

Horfield & District Allotments Association

Est.1917

Newsletter January 2018

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **Monday February 12th**

Hall of the Church of the Good Shepherd
(Between Bishop Road and Kings Drive)

Tea and Coffee available from 7.15pm
Meeting begins at 7.45pm

Agenda:

1. Apologies
2. Minutes of the 2017 AGM (Will be tabled)
3. Matters Arising
4. Report from the Chairman on behalf of the Executive Committee.
5. Annual accounts and treasurers report.
6. Election of H&DAA Company Directors.
7. Community Garden report
8. BCC Allotments Officer
9. Presentation of prizes.

Guest speaker:

Tim Scoones, naturalist, film maker and broadcaster, probably best known to us as the original series producer of Springwatch, will be coming to our AGM to talk to us about the impact of wildlife on our allotments, and how and why we can encourage and influence it's future. Do come and get some tips.

Prizes

In case you are new to H&DAA here is what they are for:

Ted Hill Cup, to the new tenant who has made the most progress in the first year of tenancy.

Phyllis Brooks Award: to a plot holder who has made an outstanding contribution to their field or the Association.

Best on Field: a small prize for the best new tenant on each field.

H&D.A.A Centenary Celebration

We've now reached the end of our centenary year, and it's certainly been a busy one. Starting from scratch, we have compiled enough information to produce a fold up leaflet, soon to be followed by a booklet, as well as invaluable recordings of peoples' stories and memories. A big thankyou to all those who have made a contribution, either written or oral, and a special thankyou to our steering group, expertly directed by Jeremy Iles, without all of whose help I would have had real problems. We hope you find the information in the leaflet, which all members of the Association will receive, to be a tantalising hors d'oeuvre to the main course, which will be a fairly comprehensive booklet, and which will be available from me on request when it is produced.

I hope that those of you who got involved enjoyed it, and that I didn't nag too many of you too much! The highlight for me was the fantastic turn out of 60 to 80 of you for the apple pressing weekend, when we scatted and pressed enough windfall apples to make about 50 litres of apple juice, a taste experience which was widely praised. I'm fairly sure that this will become an annual event, with the cooperation of those ploholders who generously allowed us to scrump their apples, and of course your involvement. It is planned that as well as the written and oral histories, there will also be some permanent reminders of our centenary year, which we will let you know about in due course. Finally, thanks to Heritage Lottery funding, without which none of this would have been possible.

Pete Clee

Change of personnel

Marjorie has retired as secretary after several years of dedicated service. However, she will still manage the web site from her new home in Reading.

Her role has been taken over by Sarah Rhodes who will also continue as minutes secretary for committee meetings & AGM.

Situations Vacant

There are vacancies for field reps on Baptist & St Agnes. Field reps are the keystone of the Association. The work load is not onerous & you get to nose round other people's plots (mind you we all do that anyway). If you are interested/want more info, contact Neil or Pete.

Polytunnels

Polytunnels are becoming increasingly popular with tenants but before you even open your catalogue there are a few things to bear in mind.

The maximum size allowed by H&DAA is 12m². However even this would be too big for some plots and some positions.

For this reason, it is essential that you **consult your field rep** and to supply the size and position of the proposed tunnel.

Polytunnel owners are asked to pay a voluntary water levy of £10.00 per year.

Don't forget that your tunnel will need to be watered though the winter to keep the soil alive.

Bonfires Please be aware of the impact of your bonfire on your neighbours both on and off the field. Avoid smoky fires, do not burn on sunny weekend days & bank holidays.
NEVER LEAVE A FIRE UNATTENDED.

Rubbish Please do not bring anything on to the site that will have to be cleared from your plot when you leave. No dumping in car parks or hedges. When you have no crops to transport take a bag of rubbish home with you and put it in your bin. The Community Garden & the Organic Orchard can also manage nicely without donations of rubbish.

Self Reliance

As well as being our centenary year 2017 has also been our 15th year of self-management.

Self-Management has brought enormous benefit to the Association not least in the low level of our rents compared with Local Authority rents.

Next year our lease is to be extended for a further 25 years.

We have also seen the probable ending of any financial support from the Local Authority who have been very generous over the last ten years to the tune of £35,000.

Our finances are currently healthy. With the help of a considerable amount of voluntary labour the rents cover our costs.

