

# Alsager Gardens Association

## Newsletter 25 – Summer 2018

Web:- <http://www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk>

Officers - telephone code 01270

**President:** Derek Hough 875144 email:- [jenhough@talktalk.net](mailto:jenhough@talktalk.net)  
**Chairman** Adrian Ford 877363 email:- [adrian\\_ford62@hotmail.com](mailto:adrian_ford62@hotmail.com)  
**Treasurer:** David Pitt 878429 email:- [davidpitt3@sky.com](mailto:davidpitt3@sky.com)  
**Vice Chair:** Pauline Hubbard

email:- [alsagergardensassociationsecretary@outlook.com](mailto:alsagergardensassociationsecretary@outlook.com)  
**Trading Sec** David Spall 874117 email:- [d.e.spall@btopenworld.com](mailto:d.e.spall@btopenworld.com)  
**Membership** Ms H Robinson 882818 email:- [hlrobinson@hotmail.com](mailto:hlrobinson@hotmail.com)

### Dear Member

#### WILD LIFE IN THE GARDEN (2)

Our back garden in Pikemere Road joins up with the back gardens on Heathend Road and so forms a block of about 7 acres of suburban gardens. It is a very mixed bag ranging from the neat and tidy through the middling sorts to the severely neglected. There are trees: some old Cheshire species, Crack Willow and Hawthorn interspersed with conifers, Camellias, Buddleias and other garden types. This gives an excellent environment for nature to thrive.

Firstly the birds. There are the normal garden species, Blackbird, Sparrow, Dunnock, Wren, Starling, Crow and Magpie. There are the usual Tits, Blue, Great and Long Tailed. This year we have been invaded by the finches driven into the gardens by the cold. There were lots of Goldfinches, Chaffinches and Greenfinches plus the occasional Brambling. With the greater concentration of birds, we saw some disease, particularly in the Greenfinches, and casualties occurred. Increased hygiene measures helped and the majority survived.

And then there is the pond. Last year there was a good hatch of tadpoles but as time went by they were attacked by various beasts. First the Heron, then the Magpies and Crows took a liking to tadpoles. Next up we had the Dragonfly Larvae who could attack even quite large tadpoles then the great Diving beetle flew in. To top it all a grass snake appeared.

This year another good hatch; no Herons, no magpies interested and the first two Dragonfly larvae have been caught. The tadpoles are, as yet looking good. Mammals have not kept up with the birds or tadpoles. No hedgehogs for two years and no foxes seen although their scent has been prominent. To make up for this, the squirrels have kept us amused with their gravity-defying behaviour and their carefree chasing of one another. They don't like the Magpies much and two Magpies seem to have the edge over one squirrel.

So, on a fine evening, go down the garden with a glass of dry white wine. Listen to the last chorus of the Blackbirds and look around. It doesn't get much better than this.

Kind Regards,

Derek Hough – President

## Dates for your Diary

RHS Flower Show Tatton Park, Cheshire	18 - 22 July 2018
Southport Flower Show	16 - 19 August 2018
<b>Annual Show - Civic</b> <i>Show entries to the secretary by 12 noon Thursday 30<sup>th</sup> August</i> Show Open to the public 2pm	<b>Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September 2018</b> <i>Why not try an entry - see the show schedule for classes.</i>
Collect and complete your Nas seed order to the Trading Secretary by 28 <sup>th</sup> October	<b>Orders by Last week in October</b> NSLG Order catalogues and form available at the Show or from the Trading Secretary or Trading Hut
Nantwich Show Nantwich Food & Drink Festival	25 <sup>th</sup> July 2018 31 August to 2 September
Southport Flower Show	16 <sup>th</sup> to 19 <sup>th</sup> August 2018
Harrogate Flower Show Great Yorkshire Showground, Harrogate	14 - 16 September 2018
Olive and Stitch Market Alsager Gardens Association Committee Meetings, Guide Hut, Cedar Ave., Alsager	3rd Saturday of the Month 8.00pm Last Tuesday of the Month <i>(Any member welcomed to join us)</i>

## Alsager Gardens Association - Allotment open Days

12 & 13 May 2018.

It is intended that all four allotment sites will be open for visitors but the main activity and Plant Sales etc will be at the **Cedar Avenue site** where the trading hut is located.

Look on our website for further details and directions, please bring along any Seedlings/plants you have surplus to requirement for sale, there will be refreshments.... lets hope for good weather. Please let us know if you can help on the day, if only for an hour

**More hut helpers needed, if you will help please contact  
Adrian Ford Chairman 01270 877363**

**The 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Show Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> September**

**Please reserve the date - Good luck with your entries in all classes**

## Ramblings from the Chairman.

Welcome to this edition of the Newsletter. At the end of last year I was preparing for a raspberry bed at our allotment on Lawton Road. Whilst digging I found several large pieces of carved stone masonry. Did these come from a previous grand building on the site or were they moved to the site for some purpose? Sometimes digging throws up mysteries. My raspberries are now all planted and are growing well in their new bed. Recent changes in the Garden Association have included:

- The Trading Hut opened for business in March. Before it opened it received a 'make over' and is now more customer friendly. Many thanks to Mike Hubbard for the inspiration, who along with a few volunteers implemented the changes.
- The Accessibility Raised Bed project at Lawton Road Allotments is now complete, two of these beds have now been allocated and the others await their first growers. A big thank you to everyone who helped with the project. You can read more about this project under the Secretary's report in this Newsletter.
- Our website has been developed thanks to Pauline Hubbard and contains up to date information and news. You can find it here [www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk](http://www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk).

