



# SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

No: 4 October 2016

## Editor's Note

After many gorgeous days in September, summer has finally ended – and with it, an end to courgettes at last! Time to look forward to the crisp days of autumn.

This issue contains lots of your photos and contributions, including an exciting account of tenants trying new crops with good results.

Hope you enjoy reading it,

Lin Phillips, Editor

## Chairman's Notes

The gardening season is nearly at an end so we can enjoy eating the fruits of our labours and prepare to clear the plots for possible manuring.

Through the winter, there are a number of Working Party days (Sundays) when various tidying up and improvement jobs around Sunnyside are tackled. Maintaining the site depends on these joint efforts, but the turnout can be quite low - 7 or 8 people. Please give a thought to helping out for, maybe, just an hour or two at one of the days - November 6, January 8, February 5, and March 5. And thanks to Neil and Trish Kennedy who coordinate the work.

The Society AGM is on Saturday 21st November at 10.30 in the Sunnyside Rural Trust premises, Ivy House Lane, with refreshments available beforehand from 10 am. So please come along to support your committee (or otherwise) and make your views known. A key issue will be to elect / re-elect committee members. New members are always needed, so do speak to any of the committee to get an idea of what we do and how you could contribute, and if you would like to join the committee please contact Jenny Sippings, Secretary.  
Good gardening

John Eaton



Pumpkin and proud owners Nigel and Sarah, SSN B20

## Bills, Bills, Bills!

Our annual subscriptions (£3.50) to the Sunnyside Allotment Society are now due. The cost includes an affiliation fee to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardens (NSALG – do have a look at their website, for a wide range of information and advice).

Also, you will have received your invoice from the Town Council for the annual rent on your plot. If you haven't already done so, do send or take it along to Berkhamsted Town Council as soon as possible (cash no longer accepted - payment by BACS or cheque only).

## Sunnyside Open Day 2016

Once again, Open Day was blessed with dry and even fine sunny weather, as the day went on. The team of volunteers got everything set up and ready in good time for the first visitors. Cynthia and Jamie ran a new stall on A Road dedicated to plant sales, and not only was there a lot of interest in the wide variety of plants for sale (all grown and donated by tenants), but it was a good way of welcoming people coming through the allotments and directing them up the paths to the rest of the activities. Packets of seeds were given out to visiting children, who were remarkably keen to choose and take away this promise of good things to grow and eat!

Andy led a successful walk through Sunnyside Old and New. The produce stall featured courgettes; so much so that free recipes were given out to encourage buyers! As well as a wide variety of other veg, there were posies of flowers, bunches of lavender and a huge range of jams and chutneys for sale. As always, the tea and cakes were the highlight of most people's visit to the Open Day.

Thanks go to Berkhamsted's Mayor, Tom Ritchie, for attending the event and for drawing the raffle prizes. We made £80 for the Hospice from the raffle, and added a further £690.81 to Society funds from sales of refreshments, produce and preserves.

And thanks to all who helped make the day a success, from pre-publicity to providing cakes and produce, mowing, and helping on the day itself, and especially to Angela Wheeldon and Wendy Calder, who jointly organised and co-ordinated all the work.

This year's Open Day is the last one to be organised by Angela, who is passing the baton on to Wendy. So, much appreciation is due to Angela for all her hard work and leadership in making past Open Days so successful, and best wishes to Wendy, who will hopefully receive all our support in making next year's Open Day just as great an event.



