



SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

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Editor's Note

Firstly of course, a happy new year to you all; here's hoping for a better one than last year! Also, thanks to those who took the trouble to send me their thoughts, words, and photos for this issue. It is the variety of contributions from tenants that makes the newsletter a good read, I hope you enjoy it

Lin Phillips

Editor, A18 lin@sunnysideallotments.org.uk 07835 623981

Chairman's Notes

For some people, the one good thing about 2020 was the opportunity to spend more time on the allotment. For others, perhaps affected by health or employment issues, my commiserations. Let's hope that 2021 brings the expected improvement. Anyway, we will have the seeds, spring will arrive, and as ever, we are optimistic.

The activities of the Society have been severely limited through the year. There has been no open day, limited working parties, and no Christmas drinks. The next casualty is the Annual General Meeting, usually held in January. All Committee members have kindly agreed to stay in post for another year, and there will be some form of remote electronic meeting. Reports and accounts will be sent to all members and comments invited. The minutes will follow and be circulated as a formal record.

A few other points:

- The Council is seeking estimates to improve the surface at the Grantham Mews entrance and the ends of A road and B road.
- A revamp of the tea hut will proceed when conditions allow.
- When the roadways are wet, please avoid driving on them, especially A Road.
- Please look out for, and report, any dumping of woodchip or other rubbish – and take your own rubbish away.
- Hazel coppicing will take place soon, but there can be no group trimming or stick preparation yet.



The state of A Road—Clive Smith

Stay well and good gardening,

John Eaton

YouTube gardening

Ever since I started allotment gardening in 2016, I have been an avid watcher of YouTube videos. At the end of a hard day's digging and planting, it is very relaxing to watch other plotters at work in various parts of the country. I almost feel I know these people, and I share in their triumphs and disasters - the bumper crop of parsnips, the raised bed destroyed by foxes... Some are very expert and meticulous old stagers; others are bumbling beginners; some like building structures and covering everything in black plastic; others are more into letting nature take its course.

For those of you who are not familiar with the delights of YouTube, let me recommend three channels in particular. The first is Sean Cameron's channel, currently called 'Sean's Garden Diary', where he chronicles the progress of his allotment in Kent. Sean's main passion is drinking tea in his shed, and planning what he would do if he wasn't drinking tea or photographing the allotment cat. He is also much given to experimenting with new equipment for propagating and protecting crops. He is currently following Charles Dowling's 'no dig' method, and longstanding subscribers can already foresee that it will end in sad recrimination over the tea kettle.

Young Katrina of 'Homegrown Garden' is much more businesslike in her approach. Her plot is diverse in that it has a herb section and fruit trees, as well as raised vegetable beds. It even had a decorated Christmas tree. She experiments with containers, and is frank about her mistakes and failures. I am particularly fascinated by her use of her produce to make soap, door wreaths and chilli sauces. She recently used dried flower-heads to make decorative baubles, which fired me with a desire to grow strawflowers (*Xerochrysum bracteatum*) and stick their heads into polystyrene balls from Hobbycraft.

However, the channel I find myself recommending to everyone is 'Steve's Seaside Allotment'. Even though his plot is in Lytham St Annes on the Lancashire coast, and thus not at all similar to our sheltered expanses of clay, his approach to growing veg is really inspiring. With the recklessness of the totally inexperienced, he uses a poly-tunnel in order to pursue the holy grail of vegetable gardening: all year round self-sufficiency. He continually pushes the boundaries of how early or late you can plant certain crops, particularly brassicas and lettuces, and he tracks it all with a mesmerising system of interlocking computer spreadsheets to delight one's inner gardening nerd. His results are staggering, and he demonstrates what you can achieve by ignoring traditional gardening wisdom.

Do have a look at these YouTube videos. For me, it prolongs the pleasure of allotment gardening when the weather stops me from getting out there. However, nothing really replaces the advice and help that I get from my fellow Sunnyside gardeners on those days when we can admire each other's produce and lend each other a hand.

Barbara Newton, B21



Pear Rust on Sunnyside Allotments.

Pear Rust is a fungal infection affecting pear and juniper trees. There is no chemical treatment available for pear trees if the fruit is to be eaten. The infection causes cankers on junipers and infects the leaves of pear trees, and can cause long-term damage. The spores are released from the pear tree leaves in autumn and are spread on the wind to junipers, which host them for the winter, spreading back to the pear trees in the summer. Leaf-fall means that the pear trees cannot re-infect themselves.

Unless you make your own gin, I think it very unlikely that you could claim juniper to be a cultivatable fruit tree, and therefore junipers have no place on an allotment. Please check whether there are any junipers on your allotment, and if there are please remove them as soon as possible, and at the latest before new leaves appear on the unfortunate pear trees. If you have a juniper in your garden at home, please spare a thought for the pear trees; if your juniper is infected, the RHS have information on their website about the symptoms - you may need to prune out the affected areas - or better still, just plant something else!