### Don't forget

- our 66<sup>th</sup> Annual Show at Alsager Civic( Sat. 1 September - 2pm) please support and make this year better than last year. Show schedule is within this letter, get planning your entries now.

Happy Gardening

**Adrian Ford** - Chairman 110 Harpur Crescent, Alsager, ST7 2SY  
Tel 01270 877363 email:- [adrian\\_ford62@hotmail.com](mailto:adrian_ford62@hotmail.com)

## CHANGES IN DATA PROTECTION

### TO VIEW OUR PRIVACY STATEMENT - GO TO OUR WEB SITE!

Since last year we have developed our web site to be the place for our members to go to for news items, up and coming events and details of our committee meetings. For the public they can now also access a copy of our AGA Membership form and a copy of our Allotment request form.

No personal information, other than the contact details of the officers of the Association, is held on our web site.

I would like to draw your attention to the new General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) which come into effect on 25 May 2018 and our Data Protection Privacy Notice (DPRN) which explains

- What Information we hold and why
- Where and how it is held
- How long it is held for

To view our DPRN please go to <http://www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk/>

## The following fertilisers are stocked in the hut and can be purchased in the quantity you require

### **Bonemeal**

A mixture of crushed and coarsely ground bones used as an organic slow-release fertiliser.

High in phosphate and is suitable for all plants including trees, shrubs, roses, fruit and vegetables.

Traditionally used for encouraging strong root growth at planting or in the spring to get plants off to a good start to the season. Use 70g-135g per square metre, applied evenly and worked into the top 50-70cm of soil.

### **Fish, blood and bone**

Made from the by-product of fish that have been processed, this is a traditional organic fertiliser that contains the three major nutrients for strong and healthy plant growth: nitrogen, phosphate and potash. Nitrogen encourages strong growth and healthy rich green foliage, whilst the slow release of phosphate promotes vigorous root growth. The added potash promotes flower colour and improves ripening of fruit and vegetables.

### **Garden lime**

Lime raises soil pH by reducing its acidity and is usually added as ground limestone, commonly called 'garden lime'. The active ingredient is calcium carbonate. Calcified seaweed and ground chalk are other forms of calcium carbonate available to gardeners. Lime is usually added in winter for annual crops, such as vegetables, just prior to digging, as the lime can take effect over the winter months and will not damage young growth.

**Note:** Before adding lime, check your soil pH to see how much (if any) you need to add. The Royal Horticultural Society offers full information about the use of garden lime and testing soil pH.

### **Growmore,**

Probably the most popular compound fertiliser, was first formulated as part of the Dig For Victory campaign in World War II (1939-45) - hence its full name National Growmore. It's a multi-purpose plant food with an even balance of nitrogen, phosphorus and potassium or potash. Apply 140g per square metre onto the soil 7 to 10 days before planting or sowing and fork well in. For salad crops use half the quantity. This should give sufficient nutrients for 6 to 8 weeks. Can also be applied to the soil surface once a month to keep your plants well fed throughout the growing season. Scatter 70g per square metre onto the soil and lightly fork or hoe in.

### **Potash**

Potash is the common name for fertiliser containing potassium. The name derives from metal pots that were once used to store wood ash, in readiness for use as a fertiliser. It's a fast acting source of potassium to help the development of healthy fruit and flowers. Ideal for feeding all types of fruit trees, bushes and flowers to help them become more weather- and disease-resistant.

Use about 35g per square metre from March to end of August, every 4 to 6 weeks.

### **Sulphate of ammonia**

A rich source of nitrogen which promotes above-the-ground growth and rich, green foliage. Particularly beneficial in leafy vegetable and salad crops such as brassicas, lettuce, spinach, rhubarb and leeks. It is made by a commercial process that causes ammonia to react with sulphuric acid. When added to water it becomes soluble and thus is readily taken up by plants, with effects being noticed in under 10 days. Since it is highly soluble in water it also means that it leeches from the soil easily, thus requiring regular applications. Apply during the growing period from March to August at 4 to 6 week intervals. Use about 35g per square metre. Sulphate of Ammonia is not considered for use by organic growers

### **Superphosphate**

Produced by the action of concentrated sulphuric acid on powdered phosphate rock. Encourages strong root growth and healthy plants. Fruit, root and seed crops will produce higher yields and ripening will be improved. Apply evenly at the recommended rates, then hoe or fork into the top surface of the soil and, if dry, water well for maximum benefits.

