

Horfield and District Allotments Association

Newsletter Summer 2016

AGM 2016

On the 8th of February about 40 members of the Association and Committee members gathered at the Good Shepherd hall, despite foul weather, for the 2016 AGM of H&DAA. **The Chairman** reported on the current occupancy, with nearly 500 plots the number of new plot holders registered in 2015 was 46, a turnover of nearly 10%. We have 97% occupancy and waiting lists on all fields. Neil thanked the Allotments Officer, Steve Clampin for his efforts in securing funds for capital projects in 2015. He outlined our policy regarding neglected plots and invited plot holders to help themselves to the piles of wood chips on Golden Hill. He thanked the Hedging Team for their stunning progress this year and Pete for applying the non-slip strips to the decking path by the pond on Golden Hill.

The Treasurer, Brian, thanked members for prompt payment of rent and reported that current income and expenditure are in balance. He gave examples of the ways in which we, as a self-managed Association, have been able to save money in the last year, highlighting the huge saving in water cost through the efforts of Pete Clee and his 'Tower of Power' on Golden Hill, the contribution of the hedge team whose work has saved hundreds of pounds in maintenance costs, as well as restoring the 500 year old hedges and re-establishing wild life corridors, and the administrative daily grind which we get for nothing but the Allotments Office have to pay for. In response to a question from the floor Brain regretted that we are unable to take rent payment by direct transfer.

Pete brought us up to date on progress in the Community Garden which is now in its fourth year of existence and is entering its second year of independence. The accolades continue to roll in with the RHS best community garden in the South West award and a nomination for the Bristol Green Award. The use of the garden by its target groups continues to grow and for younger would-be gardeners there are now two well established

toddler groups and a school group is to start shortly. The Bale House is taking bookings (the committee can verify the cosiness of the venue – even on winter evenings). The Garden is close to self-sufficiency but needs another £2000 a year to be comfortable

Steve Clampin, our Allotments Officer at BCC reported on the general state of allotments in Bristol. He reported that Bristol will not have £7000 again to give Associations but they can apply for money for capital projects in these categories: Health and safety; Accessibility; Improved letting; New sites; Improved water supply.

Prizes: Miss Phyllis Brooks presented the prizes. Prizes were awarded as follows:

Ted Hill cup (for plot holder making the most progress in the 1st year of tenancy January 2013-2014) was awarded to Mr and Mrs Newby 14 Davis. Mr Newby accepted the cup and thanked his neighbours for all their help.

Field prizes (new tenants who have made good progress): Kirsten Whimster, 8a Birchall and Jane Beresford-Huey and Marie Beresford-Huey, 24b Longs.

The Phyllis Brooks award for outstanding service to the Association was awarded to Richard Wardle for outstanding support to his neighbours.

H&DAA on Facebook

Our Facebook page continues to flourish
To join Horfield and District Allotment Association Chat search Facebook for the title, follow the link on the H&DAA website, or go directly to
www.facebook.com/groups/handdaa
The group is open to any allotment holders in the Association fields, and is for allotment related chat, questions, swaps and sharing.

General News

Election of officers

At the March committee meeting the following officers were elected:

Chairman: Neil Pirie.
Deputy Chairman: Pete Clee
Treasurer: Brian Styles
Secretary: Marjorie McCartney

Notices

Working Parties on Birchall Field:

Watch the notice board for maintenance events – a good way to meet your fellow plot holders.

Work Parties Golden Hill

Hedging work is on hold for the summer after a winter during which the cultivatable area of Baptist Field was considerably increased. We are grateful to The Woodland Trust for their continuing support in the supply of saplings, saving us considerable expense. Watch notice boards for the resumption of work in the autumn.

Appeal from Field Reps:

Please maintain the paths adjacent to your plot. You will not only walk more safely, you will also be seriously disrupting the travel plans of your slug population.

