



# SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk  
email: info@sunnysideallotments.org.uk

No: 3 July 2016

Midsummer's Day was marked at Sunnyside this year by the unveiling of the new memorial bench on A16. Paid for entirely by contributions from friends, fellow allotment holders and fellow retired railwaymen, the bench commemorates the life of Ted Dyer, long-time tenant at Sunnyside.

About 100 people, including a contingent of the retired railwaymen's lunch club of which Ted was a member, gathered on A Road to raise a glass in Ted's memory and to chat with friends before repairing to the tea hut for tea and cakes.

The new garden behind the bench is full of the hollyhocks, foxgloves and poppies which featured on Ted's plots, as well as other flowers, some of which were contributed by tenants. Ted loved roses, and these have been planted by the trellis at the back, to add colour and scent to the garden in the future. The two roses on either side are aptly named 'Edward's Rose'.

It is hoped that tenants, friends, and people passing by will pause on the bench, remember Ted, and enjoy the spot as he did.

Once again, many thanks to all those who sent me photos, suggestions, articles and even jokes for this issue – I hope you enjoy reading it, and your comments and feedback would be very welcome.

If you don't already get your newsletter by email and have an email address, please send it to Jenny to save on printing costs. Also, if you change your address, don't forget to let Jenny know, or you will be missing out on communications about SAS, including your newsletter!

Lin Phillips, Editor



Photo: Clive Smith



### Chairman's Notes

Now is the time to start the harvest and enjoy the fruits of all that effort. Unfortunately, weeds and insect pests are also at their peak so carry on the fight. There is still time to sow seeds - or re-sow if pests have had the first attempt. A number of tenants are being sent letters to remind them of the need to prevent weed seeds from spreading to neighbours and/or to keep their plot in reasonable order. If this applies to you and there is a reason why you cannot manage your plot please contact a member of the committee.

Several tenants have reported deer damage, and both fallow and Muntjac deer have been spotted on New. We have raised the problem with the Council and they are looking into the practicality of deer fencing being erected at the Birchnall's Copse end and along the farmer's field.

The allotment waiting list is quite short at the moment and there are some vacant plots, so if you know anyone who would like one, please encourage them to apply to the Council, and talk to me so I can show you what's available.

Good Gardening,  
John Eaton

### Open Day 2015

It's only a few weeks now till this year's Open Day and the enclosed letter encourages you to get involved and volunteer to help on the day itself.

This season is proving quite challenging for gardeners and as a result we may not have as much produce as usual for visitors to buy. So we are asking for more donations of jams and chutneys to make up. As you make your fruit into delicious jams and preserves, please make a few extra jars for our stall.

We are also holding a separate plant stall this year on A Road, and we would be grateful for all your spare plants (labelled please). If you are dividing things up or taking cuttings please spare a few for us. If you are sowing or re-sowing seeds, a few extra pots for us would be gratefully received. Please contact Cynthia:

[cynthia@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:cynthia@sunnysideallotments.org.uk).

It has been suggested that it might be nice to have some music to entertain visitors as they enjoy their tea. If there is anyone out there who would like to play a couple of sessions please get in touch with Wendy:

[wendy@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:wendy@sunnysideallotments.org.uk)

### Untidy gardens and reminder of eviction process

The terms of the tenancy of an allotment plot require us to keep it in a tidy condition. The Council requires plots to be inspected three times every summer by representatives of the Committee, who must report any plots where there appears to be no evidence that the plot is being cultivated. The council then sends a first warning letter to those listed, and if necessary a second letter following the next inspection. If after the third inspection there has still been no improvement, the Council sends a letter terminating the tenancy. Often, tenants may have been under some temporary difficulty and, following receipt of the first letter, they are at least able to make a start. In other cases, the letter may prompt tenants to make a decision which perhaps they had been considering, i.e., that it is time to give up their plot.

### Seat unveiling



Photo: Andy James



Photo: Will Facey

**Please Note:** To offset rising printing costs, an electronic version of future editions of the newsletter will be sent to all those people that supply an email address to Jenny Sippings – ([jennysippings@virginmedia.com](mailto:jennysippings@virginmedia.com)).

