

Newsletter





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Find us on Twitter

@ScotAllotments

SAGS New Website

Screen Actors Guild; Saigon Ground Services; Self-Aligning Guide Shoe and Summer Active Ground Squirrel....

SAGS can be many things to many people. But there's only one Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society.



To make it even easier to find us, we've launched a new site, with a new website address www.scottishallotments.org

As we build the website, we'll be adding extra features, sharing members' news and launching a members' only section.

You can find out more about how you can help shape our new website here: www.scottishallotments.org/help-sags-grow

Confused about Covid?



With the vaccine rolling out and the latest lock-down easing, the future looks bright. But, as we move from full lock-down back to the tier system, the rules can become confusing for us all.

Our Covid updates are based on the latest Government advice.

You can find the latest Covid advice from SAGS here: www.scottishallotments.org/covid-advice

Meet the Board





Richard







Trevor Andrew Julie

Find out more about us www.scottishallotments.org/trustees

To contact the board, in the first instance, please email **secretary@scottishallotments.org**

SAGS is governed by a Board of Trustees, elected by the members of the Society in annual elections. The Trustees are all volunteers who have a passion for allotments and community gardens.

They have responsibility for the work of the Society and for ensuring it meets the requirements of a charity and its governance.





"SAGS will become more dynamic, relevant and accountable."

Future Plans

SAGS president, Derek Livesey has ambitious plans for the future of SAGS.

"The purpose of SAGS has always been to champion and serve the interests of allotment gardeners in Scotland. That won't change (the clue is in the name). However, if this is to be successful, the organisation must

begin a programme of initiatives to see this modernisation in practice."

At the heart of his plans is nationwide representation for allotments and community gardens.

"SAGS will become more dynamic, relevant and accountable. It must rebuild confidence to campaign at the highest levels."

Also high on the agenda are tackling the ever-growing problem of waiting lists and bringing communities together.

"Every site is different but many share the same issues, and SAGS will be on hand to help, all across the country."

Read Derek's letter to members in full here:

www.scottishallotments.org/presidents-letter

Help SAGS grow

With so many ambitious plans for the future, SAGS needs your help.

Now that SAGS is a registered charity, we hope this will make it easier for us to access grants from funding bodies and contract with other organisations.

With the ability to represent allotments and community gardens nationwide, we can really make a difference.

To do this, we are going to need as much help as possible - from joining our board, to moderating our members' forum, to sharing your stories

with us so we can share them with everyone else.

If you would like to help SAGS grow, please get in touch. The more diverse range of skills we have on our team, the better.



"We're gonna need a bigger board!"

Find out how you can help SAGS grow here:

www.scottishallotments.org/help-sags-grow

Demand for Allotments Soars under Lockdown

We all know there has always been a huge demand for allotments in almost all parts of the country.

Since lockdown, that demand has got a whole lot greater.

In June 2020, The Sunday Post reported that Aberdeen has its highest ever waiting list, Edinburgh had received triple the amount of applications and Glasgow had seen an increase of 700%.

Behind these statistics are real people,

desperate to grow their own food, but data protection laws means that councils cannot share their details.

This makes it harder for communities who want to campaign for new sites to reach likeminded people. SAGS would like to hear from anyone who is currently on the waiting list.

We want to attach real people to the stats, share their stories and, with their permission, put them in touch with one another.

If you, or someone you know, is on the waiting list, please visit www.scottishallotments.org/waiting-list



Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 – where are we now?

SAGS treasurer, Trevor Watson, has carried out an online audit of local authority food growing strategies.

This great piece of legislation (SAGS lobbied hard for it so we're bound to say that!) extended community rights to buy land and allows ministers to compel private owners to sell abandoned, neglected or environmentally harmful land if it can contribute to sustainable local development.

The Act includes a dedicated section on allotments, reflecting the legally protected nature of allotment plots and growing importance being placed on them as part of our national agricultural ambitions. The Act requires Local Authorities to develop a food growing strategy (by May 2020), to maintain a record of people waiting for an allotment and to help identify land that could satisfy demand for allotments.

The intent of the legislation is excellent, but is not universally implemented yet. An online audit shows that not all local authorities are at the same level of compliance, with examples ranging from excellent to non-existent. SAGS are working to encourage, cajole and provide assistance to bring those areas that lag behind up to speed.

