

Site Profile – Horsenden Allotments

Horsenden Allotments The three Ealing Council allotment sites located on the north side of Horsenden Hill, Whitton Place, Whitton Drive and the Horsenden site have a long history of close collaboration and are usually referred to collectively as the Horsenden Allotments. Whitton Place, which is the administrative site and the location of the trading hut, has twenty eight plots. Whitton Drive has forty five plots and Horsenden currently has twenty plots but has the capacity for a further twenty (or more) five pole plots which will hopefully be cleared and “fit for use” by 2015. Whitton Place and Whitton Drive are accessed directly from Whitton Road East. The Horsenden site also has an access off Whitton Road East but is currently accessed from Melville Avenue.

Following a self-management initiative, the recently formed Horsenden Allotments Association (HAA) has taken over responsibility for the day-to-day management of the three sites. Responsibility for fences, gates and water services remains with Ealing Council. HAA, through its Committee, will offer support to its plot holders. Its key priority will be to maximise all of the three sites’ resources by engaging HAA members in helping support the well-being of our allotments and their future use for generations to come. It will also be looking to engage the wider community and support the use of allotments to further build on the community feel we hope to achieve.

We are currently creating an area for community gardening at Whitton Place. The idea is to give local residents, who do not wish to take on the responsibility of a plot but would still like to grow flowers and some vegetables, the opportunity to join us at the allotments. We have had one successful working party at Whitton Place and intend to hold a few more at all our sites. The plan is to organise a working party on the first Saturday of the month from March onwards. This not only gets the sites into good repair but hopefully, with a social event afterwards, brings the community of all three sites together.

Our trading hut at Whitton Place is run by Horsenden Allotments and Gardens Association (HAAGA) which has been part of our allotment community since 1932/33. It offers a wide range of gardening supplies at discounted prices. At the start of the season, we also have a bedding plant sale. Everyone is urged to join HAAGA to get the benefit of these discounts. Each year, under the aegis of HAAGA, we also have several successful shows (spring, summer and autumn) held at the local church hall. All members of the local community are welcomed to these shows. We did have some recent problems on one of our sites but hopefully these will soon be resolved by the fitting of new gates. The funding for this work is via the Ward Forum - a full grant was obtained. In the coming year, we aim to improve the infrastructure of our sites. This will mainly involve work on the main paths, maintaining their size and keeping them level. One of our longer term aims is to obtain funding for composting toilets. If we are to encourage the children and our more elderly residents we definitely need to have these services on site.

**Joseph Mangor,
HAA Communications Officer**