### A newcomer's report on the Sunnyside experience

Diane and Phil Mix moved to Berkhamsted from London four years ago. As city people, it took them some time to adjust to this relatively rural environment. Since then, they have taken on an allotment, and this is how Diane has reported the experience to her London friends:

*"We had never grown anything in our lives. Last summer I started helping a new friend, Kate, with her beautiful plot. She is an experienced gardener and it was great helping her dig and weed during the warm weather. Also, as we live in a flat, it was an extra benefit to spend time outside. I thoroughly enjoyed myself. The tea bell goes every two hours so, if you fancy a bit of company and a chat, you can take a break. I have found the diversity of people on the allotment one of its lovely attractions. It's great that you can go there for as little or as much time as you want; there are always jobs to do.*

*I never expected Phil to be as keen on the idea but we're finding we both enjoy taking on this project together and learning together. This is proving to be quite a family project as everyone is keen to help out. My daughter helped with putting up the greenhouse donated by Ray, our lovely allotment neighbour. We still haven't got the glass put in but, as we're appreciating, there's no rush .."*

### Help offered to Sunnyside tenant

Vera Ruyter, recently moved to Berkhamsted, is missing the social aspect of the allotment she used to share with a friend, in her previous area. She would like to ease her way into Sunnyside by working alongside a tenant or tenant, and is offering to help. She will possibly then apply for her own plot, but if you would be happy to welcome this lady and benefit from her energies and company, please contact me on 07835 623981 or via email, [lin@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:lin@sunnysideallotments.org.uk)

### A cynic's guide to gardening

Hoeing: method of killing seedlings whilst redistributing stones.

Compost: the only thing that grows.

Broad Bean: Vegetable grown as food for blackfly.

Pruning: method of killing plants.

Weeds: main garden crop.

Annual: an unwanted plant which persists in reseeding itself year after year.

Perennial: should appear each year but doesn't.

Allotment: But little achieved.

(from Geoffrey Giles – Ed's note: Surely things aren't that bad, Geoffrey!)

### Seed orders

If you are a paid up member of the Sunnyside Allotment Society, you will be receiving the King's seed catalogue in September. You will be able to order your seeds at a discounted price through our bulk order while making some money for the Society. As well as offering a wide range of seeds and other gardening items, the catalogue is full of handy tips for successful sowing and growing.

### We're all going to the dump!

After clearing some plots, we have amassed a lot of old wheelbarrows, defunct mowers and assorted metal junk, which has now been deposited at the bottom of plot A14 on Sunnyside Old. The smaller pieces have been bagged up for easy handling. It's too much for any one person to deal with, but clearly it can't stay on that tenant's plot for long. So if you possible can, please bring your car along A Road in the next couple of weeks and take a barrow and/or a quantity of the rest of it to the recycling centre. Many cars make light work, or something like that – and thanks!



"Rocket robin" photo: Geoff Halls

### Water conservation tips

Water is a scarce resource on the allotments (and on the planet!), so we need to use it effectively. We can conserve moisture in soil by adding manure or composted plant waste and by mulching with wood chip, grass cuttings, straw or manure – even plastic – all laid when the soil is damp. Plant seedlings in a shallow trough to hold water, or build the soil up around larger plants to prevent run-off. Weeds compete with crops for water, so regular hoeing will keep them down, and also loosen the soil, allowing rain to be absorbed instead of running off.

Our tenancy requires that every shed and greenhouse has a water butt, with a gutter and down pipe to catch the rain; if possible, position more butts elsewhere on your plot. (Have a look on B9 as sometimes there is a used one there waiting for a new home, or try [Freecycle](#)) You can use a siphon to draw water from the communal tanks into your water butts, and from there use a watering can, which loses less to evaporation than hosing. Watering in the morning or evening also avoids evaporation and gives the water a chance to get down to the roots of plants; water slowly to allow it to soak into the soil, aiming at the roots rather than all over the leaves, which may then scorch in the sun. Use plastic litre bottles with the base cut off as funnels; put them into the ground next to thirsty plants like tomatoes and courgettes, so that the water runs right down to the roots.

Lots more helpful information on the SAS website!

[www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk](http://www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk)



## Considerate allotment management – five handy hints

- Keep weeds down to prevent seeds spreading on your own plot and those of others.
- Be aware of safety hazards and remove or cover any sharp metal stakes, ragged sheets of corrugated iron or other potential dangers to yourself or to others walking by.
- Regularly remove rubbish from your plot, and take it home for the bin or to the recycling centre - don't leave it around or dump it in the car park.
- Keep stones off paths to prevent damage to mowers, and keep your paths mowed and edged. Keep nettles from growing onto public paths. We do not encourage the use of weedkiller, but if you do have to use it please do so on a still day and ensure that it does not spread on to your neighbour's plots or on to the paths.
- Remember to turn taps off after using hosepipes.

### Can you help?

Our lovely loo is kept clean and fresh by a small rota of volunteers. If you or your family value having this amenity on Sunnyside, perhaps you would join the rota. You would be doing a weekly clean for one month in three. To discuss, please contact Cynthia on [Cynthia@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:Cynthia@sunnysideallotments.org.uk)

### Photos needed for SAS 2017 Calendar

The SAS 2016 calendar was a sell-out, and the preparation of the next one will soon be underway. If you have any nice shots of your allotment, plants or produce, the Open Day, or views of Sunnyside New or Old, please send full resolution versions to [cynthia@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:cynthia@sunnysideallotments.org.uk)

### Working Party dates for your diary

For five Sundays over the autumn and winter, tenants work together on maintenance tasks for the whole site; jobs which belong to no-one and everyone; the car park, the leaf and woodchip piles, the roads and hedges. It's enjoyable to work as part of the team, whether you have the whole day or just the morning or afternoon to spare, and there is a welcome home-made soup and bread lunch provided at the tea hut. We meet at 10am – for information about the month's activities and tools to bring, contact Neil Kennedy closer to the date. [neil@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:neil@sunnysideallotments.org.uk)  
The dates are as follows:  
2 October, 6 November 2016, then 8 January, 5 February, and 5 March 2017.