As representatives of Scotland's allotment holders, SAGS meet with Local Authority and Scottish government officers and are able to influence policy-makers on your behalf. We offer advice and guidance where Local Authorities may be struggling to resource their obligations under the Act.

If your waiting lists are unreasonable (more than 5 years, or the number of people waiting is greater than 50% of total number of allotments in a Local Authority area) then pass the details to SAGS and we will campaign for more allotment sites to be created in your area.

Conversely, if your area has seen examples of innovative or progressive practice then let us know about those as well. We are the trusted channel for sharing these with areas who are looking inspiration.

The health, financial, recreational and environmental benefits of running your own allotment are well known. Working together we can realise these benefits wherever you are in Scotland.

The SAGS online audit

Aberdeen City Council	Amor		
Alembership Cored	190		
Angai Council	190	Great ordine consultation interactive map. Ook to committee 15 Mar 21	
Jegyl inti Sala Cornel	yes	map allows of Types of growing spaces, many in solution	
City of Caleburgh Council	190	Don't Feb 20. Consultation delay for CV-5s, classes 18th Jun 21	
Cardenementes Council	790	Outscharged to Generalisms	
CONTRACT ON COURT ON	100		
Outrinio and Golovay and	riso.		
Ounion City Countil	190	Doll presented to course Aug 20	
Cold Apriller Council	710		
Entit Darbarianships and	***	public consultation constall if who from 15 app 12. Card con result or releasy	
Coef Littlen Council	190	committee but not created	
Cont Partnessies Cored	780		
Falsak Causel	yea	richios maps ahouting potential sites	
Frie Cornel	yes	called Alkimori Strategy 275-2023	
Chapter City Chancil	yea		
Inverdyde Council	190	draft wreteby, deep due to CV-19	
Melnilden Countil	yes	very striple and accessible discurrent	
North Ayothre Council	IND	healing for strongs but only contains scientists about developing in	
Ferin Genetoten Council	780	statement about strategy being put highligher	
Circuity Intends Council	190		
Pieris sent Station Counts	190	Good substitut maps, draft. No Strategic Emissionnestal Associations apply	
Partirentes Carel	yes	Sesur 1991 10 10	Courgle of Seat practice
Scalah Borden Council	790	Consulation by Dec 8th 20, white learly 2021	
Declaral Interals Council	yes	retaind in their Fee Food Policy	
South Ayother Council	Year		
Stach Lavetsday Count	780	draft proposed but no control on monteys take	g place to saligh &
Siring Council	yex		
The Hyderol Council	780	draft and for consultation	
The Marey Council	yea		
West Ourbackmotes	740		
West Saften Council	100	state preprietal evaluat but no day yet	
	11 of 32		

Recults
Council Food growing strategy (\$16/12/2000)

Trevor carried out the audit in December 2020 to identify those Scottish Local Authorities which have published a Food Growing Strategy.

The intention is to use this information to direct SAGS efforts to influence authorities, ensuring equal opportunities are available to allotmenteers throughout Scotland. The timely provision of a Food Growing Strategy is indicative of the level of priority a council is placing on allotment provision.

As of December 2020, several Local Authorities had yet to publish their food growing strategies.

"The Covid-19 pandemic has apparently caused a

delay on preparing

documents for some

councils"

The Covid-19 pandemic has apparently caused a delay in preparing the document for some councils, despite lockdown only coming into force in the month before the due date.

You can view Trevor's full audit here



Hunt out the Good Eggs this Easter

The Easter holidays are upon us and sites all over Scotland would normally be arranging events to keep the kids occupied. Unfortunately, continuing Covid restrictions means there won't be any of the usual Easter egg hunts, but there are some good eggs we can hunt out on our own plots.

We are all used to looking for clutches of eggs on the undersides of our precious young plants and often, in a bid to ensure we catch the bad guys before they're born, we resort to destroying all the eggs we find. But we could be destroying an army of helpers in the process. Here's our pick of the best eggs to hunt out, but definitely leave alone, this Easter:



Lacewing eggs

Also known as aphid lions, the larvae of the delicate little lacewing are anything but delicate.

They are voracious consumers of eggs, aphids and mites and will even eat their own siblings. To prevent them from doing so, mother lacewing lays her eggs on stalks. Each stalk has one egg at the end so that, once the hatchling lacewing larva has climbed down the stalk, it usually can't be bothered climbing up another to eat its sister.

