

**Cripley Meadow Allotment Association**  
**Newsletter**  
**February 2021**

Despite the floods and snow, there is a sense that the year is turning; Spring, the start of our new membership year, is in the wings.

Lead members should have received their **invoice** email from Jamie, our treasurer, on 3<sup>rd</sup> Feb and a reminder today (11<sup>th</sup> Feb) to those who apparently have not opened the original email. If you've not received either, please check Junk/Spam then get in touch with Jamie if still AWOL [cmaa\\_treasurer@hotmail.com](mailto:cmaa_treasurer@hotmail.com) (also get in touch if facing particular financial difficulty).

All members will be emailed a formal invitation to the AGM towards the end of the month, with links to the Agenda, Accounts and Annual Report.

**AGM**

**Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2021**

**16:00 by Zoom**

Full instructions will be in the AGM Invitation, but heads up that **you will need to register in advance so we can send you the Zoom link and tell you how to vote**, so please look out for that invitation email. There will be very important matters on the agenda, that affect the future of our association for decades to come, so **put the date in your diary**.

Our constitution stipulates that AGM agenda items must be received by the Secretary at least 7 days in advance. There will be a reminder in the invitation, but you don't need to wait if you have anything you want to raise, comments or questions for the Committee, email [secretary@cripleymeadow.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cripleymeadow.org.uk).

As you know, Wendy is stepping down as Chair and Alex Hollingsworth has agreed to stand, and all other Committee members are willing to continue, but this does not preclude others. Running such a large site and organisation takes a lot of work. We'd be delighted to hear from members willing to volunteer to join the Committee. We are particularly keen to hear from those living in Castle Mill, who know they will be

there for another year, are willing to represent our many Castle-Mill-resident members and pitch in with other Committee work (email [secretary@cripleymeadow.org.uk](mailto:secretary@cripleymeadow.org.uk)).

Good news - our appeal in last month's newsletter resulted in two members coming forward to help with **paid site work**, so you may see them around doing tasks – some that cannot at the moment be done by Working Parties due to Covid, and others that are too challenging for those of us with average practical skills! Wendy and Jeremy are supervising and supporting.

More good news – thanks to the generosity of members, **Wendy's leaving collection** is looking very healthy. We shared the secret with her at our committee meeting last night. She immediately thought of something lovely to spend it on... more at the AGM. But meantime, it's not too late to contribute via the [Paypal pool](#) or cash in a marked envelope through my door (6A Kingston Rd, OX2 6EF, 6A is next door to 6).

There are no changes to our **Covid management arrangements** this month – Just to remind you that all communal areas remain closed, members are generally restricted to their plots (and the most direct route to it) and may have **only one visitor**. You may also continue to use the skip, communal bonfire area and visit the Shop by appointment. **Plot paths are private**.

Speaking of the bonfire area... it was very full so two weekends ago I took advantage of the easterly wind (i.e. blowing away from Castle Mill) to burn it. Unfortunately, some members had put matter directly into the fire bin rather than under the tarp so it was rather wet and there was a fair bit of smoke leading to a complaint. We have improved signage - please **dry material for**



**burning on your plot first, then put it under the tarp next to the fire bin, not in the bin itself.**

**Flooding** remains a problem on site. In fact it seems it is worse than it has been for years. The most important thing is to stay safe yourself, and not to damage the site. So a reminder **don't drive on site at the moment** – the shifting gravels and Victorian tracks cannot take the weight of modern vehicles and we cannot afford to replace them. November 2019s advice about staying safe during flooding holds good.



### Signs of Spring

No doubt many of you have been delighted, as I have been, to notice snowdrops and aconites flowering on our lockdown walks.

These beauties are to be found in St Sepulchre's cemetery. I have even seen daffodils in full bud in sheltered corners.



On my plot, I still have a few leeks left to harvest (if they have not drowned!), some kale and parsley. I dug my last few swedes a week or so ago. I have beautiful fresh mizuna in full spate in my polytunnel and a few other crops established in the late autumn have been slowly growing

roots in there over the winter ready to surge once day length increases.



My potatoes are chitting under the Velux window in my loft room at home, and, also at home, I am experimenting with growing onions from seed for the first time this year. I have a few chilli seeds to sow but will wait for a few weeks so they don't get too big before the weather is warm enough to move them to my unheated polytunnel.

There is cultivation advice for each month on the website ([Your plot→The gardening year](#)). Reading the advice for January/February just now reminds me that my rhubarb is coming through already and I must cover some of it soon for forcing.

There is also cultivation advice and other interesting articles in the National Allotment Society's magazine which is now available for the first time in an online edition.

Good gardening, when water levels allow,

Manda

CMAA Secretary and Vice-chair