One of the terms of our lease specifies that the sites should be maintained in the condition they were in when we first took over their management. This requires that we keep hedges, trees and borders tidy and consistent with allotment site standards. Tree and hedge maintenance is a very expensive undertaking, hauling way costs are almost insignificant by comparison. Fortunately, we have had the services of a dedicated team of hedge and tree maintenance volunteers who are slowly working their way round the Golden Hill site as well as carrying out some work on Birchall. Birchall has also established its own band of hardy souls who turn out to clear overgrown areas and generally keep the field tidy. Some heroic efforts have been made, on Birchall in particular, to return whole areas of wilderness to cultivatable plots. Sometimes by the efforts of a single plot holder.

Not all the voluntary roles in the Association involve stout boots and armoured gloves. There are things you can do in the comfort of your own home (like producing a newsletter). If you would like to make a contribution contact your field rep &/or watch out for notices on gates and on the website.

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

Working parties Golden Hill:

Hedge maintenance

Every Sunday morning 10.00am – 12md until the end of January. Stout boots & gloves essential.

Watch the notice boards and web site for working days/events on your field

Working parties Birchall:

We had two working parties in November to clear overgrown areas on Birchall field.

Thank you to everyone who came to help

Remember you can use:
Ashley Down Allotments Association Store:

For seed potatoes, onion sets, seeds, canes, fertilizers & other garden supplies
Station Rd (off Ashley Down Road) Open
Saturdays and Sundays 10.30am-12
Noon (Except Xmas/New Year period)

For more details go to:
<http://horfieldanddistrictallotments.webeden.co.uk>

You can also get all the latest on what's happening in H&DAA, where to access manure, seasonal tips & recipes

In Praise of Potatoes

There is a lot to be said for traditional allotment varieties. Leeks, cabbages & sprouts may not be exotic, but they won't generally fail & you will have your own winter veg to eat.

Potatoes are so cheap you may think that they are not worth your time & effort. But they are. Not only do you produce a potato of far superior flavour to anything you can buy in the shops (including organic), you also condition your soil in the process.

Our sites seem to favour Charlotte & Desire

Early planting can minimize damage from blight which seems to have become unavoidable. Take off the foliage at the first signs of the disease & leave the potatoes in the ground for at least 3 weeks

By planting early (mid Feb) & fleecing you can be eating home grown spuds by late June. Pink Fir Apple has a low susceptibility to blight & can be stored till March. That only leaves April, May & a bit of June, when I recommend you eat rice, bread or pasta because you will never want to eat a bought potato again.

Handy hint

If, like me, you like to knit or crochet you will be all too aware that hands that do gardening are a tad rough for knitting. To prevent rough skin purchase some thin cheap cotton gloves, apply a liberal amount of hand cream, cotton gloves then gardening gloves. Works a treat. The best method of cleaning hands after gardening is to hand knead bread dough. If you intend to eat the resulting bread I would recommend whole meal flour as the grey colour imparted to white bread can be off putting.

If you want to air your views, pass on tips or look for advice our Facebook page is a good place to start,

www.facebook.com/groups/handdaa

All are welcome to Wassail

Horfield Organic Community Orchard
Saturday 13 January 2018, 2 - 4pm

Toast the orchard for a fruitful harvest
Bring ribbons, clouties & shining things to
dress the trees

Make merry with Pigsty Morris
Listen up to Bristol Folk Singers
Homemade cakes and mulled Orchard
juice for sale

Do you want to learn more about fruit
growing? Join our new **Orchard Learning
2018** programme. Find out more:
[http://www.community-orchard.org.uk/get-
involved](http://www.community-orchard.org.uk/get-involved)

To find the Orchard (in Davis Field,
nearest postcode BS7 8JP) walk down the
lane beside 22 Kings Drive (between Bishop
Road and 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.

Contact: hocohello@gmail.com
phone: 0117 373 1587
www.community-orchard.org.uk

Golden Hill Community Garden

We've had another great year in the
community garden. We had a consistent 20+
folks along every Wednesday through the
year with many of our volunteers having
additional support needs or going through a
tough time.

We support students with learning difficulties
from the local college, welcome adults with
dementia from North Bristol Community Links
and this year have expanded our work with
local families with a child/children with special
educational needs or a disability and have
been running a monthly Sunday club.

And it was our best year yet for carrots!

Thanks to all the plot holders that have come
to our events, bought our plants and
compost, donated money and brought your
children to our toddler groups or sent them
along to our afterschool and holiday clubs.
All your help makes the garden possible!

<http://thegoldenhillcommunitygarden.com>