Resolutions for AGM 2017 should be submitted to the secretary before the December committee meeting (Dec 12th)

Plot inspections – June

Please make sure that your plot number is visible

Who to contact:

Organic compost, £5.0 a barrow: - Pete 975 6647
Change address, lost key, give up plot, have a friend helping who would like to join as a member:
Christine
Something for the web site: Marjorie
Everything else: your field rep

Know what's happening in:

H&DAA:

<http://horfieldanddistrictallotments.webeden.co.uk>

HOCO: www.community-orchard.org.uk

GHCG: www.thegoldenhillcommunitygarden.com

Ashley Down Shop –

For all gardening supplies
Open to H&DAA members
Saturday & Sunday: 10.30am – 12md
[Foot of Station Road]

Associate Members: A number of members have not paid their annual subscription for 2016. If you are one of these, but you wish to continue as a member of the Association, send your £5.00 to H&DAA, 14 Stadium Rd. Bristol, BS6 7YE. If we do not hear from you by the end of June we will assume you have retired and will not send you any more newsletters. This does not apply to plot holders who have paid rent; your sub is included in your rent bill.

Reduced Rents: If you are in receipt of a means tested benefit you may be entitled to a rent reduction. Applications have to be processed by the City Council. To obtain an application form visit BCC web site, see your Field Rep or call Christine on 3301639. It is important that you do this before the end of August, don't leave it until your rent bill arrives.

In Brief

Bonfires- It is now closed season

Burning issues must wait until November

No dumping anything on the Community Garden compost bins at the car park (NOR taking any residual compost until further notice).

Toilet at car park Golden Hill, PLEASE shut the door

Petrol strimmers 10-12am, and 4-6pm only at weekends and bank holidays: any time during the week, with a recommendation that 30 minutes should be the limit.

Plot holders, their family, and friends are invited to celebrate

Horfield Organic Community Orchard
at our next two community events.

Summer Orchard Open Day –
part of the Bristol-wide Get Growing Garden
Trail weekend

Saturday 4 June, 2016, 1 - 5pm

Enjoy an afternoon exploring Bristol's pioneering community orchard. Set up in 1998, and cared for by members, who are volunteers. HOCO aims to inspire fruit growing as a way to grow community, wellbeing, and local, sustainable food. Come and see plans and progress on our **Home Orchard Plot** project – a mini orchard with a 10 x 4 metre footprint. See our **Orchard Roots Bristol** exhibition for stories of local and heritage apples. Find out how a small community group transformed a piece of marginal and neglected land into a beautiful, fruitful urban oasis.

- The relaxed nature of this event gives us time to answer your fruit growing questions.
- Homemade cakes, refreshments, produce and plants for sale.
- Join the orchard in June and share in this year's harvest!

Apple Day

Sunday 16 October, 2016, 2 - 4pm

- Featuring our wonderful Apple Tasting Table – with more than 20 varieties to sample.
- See more progress on the **Home Orchard Plot**.
- Make juice, and make merry with the local **Pigsty Morris** team.
- Fresh pressed juice, homemade cakes, produce, plants, and fruit trees for sale.

The Orchard is in Davis Field. To find the entrance (nearest postcode BS7 8JP) Walk down the lane beside 22 Kings Drive (between Bishop Road & Kellaway Avenue), turn left and it's the first gate on the right.

OR Take the lane beside 134 Longmead Avenue until you come to the last gate on the left

For more information:
www.community-orchard.org.uk
E-mail: hocohello@gmail.com
Phone: 0117 373 1587

Our Most Appealing Garden

The privilege of renting an allotment garden in the center of a city like Bristol cannot be over stated. To be able to extend this privilege to members of the community who would not traditionally have been able to avail themselves of the facility is something we would all wholeheartedly endorse. When the Community Garden was first mooted five years ago there were committee members who were sceptical about its prospects (Me too). But how spectacularly wrong we were. I'm sure Lucy, Clare, Pete & Neil would balk at the suggestion that they are deserving of special praise & credit (so I will not bother with that) because, at the end of the day the Garden would not be there without the tireless toil of the dedicated volunteers who turn up week after week and make it work. The Garden has won numerous awards and has staged spectacular events, but mostly it has been a haven & an inspiration for those who use it on a day to day basis.

