

Cripley Meadow April Newsletter 2017

www.cripleymeadow.org.uk

Working party

Next working party on 9 April 10.30 to 12.30 meet at the shed as usual. Do come along if you can. As always we have lots of jobs and it is a good opportunity to meet other members and get to know more about the site. We have some plot clearing and covering to do. **It is due to be unusually hot so do bring some water and take care.**

Our AGM in March was very pleasant and productive. The following were all re-elected unopposed and unanimously Wendy (Chair), Alex (Vice Chair), Sara (Treasurer) Anna, Emily, Emma, Sarah, Jamie, Keith and Jeremy. Manda Joyce Plot 71 was elected as a new committee member. We will publish a new diary and committee responsibility list on the web site and notice board after we have met on the 12th.

We said good bye to committee members Annalisa and Richard. Both will remain members and Richard will be co-opted to do the site spraying. As always members were most appreciative of our hard working and forward looking committee. **Many thanks** to the members who attended. Susanna Pressell, our local and county councillor, managed to fit us in between two meetings. We do appreciate her sustained support. The Draft AGM minutes will be on the web site shortly. They will be ratified at the next AGM.

Membership fees

If you did not pay your subscription fees before March 31st late payment will now incur a £10 additional charge. About 25 members are still on the unpaid list. IN accordance with our constitution plots are automatically taken back if not paid before April

31. Please be in touch asap if there is a problem or if you are not renewing so we can arrange for you to return your key.

Key deposits are puzzling a few members who leave. Not all members paid a £25 deposit. The first key deposit of £5 was voluntary and some of our longest term members did not pay anything for their original key nor when they swapped this for a new system in 2006. Consequently we have members who have paid various key deposits of £0, £5, £10 and £25. Obviously we will only return the key deposit paid. If you lost a key and had it replaced you will have paid the current deposit rate and you will have had a receipt from the treasurer. Our records show when you joined and when our deposits changed. Additionally, if members have not done their working party commitment when they leave we ask them to consider making the £15 donation out of the deposit. The majority not only do this but some kindly donate the whole deposit.

BEES On Cripley

Christine on Plot 5 has kindly sent us the following progress report on her bees.

"The bees have made it through the Winter and seem to be thriving. As normal I am not inspecting again until late March but, meanwhile, have extended the hive a bit to give them more room to grow as the weather warms.

The plans for March/April are to lower the hive so it won't be quite so visible and put another box hive next to it ready for the swarm control splits I will make with a beekeeper friend in May/June. He will take some bees from me and I plan to have one hive and a smaller colony left to take me through to next year when this will become, I hope, two full hives from late Spring 2018. This will

then be my limit and I don't plan to keep any more than two hives for the foreseeable future, managing this by splitting out each year. One hive is fine but, now I know how much time and effort is invested in a colony, I want to keep one extra for insurance purposes!"

We are also expecting another bee colony to be set up on Plot 119. They are Buckfast bees and are bred to be docile. Usual notices will be posted.

Many of you noticed we have had some **willow pollarding** in March and early April. This has now stopped due to nesting but more is due in the autumn.

Raised beds.

These raised beds are for less mobile members and we have extended this use to members with small children. If you know of anyone who might be interested please let them know. As usual at this time of year we have turnover and there are a variety of different sized plots available. Do let friends know if they are looking for a plot.

Due to re-surfacing work, **Walton Well Road Car Park** will be reduced in size from Monday 27 March 2017 for two weeks. During this period limited parking will only be available on the entrance side. As far as I understand it from 10 April 2017 the car park will only have pedestrians access until 21 April 2017 when work is scheduled to be completed.

Please continue to use up the soil pile on plot 67 so we can return this area to plots

Site grass cutting started on April 6 We are looking very trim. Please do not leave glass, stones on and keep the new fence area clear... it is dangerous and crunches the blades!

Good growing to all Wendy