

# ALLOTMENT NEWSLETTER

January 2016

## Message from the Estates Team

It has been a continued transition for the Estates team in 2015 with the post of the Allotment Officer absorbed into the department the previous year. To assist us please be mindful that due to resources we are not always available to respond straight away however **we will always endeavour to respond to general enquiries within three working days.** We now have additional admin support so are hopeful that the running of the allotments will continue to improve and there will be more visibility on site in the Spring and Summer months.

You can always speak to your association or site representatives if you have general site queries, and they will be happy to raise more significant issues on your behalf at the Allotment Forums, which have Councillor representation. The dates for future meetings are to be circulated early in the new year and are likely to be in February, July and September.

In the meantime, the Estates team hope you have a successful and prosperous growing year.

## Invoices & Instalment Payments

You should now have received your invoice for 2016. We will be issuing reminders for non-payment from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2016. We do understand that it is not always possible to pay the invoice in one lump, therefore if you would like to pay by instalments please let us know in writing and we will make a note to stop any recovery action. Please note we do not offer a direct debit facility and each instalment payment will need to be made by one of the usual methods on the reverse of your invoice.

Alternatively, if you no longer wish to keep your allotment plot please let us know so that we can offer the plot to someone else. You can do this through any one of the general enquiry methods overleaf.

## Repairs & Maintenance

To report a leaking tap, faulty padlock or any other problem at the allotment site please contact the Facilities Management Service Desk on 01472 326289 and select option 3 and then 4. Your job will be logged and you will receive a reference number for future enquiries.

## Reporting Crime & Security

Allotment sites continue to suffer from crime and are particularly vulnerable to trespass, thefts and vandalism. You can assist by **ensuring that the gate is always locked** when you enter and leave the site, being vigilant - consider setting up an 'Allotment Watch Group' - and report all criminal activity to the police so that they can investigate and identify the 'hot spots'.

For non-emergency crimes the number for the police is 101. The cost is 15p per call.

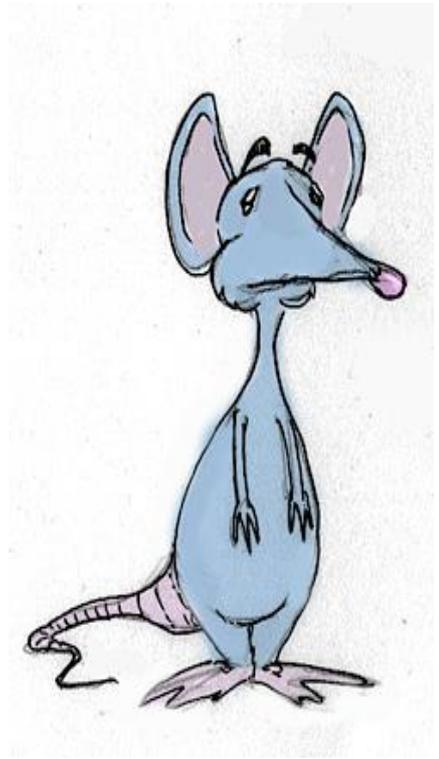
## Rats and Vermin

Over the last year we have had an increasing number of reports of rats on allotment sites and neighbouring properties. It is the responsibility of each tenant to ensure that they minimise the attraction to rats on their plots. Rats and other vermin are primarily attracted to waste vegetables and grain.

**The areas that are most likely to attract rats are where chickens are kept and in compost heaps and bins.**

Please ensure that if you keep chickens you keep grain away from the ground, and regularly clear away any that is on the ground. The rules for keeping chickens clearly state **'feed should be kept in vermin proof containers'** and permission is only granted on this basis. It may be withdrawn in some cases if problems persist.

If you have a compost heap, please ensure that you check it regularly for any nesting vermin and take appropriate measures to remove any infestation and prevent access, for example raising the heap off the ground and using wire mesh where access could be easily gained.



## Updates

- Following the success of Beacon Hill we are still seeking interest for self-management and would encourage further sites to adopt this model in 2016. Interest has been raised by the Peaksfield Allotment site and we have recently met with them to look at progressing this. Anyone that has an interest in becoming self-managed should contact us and we will provide you with information and guidance regarding the process and how it can be achieved.
- The rationalisation of parts of Carr Lane Allotment site is still at the early stages and initial discussions with the National Allotment Society - with representation from the site - were had in late September. Consultation is important to the success of this project and we hope to be able to provide further details in the coming months and engage fully with all.
- In early 2015 a new lock and key was introduced for the Carr Lane Allotment site and the old key made redundant. Authorisation letters are now required should tenants require a new key. In addition a second gate has been installed at a vulnerable point on the site. It is hoped that by introducing these measures security will be improved. Early feedback has been positive as we continue to look at ways of improving security for all allotment sites.

## General Enquiries

Please speak to your association, site representative or contact;

- Facilities Management Service Desk on 01472 326289 option 3 and then 4
- Visit the website at [www.nelincs.gov.uk/resident/sport-and-leisure/allotments/](http://www.nelincs.gov.uk/resident/sport-and-leisure/allotments/)
- Email the Estates team using [allotments.enquiries@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:allotments.enquiries@nelincs.gov.uk)
- The Customer Access Point at the Municipal Offices, Grimsby
- Finance Help Desk on 01472 31 31 31

### Please Note

The Civic Offices in Cleethorpes no longer has a customer access point therefore all enquiries should be made using one of the methods above.