**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)).



Our Chairman and Mayor Tom Ritchie

## Autumn Jobs and Reminders

- Time to empty the greenhouse and give the glass a good clean to maximise winter sun, get rid of slugs and snails harbouring in corners, and replace pots, supplies and over-wintering plants.
- Check the downpipes on your greenhouse or shed, to make sure water is being collected: all such allotment buildings are required to be fitted with guttering and at least one water butt attached.
- Please avoid driving on the allotment roadways when they are wet and muddy, as the grass gets ripped up and the roads become impassable – and cars have been known to slip right off the roadway into the allotments!
- Weeds are growing like mad at present – get them hoed and cleared before they set seed, and blow all over your plot and your neighbour's.
- Keep mowing your paths until the end of the growing season, and remove anything that could be an obstruction to others.
- Start preparing the ground for next year by adding humus in the form of manure or compost. The following local farmers have supplied manure to tenants in the past – please let me know if you have another good supplier:

Dave Burgin 01442 832997

Phil Marks 01442 823357

Nigel Durrant 01442 403351

## Kings Seed Order Catalogues

The catalogues have gone out, and forms are due back to me by 30th October. Apart from raising funds for SAS, the main advantages to tenants of using the scheme are a). convenience, in that seed orders are made ready to you for collection, and b). much reduced seed prices.

For example:

Carrot Early Nantes - £0.60/2000 seeds at Kings (£1.99/1100 at Suttons, £2.55/1500 at Mr Fothergills  
Broad Bean Sutton - £1.00/50 Kings, £2.99/45 Suttons, £2.65/50 Mr Fothergills

Tomato Gardener's Delight - £0.70/50 Kings, £2.49/50 Suttons, £2.55/35 Mr Fothergills.

Andy James, Treasurer

### Working Parties and Birtchnell's Copse

We were new tenants when we joined our first working party back in January 2012, in Birtchnell's Copse.

Birtchnell's Copse is the small patch of woodland above SSN which is now looked after by Andrew Calderwood, Warden. It was originally allotment land of about forty plots on the boundary of an old bungalow in Ivy House Lane. It fell into disuse and developed into a nature reserve which is now managed by the Town Council and named after Percy Birtchnell, who was a well-known local historian. The first warden was a resident of Ivy House Lane; the second was Ken Harbord, who looked after it for several years. After Ken's death in 2002, Patrick Stileman, the tree specialist, took over, and most recently in 2010 Andrew donned the mantle.

Each year, the Sunnyside working party devotes one of its days to working on the Copse, and next month on Sunday 6th November, Andrew and Diana will lead the work.

We will meet at the tea hut on SSO at 10am. There will be general cutting back and tidying up to be done and fallen branches to be moved. Even though it is a day late for Guy Fawkes, you may find a pile of cuttings that is ready to burn!

For five Sundays over the autumn and winter, tenants come together for the working parties, getting maintenance tasks done for the whole site; jobs which belong to no-one and everyone; the car parks, 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 homemade soup and bread lunch provided at the tea hut.

Coming up in November is the Sunnyside AGM, so if you would like to make suggestions on what working parties should tackle and how they can be more effective, come along and make your views known. Finally, many thanks to all of you who turned out at on Sunday 2nd October for the first working party of the season. Much to our surprise all the jobs planned got finished - to an allotment standard.

Neil & Tricia Kennedy, C23 & B33B  
[neil@sunnysideallotments.org.uk](mailto:neil@sunnysideallotments.org.uk)

PS: Put future working party dates - 6th November 2016, 8th January, 5th February and 5th March 2017 - in your diaries.



### Ashridge Spring Plant Fair, Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May 2017

From 2017, the Plant Fair will be organised under the auspices of Ashridge Estate (National Trust) rather than the Friends of Ashridge. It will continue to be run in the same way by a volunteers' committee, but with greater input from Ashridge Estate management. In 2016 we raised £6,370 mostly from the sale of donated plants, and including a contribution of £635 from the commercial stallholders.

In recent years, money raised has been used to extend the trails at Ashridge which are suitable for the disability vehicles; this scheme is managed by volunteers and available most weekends. The current project is to make the Copse Cottage trail circular so it can be used by the disability vehicles.

So this is a reminder to think of the Plant Fair as you take your autumn cuttings and divide up your plants, etc. Give them a good start by potting up now, so they can get a healthy root structure established before the spring. If you need pots, labels, peat-free compost, please contact me.

Finally, I am pleased to advise that we have a new Plant Fair Organiser. Her name is Sarah Jones and she has lived in the Ashridge vicinity all her life. I will be working with Sarah for the 2017 event and then stand down from the committee (but remain a volunteer grower!).

