

# PAA “The Carrot Crusader”

**Chairman:** *Stuart Walker 01759 303458*

**Secretary:** *Patricia Clarkson 01759 303437*

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**Treasurer:** *Claire Hamilton Plot 19a*

**Town Council representative:** *Alex Petrie*

**Horticultural Society representative:** *Martina Timbs*

**Committee members:** *Tony Sawyer Plot 8, Keith Houseman Plot 42, John Marley Plot 96,*

*Pip Jackson Plot 51, Co-opted - Craig Messingham Plot 40A*



## Issue 4 February

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### *Editorial*

Welcome back! As I write this I am hoping the worst of the winter weather is over, I cannot remember such a cold spell for many a year. It certainly seems to have done some damage to winter standing veg, Brussels sprouts and Savoy cabbage in particular. Others I have spoken to are reporting that their overwintering onions are suffering, and leeks although good underneath, have top growth resembling a weed spray attack. Oh well I hear you say there's always next year! Optimism and hindsight are two essential qualities in an allotment gardener. During the winter resting period, if there is such a thing, I have given some thought to bringing some new columns to the 'Carrot Crusader'. I am hoping to get some fond memories from some of our longest standing tenants. Hopefully this will give us 'newbie's' some insight to the history of The Mile. The committee is having some thoughts on arranging some social events, maybe a quiz night or just a 'get together' with maybe a talk on relevant subjects. As we enter our second year of administering The Mile site we are hoping to move towards uniting our gardening community. Let's get digging!

Trish Clarkson - Editor

### *From the Chairman*

Welcome to a new gardening year, and especially to all new plot holders. It was good to see so many at the AGM. One of the items raised that night was the cutting of boundary hedges, you will have noted that the hedge on The Mile has now been cut, negotiations are ongoing with regards to the other boundaries

Your new committee has been formed and a list is now at the horticultural shop for all to see. What of 2010? Well as reported at the AGM we are looking into fund raising for a toilet facility, our own composting and shredding scheme, and possibly our own vegetable show.

We are thinking of having a monthly or quarterly social evening, perhaps with a gardening quiz night at the United Services Club. Other ideas are still in the infant stage but as soon as anything is decided we will let you know.

Until the next time, keep on digging.

*Stuart Walker* Chairman

### *The Secretary*

Trish Clarkson was voted into her first year as Secretary and will primarily be responsible for dealing with all correspondence, organisation of the waiting list, communication, and any further administration as may be required. Trish can be contacted by phone on 01759 303437 or by e-mail at [pockallotassoc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pockallotassoc@yahoo.co.uk) or in writing to 18 Church Lane Flats, Church Lane, Pocklington, YO42 2BL.

There are also plans to provide a post-box on the front of the Secretary's shed, Plot No 39, where you can post any notes etc., you may have for me. Please do not include any cash though, we have had a series of attempted break-in's at the site over recent months and it just would not be safe to trust your hard earned cash to this transfer method. There are also plans to be approved to provide a waterproof notice board or two so that notices can be posted bringing to your attention anything we feel is relevant. We appreciate that there are many ways people get their information and we are trying to cover all areas.

A little more on the break-in attempts these were reported to the community policing team, they have asked that we continue to report any incidents and that we mark our tools and machinery with appropriate marker pens. Although the team agrees there is little they can do to prevent these random attempts it is important that we continue to report incidents because then a wander round by an officer can be authorised. So get marking and let me know if you become a target and I will do the rest.

In December 2009 the committee completed a site inspection, there were only three plots which if it was felt were not being adequately

cultivated, great work everyone, could we get to 100% by Spring? On a slightly less well done there were thirty one plots whose rain water harvesting was either inadequate or non-existent. This included no guttering fitted to sheds or guttering not connected to downpipes. The other problem noted was that some gathering containers were inadequate for the area of roof i.e. small barrels connected to large roofed buildings. We all did a great job last year at reducing water bills but we could do better. We are trying to gather a collection of second hand guttering etc from UPVC replacement companies and we will continue to make 1000ltr tanks available. The next site inspection will be in May, it would be really nice to see a lot of progress made in this area.

