income of £150,000 per annum. The proposal could also revisit the existing discount regime.

Potential impact on service outcomes and any mitigating actions proposed (this should take into account, where applicable, relevant strategic, service plan or community planning outcomes):

The Council has 29 allotment sites, which have a total of 1,429 plots. There is currently a waiting list of 2,730 people, and the waiting time for a plot is up to 9 years for the most popular sites. The waiting list is growing at a rate of an average 348 people per year. Currently the annual rental for a plot is £100. Some plots are half-size, for which £50 per year is charged. Discounts of 50% are offered to disabled, elderly and those in receipt of benefits.

Total allotment income for the current financial year is £80,355

£ 326 plotholders paying £100 on full plot rents

£ 396 plotholders paying £ 50 on half plot rents

£ 407 plotholders paying £50 on full plot concession rents

£ 300 plotholders paying £25 on half plot concessions rents

Therefore to raise an additional £150,000 will require an average increase of £105 per plot/half plot.

However, if concessions are to be retained at existing proportions then the full rental rate would need to be around £300 per plot.

AGM reminder: 21st October



The Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.15pm on Tuesday 21st October at the Southside Community Centre. Papers have been sent out to Site Representatives. The Draft Agenda should be displayed on your site noticeboard. Site Associations should meet to decide upon who their delegates are. All documents can be viewed [here](#). (You'll have to scroll down a bit). Don't wind up like Wullie!



Apple Press Days



Too many Apples?

Fancy turning your apples into Juice or Cider?

There will be a Masher and Fruit Press at the following allotment locations:

Midmar 1-2 November 1-4 PM

Claremont Park 8 November 1-4 PM

Inverleith 9 November 1-4 PM

Contact your site Rep for more details or see the October issue of the FEDAGA Newsletter.

www.fedaga.org.uk



The FEDAGA volunteers who will be on site have been asked to watch this [video](#) to ensure the process is carried out correctly. Please remember to bring adequate containers to carry away your juice. If you are at an allotment not mentioned above please arrange to transport your apples to Midmar, Claremont Park or Inverleith. South Edinburgh sites on 1st and 2nd November; North Edinburgh sites on the 8th and 9th.

If this is successful FEDAGA will consider buying equipment of our own and arranging a more widespread provision next year.

2014 has been a record year for fruit production. It would be a great shame if any went to waste.

Council allotment spending: Mid-term report



Halfway through the Financial Year and FEDAGA has met with Ian Woolard, the Council Allotment Officer, to discuss progress on items identified for action. Here's a brief summary:

Bridgend - Achieved: Removal of compost toilet and door secured; Weeds on communal areas strimmed; Water taps renewed; Vandalised fence repaired. No progress: Resurfacing access road; Bins for leaves and woodchip; Division of communal areas for those on waiting list.

Cambridge Avenue - Remove old tree stumps, especially at the gate - for next spring.

Carrick Knowe - Achieved: Improvement to soil bund (although this has been disputed); Welding hasp on barrow shed; Concrete posts for water supply; Fence repairs at plots 46 and 56.

Chesser Crescent - Achieved: Make safe dangerous drops from side paths; Water supply improved.

Claremont Park: Achieved: Deal with backlog of debris; Fence re-welded. Repointing of walls awaiting a report.

Craigentinny - Achieved: Fence and wall repaired. Ongoing: Reduce or remove trees at south end; Wall pointing; Raised beds at plot 20 to combat flooding.

Dumbryden - Achieved: Water taps renewed. Ongoing: Toilet provision (it's a no-shed site!). Lock on side door of back shed to be fixed soon.

Ferry Road - Achieved: Repairs to toilet building and communal hut; Perimeter fence reinstated. Wall pointing to be continued.

Findlay Avenue - Achieved: Dangerous surface on communal paths removed and woodchip supplied. ***(please note - since the Newsletter was distributed it has been drawn to our attention that this item is still outstanding)***

Hutchison Loan - Ongoing: Dangerous drops at side of paths to be leveled.

Inverleith - Achieved: Removal of non-fruiting trees; Leaking taps repaired; Woodchip supplied to deal with muddy entrance path (outwith site). Ongoing: Supply hose to extend water supply; Pest control.

Lady Road - Achieved: Weld main gate fencing. No progress: Resurfacing main path, due to price increase. To be completed in November.

Leith Links - Achieved: Tree pruning and removal.

Midmar - Achieved: Provision of toilet facilities to accomodate the number of users; Improvement of hazardous pathways; Rabbit fencing. Removal and pruning of trees both off and on site to be completed by December.

Pilrig Park - Achieved: Regular cutting of boundary hedge; Taps repaired. Taps to be lagged in November. Bulge in wall awaiting a report.

Redhall - Achieved: Damaged gate repaired. Wall repairs awaiting

report.

Restalrig - Achieved: Weeds on cycle path boundary cut; Communal composting corral provided.

Saughton Mains - Achieved: Repairs to main gate support; Improvements to perimeter fence.

Stenhouse - Pile of leaves and debris at main gate to be retained for use on extension (debris to be removed).

Warriston - Achieved: Central line of trees cut back and made safe; New gate for plots 98 to 108. Ongoing: Further work on main roadway required to improve drainage; Pest control. Defunct compost toilet to be removed from shed in November (to go to Dumbryden).

West Mains - Leaf mould compost to be delivered in November.

Plans are on track with half of the budget spent. The FEDAGA Management Committee monitors progress on a monthly basis with a view to ensuring that all sites are treated fairly and that the budget is spent correctly.

Tattie orders



Our Trading Secretary is about to send out Order Forms for next year's Seed Potato and Onion Sets. This year FEDAGA is also promoting half price fruit trees from [Talatun Plants](#). Your site rep. will soon have the paperwork to enable him or her to take your orders.