



Maidstone
ALLOTMENTS

Maidstone Allotments Newsletter

ISSUE 1 – AUGUST 2023

MAMC Contact Information

Secretary: Jo Aylett

Telephone: 07907 181742

Address: MAMC, PO Box 1455, Maidstone, ME14 9DN

Email: admin@maidstoneallotments.co.uk

Website: www.maidstoneallotments.co.uk

Office Hours: Monday to Friday. 9am – 2pm

Chair: Olivia Hawkins (Upper Fant Site Manager)

Vice Chair: Ben Kirby (Sandling Lane & James Street Site Manager)

Committee Members (as of August 2023):

Lisa Moore (Loose Road Site Manager)

Chris Di Marco (Upper Fant & Sandling Road Site Manager)

Dave Williams (Loose Road Site)

Derry Orr (Upper Fant Site)

Andy Symonds (Glebe Lane Site Manager)

Steve Sharkey (Rocky Hill Site Manager)

Paul Ramsey (Buckland Hill Site Manager)

Valerie Cullen (Beaumont Road Site Manager)

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The MAMC newsletter editor is Ben Kirby

Email: Benmaidstoneallotments@outlook.com

Front cover photo, Peacock butterfly, Bee and Frog photo by Ben Kirby

Other photos from MAMC

Sites Contacts Information

If a plot holder has any issues, then please contact your site rep or manager(s). Details can be found on site notice boards or on our website. If you cannot contact them, please contact our secretary who can then pass on any messages.

Beaumont Road Valerie Cullen (Site Manager) 07957 706124	Rocky Hill Steve Sharkey (Site Manager) 07944 560632
Bower Mount Road Until further notice, please contact the office	Sandling Lane Ben Kirby (Site Manager) 07706 051137 Peter Kirby (Site Rep)
Buckland Hill Paul Ramsey (Site Manager) 07930 147282	Sandling Road Chris Di Marco (Site Manager) 07821 398839 Nick Tompsett (Site Rep) Trevor Pearce (Site Rep)
Glebe Lane Andy Symonds (Site Manager) 07885 373775	Square Hill Barry Nickoll (Site Rep) John McFarlane (Site Rep)
James Street Ben Kirby (Site Manager) 07706 051137 Rosie Scally-Mills (Site Rep)	Upper Fant Oliva Hawkins (Site Manager) 07815 762342 Chris Di Marco (Site Manager) 07821 398839 Derry Orr (Site Rep) Nathan Dawson (Site Rep)
Loose Road Lisa Moore (Site Manager) 07761 259010 Dave Williams (Site Rep)	

Welcome



All plot holders should have received an email, in June 2023, advising that Judith Chappell is no longer the chair of Maidstone Allotments Management Committee (MAMC).

Our new chair is Olivia Hawkins. We wish her well in her new role.

We would like to welcome the following new site managers:

- Paul Ramsey - Buckland Hill
- Andy Symonds - Glebe Lane
- Valerie Cullen - Beaumont Road
- Steve Sharkey - Rocky Hill

Thank you to them for taking on the role.

A big thank you to all the other plot holders, on our sites, that help maintain them. It is much appreciated.

We have given the newsletter a fresh new look too. We would welcome plot holders to share their allotment stories, photos, and any hints and tips, that we could include. Please send them, by email to Ben Kirby at:

Benmaidstoneallotments@outlook.com

We hope all plot holders enjoy their allotment plots and happy gardening!

The MAMC Committee

We are going electronic!

In the past, we have sent out all new tenancy agreements and paperwork, via the post. With the cost of postage going up and to help reduce the amount of paper we use; MAMC are now sending out most communication electronically.

This saves us having to wait for paper copies of tenancy agreements to be returned, saves us postage and printing costs and allows us to rent out plots more efficiently.

We are aware that not all our plot holders have access to the internet or email and will continue to send paperwork via the post for these plot holders.

Electronic copies of the Tenancy Agreement and Newsletters can be found on our website.

Please help us keep in contact with you

Some of the contact email addresses, we have for plot holders, are no longer valid. Please could we ask all plot holders to let our secretary know of any changes, so we can update our records. Thank you.

New phone number & office address

The telephone number, to contact our secretary has changed. The new number is: **07907 181742**.