John Cartwright, SSO A42



### Innovative Gardening on Sunnyside New

This year has been an excellent one for us. We experimented with quinoa (the superfood from Bolivia) and with chickpeas. The quinoa was so easy to grow that initially we thought we were growing a weed! It looks very much like the fat hen weed. However, harvesting it is a little more labour intensive, as the separation of the chaff from the grain (very small) takes a lot of ingenuity. However, we managed to harvest about a kilo! This same amount of "organic Quinoa" in Holland & Barrett costs £8.99.

The chickpeas were difficult to grow to begin with, as they were very unwilling to take off. They were very sickly, so we decided to dispose of all but 3 of them, which I planted at home. Lo and behold! Some weeks later they resurrected and turned out to be beautiful plants with chicks in their pods. We haven't eaten them yet, but we look forward to trying them out.

The runner beans were another success. We left them in the pod to dry as we enjoy them as pulses, and they are big and absolutely delicious. They are a size and taste that the supermarkets can only dream of. And finally, we were given a shed by a lovely allotmenteer who left, and we are in the process of, getting help to move it.

Elsy & Mike, SSN 56B

**Free Offers to Tenants**

Sam Barley, SSO B41, is offering a quantity of panes of glass and a compost bin free to anyone who want to take them away (see photos). Also, Sam is looking for more casual jobs around Sunnyside Old, e.g. digging, mowing, etc. Please contact him direct on 07594 625651.



**Tenancy changes**

*Welcome to:*

- A4A Heidi Abbott
- A17A Karen Sutton
- A29A Denise Griffiths
- A41 Dennis Casserly
- B9A Matt Lingard
- B39A Jo Barley
- N5 Sam Lockie
- N13 Paola Andreoni
- N56A Clara McDonnell

*Goodbye to:*

- A17A Vera Chambers
- A29A John Savage
- A37A Susan & Terry Bolton
- A41A Ian & Lesley MacDonald
- A41B Teresa Gogol
- B39A Freda Earl
- C17A, C19 Meg & David Robinson
- N1C Anthony Phillips
- N5 Marc Gilmour
- N33 Harvey Gosling
- N41 Alan Sewell

**Your Current Committee Members**

- Chairman:** John Eaton 865307
- Vice Chairman & Newsletter Editor:** Lin Phillips 862882
- Secretary:** Jenny Sippings 865890
- Treasurer:** Andy James 865061
- Minutes Secretary:** Cynthia Fulks 879410
- Other members:** 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 apart from John Eaton who is: johne@ and John Goffey who is: johng@



**AGENDA FOR THE TWENTIETH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY 19 NOVEMBER, 2016 AT THE SUNNYSIDE RURAL TRUST, IVY HOUSE LANE, BERKHAMSTED AT 10.30 A.M.**

1. Apologies for absence
2. To approve the minutes of the last AGM
3. Chairman’s report
4. To consider and approve the Society’s accounts
5. To receive any nominations for officers/committee members
6. Election of officers and committee:
  - Chairman
  - Vice Chairman
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
  - Committee members
7. Election of Allotments’ representative on Town Council’s Allotments Management Team
8. Future developments
9. Any other business

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Please send in any nominations for officers, the committee and allotments site rep to Jenny Sippings, 82 George Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 2EQ or email to [jennysippings@virginmedia.com](mailto:jennysippings@virginmedia.com). Please make sure your nominee is willing to stand.

**Sunnyside Toilet Facilities**

Do you use the loo on Sunnyside Old? Isn’t it great that we have such an amenity on our allotments – not every allotment is so provided, and elsewhere many a bucket is used!

If you appreciate the loo, your help is needed on the rota of cleaners – it is cleaned weekly, and each person on the rota does a month at a time. So depending on how many people are on the rota, this can be every two, three, or more months. For more information or to volunteer, please contact Cynthia on [cynthiaf@btinternet.com](mailto:cynthiaf@btinternet.com)