

June 2014: Allotment Competition Deadline Extended



Summer arrives at Telferton allotments.

FEDAGA is pleased to announce that the deadline for this year's Edinburgh in Bloom Allotment Competition has been extended to the end of the month. You have until Friday 27th June to enter your plot. The aim of the exercise is to have fun, take pride in your plot, share it with others and contribute to raising the standard of allotment plots across the city. And you might even win a year's free rent as well. Details of criteria and how to enter can be found [here](#).

All members of FEDAGA affiliated sites can enter: all the Council-managed sites and the independents Wester Hailes, Telferton, Dean Gallery, East Scotland Street Lane and Portobello East Junction.

New site at Drumbrae.



Phase 1 of the new "Mini" allotment developed by the Western Edinburgh Neighbourhood Partnership is up and running. Phase 2 follows on soon. Some spaces are reserved for local residents who are not on the Waiting List. If you're interested or know someone who might be, get more information [here](#).

Brown Bins for allotments?



The Council's Allotment Officer, Ian Woolard, is proposing that Brown Bins for compostable material be provided to allotment sites. This may be a good thing as some waste vegetation is diseased or contains pernicious weeds and so should be disposed of by burning. There are restrictions on bonfires at various sites, and it is not always possible to do this when convenient. Much of this waste currently goes to landfill. FEDAGA feels that composting, either in communal bins or on individual plots is a good thing and should be encouraged. But there is probably a need for a Brown Bin service as well. We are told that the uplift cost will be "minimal". What do you think? Let us [know](#).

Safety Surveys.



FEDAGA has asked the Council to survey all walls on allotments and issue guidance for ploholders who find asbestos on their site. Despite a programme of repointing, the state of many walls on allotments has attracted comment. A survey will take place this summer and a report is expected by the end of August. The Allotment Officer says that currently he believes there to be no areas of immediate concern.

Asbestos cement was widely used last century as a building material and remains on many allotment sites. FEDAGA has asked for a guide to be issued by the Council's Asbestos Officer and she is preparing this. In the meantime you can download information prepared by Hartlepool Borough Council [here](#).

Other Council Allotment News.



Summer arrives at Carrick Knowe allotments.

Water news: Baronscourt allotment holders can expect Scottish Water to turn their taps on by the end of June. The installation had failed a safety test but all is now OK. Not that you'll really need it...

This is the scene at Carrick Knowe. Much trouble and expense was invested in a soil bund to hold back water that runs off the new banking for the tram track. It doesn't seem to have made much difference. A sudden downpour can bring worse to Lady Road. Modesty forbids pictorial evidence. The storm surge network forces sewerage out into the Pow Burn which flows through this site. Once again, plotheolders are facing a summer of misery. Crops are damaged, plots swept away and effluent deposited everywhere. FEDAGA is continuing to pressure the Council and Scottish Water into addressing the problem. However, it is estimated that a sufficiently substantial wall to hold the periodic deluge back may cost well in excess of £50,000. Don't hold your breath. But you may need to hold your nose instead.

Elsewhere, the tree pruning programme has got under way. Sites already dealt with include Leith Links and Warriston. Next up are Craigentenny, Claremont Park, Inverleith, Midmar and Redhall. More may be identified and work will take place over the summer.

...and finally: Legal News.



The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Bill has been published and can be found on the Parliament's [website](#) along with the accompanying documents: the Policy Memorandum, Explanatory Notes and Delegated Powers Memorandum.

It looks excellent as a framework upon which local authorities can create their own rules for allotments. A quick read over Section 7 has revealed the following points of interest to allotment holders (and aspirant allotment holders). *Our comments in italics.*

- Each local authority must take reasonable steps to ensure that the number of persons entered in the list maintained...*(i.e .the waiting list for allotments)* is no more than one half of the total number of allotments owned and leased by the authority.

- A local authority may not dispose of the allotment site or change the use of the allotment site without the consent of the Scottish Ministers.

- As soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each reporting year, each local authority must prepare and publish an annual allotments report for its area. *Basically the number of Allotments, the size of the waiting list, reasons for not meeting demand, eg. financial.* A person who represents the interests of the tenants of each allotment on an allotment site may make a request to the local authority that owns or leases the site that the authority delegate to the person any of the authority's functions mentioned in subsection 40 (2) in relation to the allotment site. *Waiting list included.*

Plots handed back in a poor condition... The tenant is liable to pay compensation for the deterioration to the local authority.

It is good to see allotments being treated with such importance by the Scottish Government - well done SAGS and everyone else that contributed.

The Scottish Government goes on to confirm that the Analysis Report and Social Research findings on the responses to the second consultation have been published today and can be found [here](#). This link also directs you to all historical documents relating to the Bill.