### Tenancy changes

#### Welcome to:

David Hulbert N10

#### Goodbye to:

Rhianna James-Moore B28  
Katie Grange C27B  
Mel O'Brien N13  
Scott Wegener N61

### Your Current Committee Members

<b>Chairman:</b>	John Eaton	865307
<b>Vice Chairman &amp; Newsletter Editor:</b>	Lin Phillips	862882
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jenny Sippings	865890
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Andy James	865061
<b>Minutes Secretary:</b>	Cynthia Fulks	879410
<b>Other members:</b>	Wendy Calder	767289
	Angela Wheeldon	874440
	John Goffey	864967

You can email any member of the committee by putting their first name in front of:

[@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:@sunnysideallotments.org.uk) apart from John Eaton who is: [john@](mailto:john@) and John Goffey who is: [johng@](mailto:johng@)

### Watch out for blight!

The humid weather we have been having has resulted in the appearance of the cursed tomato and potato blight on some plots.

Potato and tomato blight is a disease caused by a fungus-like organism that spreads rapidly in the foliage and tubers or fruit of potatoes and tomatoes in wet weather, causing collapse and decay. You can recognise it by the brown rotting, shrivelled leaves of affected plants, which spreads rapidly throughout the plant, rotting the tomatoes or potatoes too.

Once found, the only remedy is to pull out the affected plants, and burn them or put them in the council green bin – not in your own compost heap.

See <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/profile?pid=217> for further information.



# Sunnyside Allotment Society

## OPEN DAY SUNDAY 14th AUGUST 2016

This year our Open Day takes place on Sunday 14th August from 11.00 am to 5.00 pm, to enable local residents to visit and enjoy the allotments with us. There will be refreshments, sales of produce and preserves and depending on the weather a guided walk through the allotments at 12 noon.

We try to make the sites look attractive, and it would be nice if you could spend some time on your plot during that day to give visitors a warm welcome and talk about your garden. Please try to cut your paths so that they are tidy, bramble free and accessible to the public. The contractors will be cutting the main roadways during the week before Open Day; to enable them to do a full width cut, please ensure the end of your plot bordering the roadway is cut back as far as possible.

## PRE-OPEN DAY JOBS

There are a number of jobs which we need help with before the day: cleaning furniture, displaying signs, mowing and strimming of paths and general tidying up of communal areas & entrances.

## VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

On the day we will need volunteers to help setting up, clearing up, manning the produce and plant stalls, refreshments and the raffle. We are also looking for people to meet and greet visitors. This would be ideal for people who garden near the gates.

**Volunteers are needed.** Even if you can only help for an hour or two. This is a good opportunity for meeting fellow allotmenters. The more people who get involved the better.

Please return the completed form to Wendy Calder at 8 Ellesmere Road or B15 or email to:

[wendy@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:wendy@sunnysideallotments.org.uk). We can then draw up a rota to share the jobs out. Could you also let us know if you are able to provide any contributions (see form below). Plants and preserves need to be delivered to B15 on **Friday or Saturday** and fresh veg/cakes **before 10.00 a.m.** on **Sunday**.

"-----"

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Plot No: \_\_\_\_\_ Tel: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_ Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

### Pre Open Day help:

I can help with: \_\_\_\_\_ Please let us know when: \_\_\_\_\_

### I can help at the following time(s) on Open Day (please tick the box):

- |   |   |  |
|---|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> 9.00-11.00 a.m. (setting up) | <input type="checkbox"/> 11.00-12 noon                | <input type="checkbox"/> 12 noon - 1.00 p.m. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1.00- 2.00 p.m.              | <input type="checkbox"/> 2.00-3.00 p.m.               | <input type="checkbox"/> 3.00- 4.00 p.m.     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 4.00- 5.00 p.m.              | <input type="checkbox"/> 5.00-6.00 p.m. (clearing up) | <input type="checkbox"/> anytime             |

### I will provide:

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> cakes/biscuits for the refreshments | <input type="checkbox"/> produce/preserves to sell |
| <input type="checkbox"/> plants/flowers to sell              | <input type="checkbox"/> other                     |

Please return this form by **Friday 7th August** to Wendy Calder at 8 Ellesmere Road or B15 or email to: [wendy@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:wendy@sunnysideallotments.org.uk). Thank you.