A final paragraph on the results of the questionnaire handed to those who attended the AGM the results were that the majority of members were in favour of a simple toilet facility rather than a larger shop/social area. The results for the Newsletter were that it continued but in black and white. Distribution needs to be improved and all who can, will receive theirs via the website or e-mail.

### *The Treasurer*

Claire Hamilton begins her second year as Treasurer and will continue to deal with all things financial.

Claire has produced the following information for all tenants who were not at the AGM.

As you can see from the Treasurer's annual report for 2009 the PAA ended the year with credit funds totalling £712.74 the only bill outstanding for 2009 was the final quarter water bills which have now come in at a cost

of £68.48 so I think we can all agree that the PAA are starting 2010 in good financial health!

Financially January 2010 has been a very busy month and a summary of finances for January are detailed below. I would like to say a very big thank you to all plot holders for paying their rents on time. The rent collection has been a big success and there are only a handful of rents outstanding. I would also like to thank Trish, Stuart, Craig and Keith for all their help and support with the annual rent collection, it was much appreciated. There are at the moment fourteen tenancy agreements which have not been returned to the Secretary, if you have not done so yet could you please return them as soon as possible. I know it seems a small thing, but in law both landlord and tenant need to have a signed copy of a lease before the tenant has a right to garden their plot.

<b>Balance</b>	<b>£ 712.74</b>
Stationary	£ 6.61
Printing	£ 37.50
Water	£ 68.48
Rents	£ 2772.50
<b>Total funds</b>	<b>£ 3372.65</b>

#### TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT

For the Year Ending 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009

#### Funds received

May 2009 from Pocklington Town Council  
£1634.67

**Total £1634.67**

#### Summary of spending

Stationary	£ 177.39
Postage	£ 60.48

Insurance	£ 147.88 (£85.75 is for 2010)
Trophies/Judging	£ 56.72
Website	£ 19.02
Meeting rooms	£ 56.00
Sundries	£ 22.98 (Trolley for moving 1,000 gallon water tanks)
Water	£ 361.46
NSALG	£ 20.00 (For 2010 membership)
<b>Total</b>	<b>£ 921.93</b>

**Total funds remaining £ 712.74**

#### Yorkshire Water

**Meter 1 - (North Road) Ac – 800263480**

**Meter no – 00807916**

30-04-2009 1807

**Meter 2 – (South Road) Ac – 800263472**

**meter no – 72180057**

01-05-2009 5857

North Road	Total	South Road	Total
02.07.2009	£107.59	02.07.2009	£ 92.53
14.10.2009	£ 97.38	14.10.2009	£ 63.96
20.01.2010	£ 41.90	20.01.2010	£ 26.58

Reading for 02.07.2009 only for 2 months  
other bills are every quarter (3 months)

#### *Committee Meetings*

Here is a list of this year's committee meetings. Any of our members are welcome to attend, if you just would like to see what goes on or if you would

like to bring something to our attention then please come to a meeting.

MONTH	DATE	TIME	WHERE
February	16 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
March	16 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
April	20 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
May	18 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
June	15 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
July	20 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
August	18 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
September	21 <sup>st</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
October	19 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
November	16 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room
December	14 <sup>th</sup>	7.30 pm	United Services Club Meeting Room

### *Top Tips - Keith's Diary*

#### **February**

Onions can be grown in a few ways; set's planted into the ground in March/April. Also onions can be grown from seeds and gives you a wider range of varieties to choose from. Seeds can be sown directly into the ground but its best sown into trays filled with multipurpose compost. Sow seeds ¼ inch deep and cover with sieved compost or fine vermiculite, if using vermiculite it can be run about on top of the compost when watering,

so best to water from the bottom, i.e. stand tray in special water trays, keep the compost moist. Place them in a propagator with a lid at a temperature of about 15c/60f to germinate which should take between 14 – 21 days.

Once seedlings are through the compost, the cover can be removed and move the tray to the staying or bench at a temperature of 45 – 50f. Once seedlings are large enough to handle, pick them out into 3" pots or cell trays filled multipurpose compost. Harden off plants, gradually get plants used to outdoor conditions, and move them from the greenhouse to cold frame in day time for a period of 2 – 3 weeks.

Weather permitting onions can be planted outside in April allowing 6 – 10 inch between plants and rows 18 inches apart.

If the weather is kind, crack on and finish the winter digging adding manure or compost.