These eggs on stalks, often laid in a U-shape, are really easy to recognise and, with a single lacewing larva capable of eating 200 aphids a week, this is one clutch of eggs every gardener should be delighted to discover.

If you aren't lucky enough to find the eggs of these future pest controllers, maybe you just don't have enough dandelions.

Adult lacewings feed on some aphids but not nearly as many as their kids. They like a drink with their meal and they prefer flowers where the nectar is easy for them to reach. So, plants from the daisy family - daisies, dandelions, sunflowers and feverfew - as well as plants from the parsley family - angelica, Queen Anne's lace (wild carrot) and lovage all help to attract lacewings.

Find out more about lacewings from The Wildlife
Trust



Ground beetles

When ground beetles are disturbed, many will spray a foul-smelling liquid and, if that doesn't put you off, they can bite you.

Despite these defences, they are a gardener's friend and prey on slugs, snails, wireworms, leatherjackets and other soft-bodied insects we don't tend to like. Sometimes they eat earthworms but what's a few worms between friends? Especially when you know that ground beetle larvae also like to eat New Zealand flatworm.

Ground beetles lay their eggs in soil or leaf litter. In a week's time, they hatch into larvae which spend a good few months roaming around the soil, enjoying a diet of just about anything they can get their teeth into. Eventually, they pupate and emerge as adults. Adult ground beetles tend to hunt at night, saving us time spent with a torch looking for slugs.

Unlike slug and snail eggs, which are rounder and more translucent, the eggs of ground beetles are usually creamy white and oval.

There are around 350 species of ground beetles in the UK and, if you want to attract them to your vegetable patch, it's as easy as leaving a pile of logs or leaf litter for them to sleep under during the day.

For more on ground beetles and rove beetles, visit **The rhs**





Ladybird eggs

Every gardener loves ladybirds and yet many a ladybird has her reproductive ambitions shattered when we mistake her eggs for a clutch of cabbage white butterfly eggs.

Like those of the cabbage white, ladybird eggs are bright yellow, oval shaped and are laid on the undersides of leaves. But, if you take a closer look with a hand lens, you will see that ladybird eggs are smooth, whereas the eggs of cabbage whites are ribbed.

The eggs hatch out in a week and the larvae consume huge numbers of aphids and other sapsucking insects such as scale insects.

Unfortunately, for ladybird larvae, they are not nearly as pretty as their mothers and often get squashed on account of the mistaken assumption that, if they're that ugly, they must be bad.

Ladybird larvae look like tiny little alligators and, as they get bigger, they may even develop spots on their backs, just like their parents.

Ladybird larvae and eggs are sold as biological pest controllers and, if you order them, they will more than likely arrive through the post in a petridish. Make sure you have some aphids to feed them because they will need to eat straight away.

For more on the lifecycle of ladybirds and how to recognise their larvae, visit **UK safari**



European goldfinch

There are very few British birds that can tolerate the taste of cabbage white caterpillars. Robins, blackbirds and blue tits will all turn their noses up at a meal of cabbage caterpillars. However, goldfinches happily eat them and that makes them a great little allotment pet.

Their eggs are very pale blue, with reddish-brown spots, laid in cup-shaped nests, lined with soft down or wool. The nests can be found in trees near the end of the branches or in hedgerows.

Goldfinches aren't daft. They often decide to migrate to the warmer parts of Europe for winter, arriving back on our shores in the spring when they're ready to breed. The adults eat insects and seeds but have a notable preference for the seedheads of Teasel so this is a great plant to grow in order to encourage adults.

When feeding their young, they will look for softbodied insects because seeds can be hard for the little ones to digest so, if you are lucky enough to have a nest, the adults will be more than happy to keep your cabbages clean of caterpillars.

Goldfinches are very beautiful. With their bright colours, they look like escaped exotic caged birds and they were once kept as caged birds in this country. Of course now, they are a protected species.

More on goldfinches at rspb.org

Download our A4 printable poster 'Good eggs and bad eggs' here



Share your stories

We want to hear all about your upcoming events, good news stories and allotment growing tips.

If you have a story you want to share with the rest of the Scottish allotments and gardens community, please contact us: newsletter@scottishallotments.org