We have also changed our office address. The new address details are:

MAMC

PO Box 1455

Maidstone

ME14 9DN

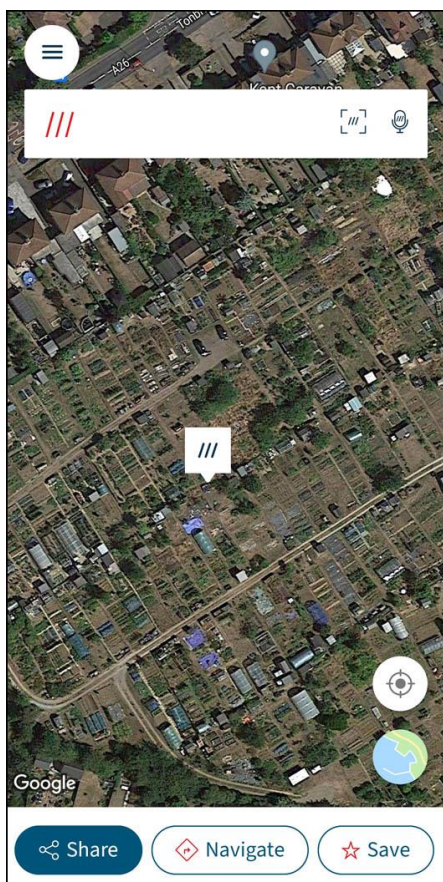
Please could we ask all plot holders to update their records.

What3Words

The Post Code we list for each of our sites, is the nearest one to their location.

In the event of the emergency services needing to be called, we have added What3Words references for all our sites on our website and will also be adding these to the site notice boards. These are more accurate than just the Post Code. By providing the emergency services with this information, they can use the reference to navigate and find the site.

You can download the free What3Words app, on your mobile, from the Google Play Store or the Apple Store.



Wildlife



Wildlife is precious and some help pollinate the crops we grow. To help our wildlife we have some dedicated wildlife areas at four of our sites and these are managed by volunteers for the benefit of wildlife.

When planting, consider perhaps adding a few nectar flowers for the bees and butterflies. Perhaps add a small wildlife pond to encourage frogs. They are good at eating slugs. If you add a pond, please do not make it too deep for site safety.



MAMC Website & Facebook

Our current website needed to be moved to a new server, which could have resulted in costs for MAMC.

With the help of Ben Kirby and Kayo, our website hosting provider, we have managed to agree moving the site to a new server for free.

As part of the move, we are going to review the entire website and make some changes. The hope is that the website will become more active, updated more often, have some nice new photos and a source of information for plot holders. The work will be carried out by Ben Kirby and should be completed by August. Please keep an eye on the website!



As well as updating the website, we would like to bring back our Facebook page. From mid-August 2023, if you are on Facebook you can join our Facebook group. Our page is at:

www.facebook.com/groups/maidstoneallotments

Shops

At the AGM, there was mention of the 5 shops we have, where they are etc. There was some confusion about who runs them, and whether they are part of the overall MAMC.

MAGA (Maidstone Allotments Garden Association) was formed when the allotments were run and controlled by Maidstone Borough Council, who still own the allotment land. If there was a problem on any plot or site, MAGA could represent them. All allotment holders were, and still are, automatically a member of the association. Representatives on each site were appointed by MAGA.

When the day to day running of the sites was handed over to MAMC (Maidstone Allotments Management Committee), site managers and reps were appointed and ratified by the allotment holders at the AGM.

MAGA still exists for the benefit of all plot holders. There is a small committee who has responsibility of the shops, headed by Nick Tomsett (Sandling Road). Nick runs and controls all the shops and the stock. Shops on other sites are run by volunteers from that particular site. Although all stock is sold at very competitive prices, all finance is in a separate MAGA bank account, with a treasurer in control. This is completely independent of MAMC, and does not form part of its finances.

Commodities sold in the shops include composts, manure, fertilisers such as Growmore, blood fish and bone, chicken manure and good quality canes. Seasonally, seed potatoes, onion setts and garlic are available. In Autumn, a big discount can be had for seeds from Kings Seeds, if ordered through MAGA. Details will be put on notice boards at the appropriate time.

Shops are to be found on Sandling Road, Upper Fant, Loose Road, Glebe and Rocky Hill. If your site does not have a shop, you can arrange to go to any of the above sites. Ask your site Manager for details.