We are now into the fifth year of our community Garden, and its second year of independence. Because of the diversity of its clientele it is a difficult project to run without the support of a paid worker. There are issues of child protection & safety that require accountability. You know where I am going with this so here's the thing:

You can become a friend of the Garden by pledging a regular payment by standing order, this could be as little as £2.00 a month or as much as you like. (Forms from me or Lucy)

You can help with events, everything from running an activity/stall to donating cakes & plants.

You can make a one-off donation, contact Neil.

You could become involved in the committee, a secretary & minutes secretary are currently urgently needed.

And don't forget, as well as all the benefits to plot holders that I can list for the existence of the community Garden, the clincher must be that it was the Community Garden that brought a toilet to Golden Hill.

Thank you – Christine.

Here is where it's at:

Lucy Mitchell

Community Project Worker

07506 905 394

www.thegoldenhillcommunitygarden.com

**Please note I work Part time usually
Tuesdays and Wednesdays**

Bishopston Open Gardens

Sunday 19th June 2-5pm

Gardens Open

7 Dulverton Rd.

104 Egerton Rd.

2 Wentworth Rd. + Teas

3 Logan Rd.+ Plant sales

9 Berkeley Rd.

30 Berkeley Rd.

74 Egerton Rd.

98 Egerton Rd.

Note especially – teas & plant sales above!

Money raised will go to:

Golden Hill Community Garden

A refugee charity

Entrance charge £4, children free.

Top Tips

Broccoli Bonus

On April the 1st this year it was reported in the Times newspaper that broccoli leaves are being promoted as a new super-food. According to research carried out for Asda the leaves are the healthiest part of the plant. Now, you may say that the clue is in the date, but I can offer evidence from a blind tasting experiment carried out exclusively for H&DAA. In August last year my daughter & I purchased plants labeled 'Curly Kale' from Henleaze Garden Centre. It soon became clear that these were not curly Kale, but I thought it possible that they could be a variety of Russian Kale. My daughter & I enjoyed several meals from the plants before flowers started to appear in early March clearly indicating the true identity of our plants.

I can only say that the leaves were a good substitute for kale & were very good in Indian recipes as a substitute for spinach. The plants went on to yield a very respectable crop of sprouting broccoli!

Take two Aspirin

James Wong, a regular panelist on 'Gardeners Question Time', has advised spraying with a weak solution of soluble Aspirin as a preventative measure for blight in potatoes & tomatoes. The salicylic acid in the aspirin mimics a hormone in the plant that triggers an immune response. A quick Google turns up lots of different advice regarding dose but it would seem that 1 – 1½ standard

300mg tablets dissolved in 1 gallon/4.5litres of water should do the trick. Spraying must commence before any sign of blight has appeared (probably by mid-July) and be repeated 3 times a month. There have been claims that this treatment can reduce the incidence of blight by 47%. If you would prefer a natural source of salicylic acid then you may like to try a tea made from willow bark – you will find recipes on the internet.

Surviving the 'Hungry Gap'

The term 'Hungry Gap' was coined to describe the period of late spring when winter brassicas are over & summer crops are still at the seedling stage. However, with modern varieties scurvy can be avoided. Here are a few that have worked for me on Golden Hill (heavy clay) with their harvest dates:

Leeks: through till April

Cauli Purple Cape: Feb/March

Late sprouting Broccoli: Feb/March

Cauli Aalsmeer: April/May

Cauli May Star: May

Cabbage Spring Hero: May/June.

Perpetual spinach: whenever – grows like a weed.

Rhubarb: from March or earlier if forced.

The caulis & leeks are all sown in April/May the Spinach & cabbage in August. They sit in the ground looking like nothing very exciting till about a month before harvest – a quick feed & some water and hey presto! You have veg, nutritious, organic & fresh. You don't need too many plants of any one variety as they all tend to come at once

Grow simple –serve delicious

Did you know that you can make tzatziki from beetroot? Any combination of yogurt, horseradish, toasted cumin seed, mint if you like, lemon juice if you like & boiled grated beetroot.

Veg don't have to be exotic to be scrumptious. The easiest to grow can be gourmet foods – the secret is in the growing & the freshness. So if this is your first year of allotment gardening give yourself a break & stick with really easy stuff. You will still impress your friends – and yourself

Have a good Summer Season