

The Allotment



Newsletter of the Hampton Court Way Allotment Association

July 2008

It's Barbecue time

Don't miss our brilliant summer barbecue.

Saturday 12th of July 6 – 10pm

Get to know your fellow plotters and talk all things allotment over a glass of your favourite tippie.

Bring a bottle and something to bung on the barbie.

We'll do the cooking and supply the green stuff and deserts

Admission £3.00 Friends and family welcome

To book your place please email Marie Mullard at mgmullard@hotmail.co.uk or telephone her on **0208 398 5022**

Best Plot Award

View from the Shed

As many are aware there are some plots that have remained lightly worked or completely uncultivated for some time now. Weed seeds blow on to neighbours' beds, bindweed spreads across the paths and strimming two borders is tiring and time consuming. The Association now has a waiting list of over 20 potentially keen growers and it seems a shame that when some plots are obviously lying fallow that they are not able to join us on site.

With this in mind it was decided early in the month to contact the rentees of the 14 plots identified as unworked and enquire if they were considering vacating their plot and if not, perhaps would like to at least have a tidy-up. A 30 day period of grace has been offered to take into account validating circumstances and allow maintenance before termination of tenure is considered.

There may be many reasons plots are not worked – work commitments, illness, changes of circumstance etc, these are all valid and must be considered, but if

another interest has taken over or it feels like just too much work it's probably better to let go.

Make mine a half

It's become clear over the last couple of seasons how popular the half plots are. Most of us young people (don't laugh) have time constraints, and some of the more mature find it difficult to cope with a whole plot. Funnily enough yields don't seem that much lower, planting less means you consume quicker, and if you sow in succession there's no glut and no waste.

Now as plots become available, halving will be considered in all cases where possible.

Poor old Plot 13

I think I should probably have received a letter. Some of you may have noticed that plot 13 is not the usual verdant veg packed site that it has been for the last 6 years. In fact most of the beds are bare and the few surviving potatoes and

onions are choked with weeds and looking very sad. Here's the explanation, it does not assuage my guilt, but, hopefully will assure that there has been a significant extenuating circumstance – namely the Hampton Court Flower Show.

Late last year I was chatting to Susan on No.15 and we decided to have a punt at designing a small garden for the show. Plans were duly submitted in January and to our utter amazement were accepted soon after. Since then, this two square metres of Hampton Court has grown to become the entire focus of our lives and fill every spare hour.

Hundreds of miles have been travelled sourcing plants, thousands of plants have been fed, dead-headed and watered – every night. Millions of aphids have been put to sleep and I have personally drunk three whole bottles of wine – yeah right!

There are so many tales to tell that they would probably fill a book – hey there's an idea –believe me all you see

Continued over

July Diary

Veg

Control weeds between rows.

Water regularly to prevent 'bolting'.

Pinch out the tips of runner beans when they have reached the top of their support and water regularly.

Harvest early potatoes, Garlic, early onions and shallots.

Protect summer cauliflowers from the sun by bending a few leaves over the curd.

Fruit

Start picking summer raspberries, black, red and white currants.

Train blackberry canes to avoid a tangle of thorny stems.

Cut out fruited summer raspberry canes

Direct sow

Spring cabbages in prepared seedbed

Autumn and winter salad crops.

Quick maturing Pea varieties.

August Diary

Veg

Harvest all vegetables as they mature - onions when the foliage has collapsed and runner beans when small and tender.

Stop outdoor tomatoes after four trusses of fruit.

Fruit

Prune summer fruiting raspberries.

Harvest early apples and pears.

Plant out new strawberry plants

Direct sow

Spring cabbages in prepared seedbed

Final salad crops

Green manure crops in vacant beds

September Diary

Veg

Start lifting beetroot, carrots and turnips.

Lift maincrop potatoes.

Pick pumpkins, squashes and marrows.

Cut down asparagus foliage.

Store onions in a cool dry place.

Fruit

Net ripening berries to protect from birds.

Start picking autumn fruiting raspberries.

Finish cutting out fruited summer raspberry canes.

Plant out

Garlic

Winter lettuce varieties

Spring cabbages

Early onion sets

View from the shed continued

on TV about effort expended doing this sort of thing is true – and some. It all has to be so perfect.

Anyway it's all very exciting and very nearly done, so barring pestilence and nervous breakdown we'll be there on the 7th, ready to greet the great British public – hopefully we may see some of you there.

HCWAA Barbecue

Hopefully the weather will stay fine for this years barbecue on the 12th. It's a

great way to put to names to faces and share growing tips. The winner of best plot award will be announced and prizes awarded.

Could all wishing to attend please email or phone Marie Mullard asap so she's got some idea of numbers attending and if you could bring something to sit on, some cutlery and plastic cups that would be great. I'll try and get there but may be down the road!

Wishing you all very the best – Paul

From the site manager

Well summer is here!! not entirely convinced myself - the weeds are growing extremely well but the veg and fruit seem to be struggling a bit. Last year I had loads of stuff up but this season I'm all behind. Anyway it seems the same across the site, I suppose it would be dull if everything were the same every year.

There are more new people joining us and hopefully we will all help and share our knowledge not mine as I haven't got much yet! (Oh Paul at plot 13 is great with onions) I wish you all a fruitful season.

We would like to remove the manure along the roadside, at the back of plot 14.

So if people can take as much as possible that would be great - we will be relocating the manure to sites either end of the allotments as we have had numerous complaints about the smell from one householder backing on to the site.

Again we request can all plots be clearly numbered, and can all plot holders please park off the road and on their own plot. Also can we follow the one way system and restrict our speed to 5mph.

It is a good idea to also mark all tools and compost bins including the lids with your plot number and postcode. Tools can be marked with an ultraviolet pen this makes it easy for police to identify the owner if items are stolen then recovered.

We have had problems with vandals and theft. Also in the last week or two we have had grass cuttings etc. dumped on plots 81A and the four adjoining sites - if people could keep their eyes open and ask strangers wandering around "If they need help" or "why are they there" we might be able to keep the vegetable stealers and tippers at bay. Please if you see anything suspicious you can email me on fmuldoon@ntlworld.com.

If you have the misfortune of anything stolen or damaged we will need a police report number which you can get online from Surrey Police.

If you could give the number and information to me I can keep the pressure up and keep the patrols coming round. Hope this a very successful growing year for everyone and I hope to see you all over the coming months. Regards

– Fiona

Who to contact

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