### **Sulphate of Iron**

A long-lasting feed for all acid loving plants, promoting strong growth and rich green foliage. Helps to acidify the plant root zone and prevents leaf yellowing (Chlorosis). Uses: For feeding ericaceous plant varieties such as Rhododendrons, Azaleas, Heathers and Pieris, Blueberries, Cranberries.

Apply: Can be applied throughout the growing season from March to the end of August, every 4-6 weeks.

Caution: Do not over apply. Wash hands and exposed skin after use.

### **Nitro Chalk**

A popular early season fertiliser and contains nitrogen as nitrate. Especially useful for brassicas. Easy to handle pellet. Ideal Spring/Summer Feed. Rate of Application:- Apply 50gms per square metre. Also called Calcium Ammonium Nitrate

ENTRY FORMS ARE NOW AVAILABLE FOR THE ANNUAL

# ALSAGER GARDENS AND ALLOTMENT COMPETITION

This competition is held annually, during the summer months, and is open to all residents within the Alsager Town Council Area and AGA allotment plot holders. Alsager Town Council sponsor the competition which is administered by the Alsager Gardens Association. The aim of the competition is to increase awareness of, and generate interest in, the pleasure of gardening as a healthy, worthwhile and stimulating hobby and at the same time encourage residents to take pride in the surroundings of their properties and the appearance of the town in general.

This year there are **six main classes** and entrants may enter more than one class.

1. **Best Overall Garden**
2. **Best Floral Garden (Front /Side/Rear)**
3. **Best Cottage Garden**
4. **Best Ornamental Garden (Front /Side /Rear)**
5. **Best Hanging Basket OR Container Display**
6. **Best Allotment**

First -time entrants are encouraged, and a special prize is awarded for the best first-time entrant who has not won before.

Judging takes place during July. Prizes will be in cash and will be presented at **The Annual Show held at the Civic Alsager on Saturday 1st September.**

Entry forms are available from

- the Council Offices between 10.00 and 13.00
- the association Trading Hut located at Cedar Avenue next to the Scout Hut. Sundays 10.30-11.30am and Wednesdays 7.00-8.00pm
- A downloadable, PDF copy of the Entry form can be obtained from [www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk](http://www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk)

Completed entry forms should be returned to any of the above by 30th June 2018 or returned by email to [AlsagerGardensAssociationSecretary@outlook.com](mailto:AlsagerGardensAssociationSecretary@outlook.com)

## FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

[ALSAGERGARDENSASSOCIATIONSECRETARY@OUTLOOK.COM](mailto:ALSAGERGARDENSASSOCIATIONSECRETARY@OUTLOOK.COM)

## ACTING SECRETARY'S REPORT SUMMER 2018

### *An Update on the Accessibility Raised Beds Project!*

Our comprehensive project to provide wheelchair users, people with visual disabilities, and other less abled individuals in the community, with access to each of our **four** Allotment sites and the *construction* of specific **Accessibility Raised Beds for their individual use, is now well underway with the help provided from our team of volunteers.**

We have completed four **Accessibility Raised beds** at our **Lawton Road site**, together with paving surrounding the four beds and these have been linked to the main path. Over Easter weekend our volunteers were out filling the beds with top soil, marking their completion!

**At Cedar Avenue** we are now concentrating on constructing the three Raised Beds which are to be located close to the existing car park and the main entrance, thus making them specifically suitable for wheelchair users. These beds will provide users with easy access to the Toilet Building and the water standpipe.

We have already purchased the sleepers required to construct the raised beds and as soon as we have the materials in place and on site, we will be ready to commence the paving which will surround the beds and link the beds to the main path.

It's a big job! We estimate we need approx. 250 paving slabs, the hardcore to provide the sub structure and sand and cement for laying the paving. We also need approx. 50 building blocks to provide a retaining wall which will support the widening of the existing central path giving safe and wheelchair access through the site.

*Our sincere thanks go out to all those that have helped with this project of work.*

*For more information and progress of this project go to:*

[www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk/accessibility-raised-bed-project/](http://www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk/accessibility-raised-bed-project/)

Pauline Hubbard  
Vice Chair

### ***Views of the work on the Accessibility Raised Beds Project!***

Our comprehensive project to provide wheelchair users, people with visual disabilities, and other less abled individuals in the community, with access to each of our four Allotment sites and the construction of specific **Accessibility Raised Beds for their individual use, is now well underway with the help provided from our team of volunteers.**



[www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk/accessibility-raised-bed-project/](http://www.alsagergardensassociation.org.uk/accessibility-raised-bed-project/)

**Sunday Opening Hours**  
*(NB Note opening times)*  
**Wednesday Opening**

#### **Trading Hut opening Hours**

**4-3-18 to 20-5-18** 10.00 – 12.00 noon  
**27-5-18 to 28-10-18** 10.30 – 11.30 a.m.  
**11-4-18 to 25-7-18** 7.00 – 8.00 p.m.