

Study trip to Letchworth Garden City on Monday 23rd May 2011

Through our contact at the University College, London, we were delighted to once again contribute to a study trip to Letchworth Garden City. The delegation was primarily composed of five Senior Scholars from the Chinese Academy of Sciences, including key people from the Department of Rural and Urban studies and the D.G of the Agriculture Commission from Shanghai.

The purpose of the study visit was for the participants to be exposed to and gain an overview of urban agriculture activities in the UK and Holland. More specifically the visit focused on environmental aspects, city design and planning with particular attention to the potential contribution of urban agriculture and garden cities to food security and low carbon cities and the integration of the underlying principles for development planning in China.

The day started with a session with the Heritage Foundation to assess their objectives and enterprises. Their management structure and governance together with the revitalisation of the Garden City Town Centre (The Wynd) were all discussed.

Following lunch, as we drove to the Norton allotment site, I explained to them how the Letchworth District Gardeners Association is organised and what we have to offer members. I took them into the trading store and explained to them how it is run. They seemed to have difficulty understanding why we do all this work, unpaid, for the benefit of our members. They were very impressed by how we could provide such a service.

We then walked round the allotments, explaining what an allotment is and how it works. It seemed to be a totally new concept for them. They asked lots of questions and I am sure they would think of many more during the following days.

I would like to thank Jo Tofts and Clive Collins for participating in the day and passing on their knowledge of allotments and the LDGA.

Maureen Hersee
Chairman LDGA