Spring cabbage and cauliflower will benefit from nitrogen, feed such as nitro-chalk or sulphate of ammonia.

#### **March**

By early March shallot sets will have started to produce green shoots, they need to be planted in the ground if the weather and soil conditions permit. If not, the sets can be planted in modular trays of six cells per tray. Fill with multipurpose compost and plant one bulb per cell, place in a cold frame and ventilate on warm days will help stop shoots becoming spindly and prevent fungal diseases.

Tomatoes have to be one of the most popular vegetable grown; they're many varieties about these days which allow us to grow tomatoes in different ways, greenhouse patio in pots and hanging baskets. To start a few seeds fill a small seed tray with multipurpose compost and sow seeds thinly and cover with fine compos and keep moist. Place in a

propagator or heated greenhouse and provide a temperature of 18°C/65°F, if you don't have these facilities the living room window sill is a good place. Don't forget, once the seedlings are through, turn the tray around as seedlings will grow to the light and become stretched. Once they're large enough to handle, transplant into 3" pots and grow on until the first flower has opened on the first truss. Plant into grow bags, borders large pots etc, provide strong support with cane's and tie plants with nylon string to cane. Remove side shoots from cordon types while the shoots are small. Maintain even watering, feeding with quality tomato food and adding a little calcium will help prevent blossom end rot. Remove growing tip once five or six trusses have set.

#### April

If the ground has been wet and cold in late March then all potatoes can be planted this month. Potatoes are a hungry crop and will benefit from manure or compost dug in, in autumn or early spring. However, well rotted manure can also be added to the bottom of the trench at planting time.

Add potato fertilizer or Growmore when preparing the soil for planting a week or two before, 6 – 8oz per square yard. The trench should 5 – 6 inches deep, plant the chatted sets 12 inches apart for earlies and 15 inches for main crop. In rows 24 inches apart for earlies and 30 inches for main crop. Gently replace the soil over the sets to make a low ridge or leave the soil level and draw a little soil over them as they begin to emerge, especially if there is a danger of frost. When the haulm reaches about 9 inches high they will need earthing up, break up the soil between the rows with a fork and pile the soil up 6 inches high to make a flat topped ridge.

If the weather is humid from late June onwards, watch out for blight.

French and runner beans and sweet corn can be sown in pots or rootainers as it is too early to sow outside, do this in late April. Use multipurpose compost, place the seed upright as this helps to prevent them rotting, cover with fine compost and keep moist and don't forget to label. Place in greenhouse, once plants are established they need hardening off ready for planting out at the end of May when the risk of frost has hopefully past.

#### *Have Your Say*

One of our tenants approached a member of the committee during the last couple of weeks reporting spray drift onto the path bordering their plot and their neighbour's. Needless to say they were not very happy about the damage done to the path as the recent frosts have now caused the path to break up. During the conversation it was suggested that a ban may be imposed if more care was not taken to avoid drift.

**Editor's comment.** I am sure you are all aware of the Editor's views on herbicide usage so no need to 'go there'. Once again can the committee please ask that if you are going to use herbicide spray you use it responsibly, and ***please*** keep it away from your neighbour's crops and shared paths.

Another issue came to light regarding a tenant being very unhappy with a neighbour's lack of weed control. This is such an emotive issue, but when others around you are trying to be as tidy as possible can you please have a go at a meeting of minds. As a general overview if more than half your plot needs intense cultivation then perhaps you need to ask yourself a few probing questions? We all experience harsh weather and time

constraints due to other commitments, but we also need to give some time to others and their priorities.

### *What's New*

Our co-opted committee member Craig Messingham would like to hear from anyone interested in setting up a seed-swap scheme.

"I am sure there are those among us who save their own seeds and wondered if people would like to set up a system to allow members to swap these seeds between each other. The main idea is for Craig to act as co-ordinator, making up a list of people, their seed and their plot numbers you can get in touch with one another and swap what you have. This scheme could possibly work in a similar way for surplus commercial seed, i.e. half a packet of Brussels sprouts for half a packet of cabbage.

The list will be a simple who has and who wants what. This has always been part of allotment life, but I thought it was time to widen the web and make it easier for people to contact each other."

In the first place if you are interested contact Craig Messingham through the Association.



# Seed Swap