John Goffey, B16

Bonfires

There was a time during the first lockdown when the advice from NSALG was against any bonfires. This has changed; bonfires may now be burned, subject to the usual good practice rules; i.e., they should be occasional, short, hot and non-smoky. Please have proper regard for neighbours by making sure the wind is not blowing smoke onto the homes and gardens which border our allotments, or indeed into the lungs of other allotment-eers working near you.



Can cabbages produce more than one head?

I discovered that after harvesting the first big heads of my cabbages last year, leaving a few leaves on the stem, they continued to grow and produce further smaller cabbage heads - which we enjoyed for our Christmas meal. The secret is to leave enough leaves so that the plant can replenish its resources - so continue to feed or add more compost. New 'sub-heads' will start to grow around the cut-off stub and grow to about fist size. These are very tender and tasty.

Debbie Crooks, A38



Tenancy Changes

Welcome to:

Sarah Vaux	A23
Peter Kelly	A44B
Caroline Weston	B11C
Tamsin Wheatley	B26B
Robert and Helen Dowley	B9B
Taylor Boniface	N4A,B
Graham Clare	N4C,D
Julie Woodford	N5
Vicki Daniels	N26
Joshua Luckhurst	N27A
Colleen Duggan	N31B
Cindy Gibson	N38
Ilia Georgiou	N40
Gemma Bassil	N66
Lucy Evans O'Neill	N67
Henrietta Bors	N70

Goodbye to:

David Neale	A21
Geoff Giles	A23
Adrian Baker	N4A, N4B
Jennie Tucker	N5
Katie Mack	N27A
Chris Thornton	N31B
Rachel Campbell	N66
Mervyn Dempsey	N67

A few reminders

Please remember that cars are to be parked only in the designated car parks, above Grantham Mews entrance, in the Church car park, at the bottom of SSN, or out on Ivy House Lane. If you need to load or unload your car at your allotment, please move it as soon as possible.

If you have any construction projects going on your plot, do help yourself to wood in the wood store by our big communal shed near B Road on SSO (i.e. on the Grantham Mews end of SSO) - but remember to replace the tarpaulins and weigh them down. Please do not use other materials stored behind the large sheds or any of the scaffold poles, sheets of corrugated iron as these are reserved for SAS projects.

And finally, do put a plot number at the end of your plot, for navigation, inspection, and visiting purposes!

Before and After

We have just taken on plot N4A/B, and are currently clearing the plot of all the overgrowth it contained. Here are a couple of 'before and after' photos that show our current progress.

Tazz and Charlotte



Your Current Committee Members

Chairman:	John Eaton	865307
Secretary & newsletter layout and production :	Jenny Sippings	865890
Treasurer:	Andy James	865061
Newsletter Editor:	Lin Phillips	862882
Other members:	Angela Wheeldon	874440
	John Goffey	864967
	Diana Ball	875277
	Geoff Halls	878176
	Kate Rankin	866827
	Jeanne Woodcraft	872852
	Steve Atkinson	

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@



Discussion Members Photos

Search this group

Don't forget to check out our Facebook page, where members are increasingly posting great photos and comments on their successes (and challenges) on their plot.

Please join our group for allotment gardening chit chat.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1466477513362340/>

Geoffrey Giles

We are sorry to report the passing of Geoffrey Giles in November; a long-standing allotmentee, a volunteer at many a working party, and a regular at the tea hut (pictured second to right, at this tea Hut Halloween event a few years ago).

**Message from the Treasurer****Membership of Sunnyside Allotment Society**

I am now inviting payment of your £4.00 Sunnyside Allotment Society subs for 2021. In order to be included in this year's membership, payments must be made by May. As the tea hut is currently closed, I would prefer payment by BACS transfer (please contact me on andy@sunnysideallotments.org.uk if you do not have the bank details) but you can send payment to me at 4 Fieldway, HP4 2NX.

Allotmenters' Liability Insurance

SAS is a member of the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (their website contains a lot of useful information for gardeners – contact Jenny Sippings for the password). Membership of the NSALG now includes allotmenters' liability insurance, so all paid-up members of SAS are covered. This scheme offers £50k liability cover to any member plot-holder accused of accidentally causing injury or damaging property.

This cover is well worth the cost of SAS membership in itself. In addition, SAS members can participate in our autumn group seed-ordering scheme with King's Seeds, which offers considerable savings on the annual cost of seeds.

The Sunnyside Allotment Society works on your behalf, co-ordinating work to maintain the communal areas of the site and hosting the annual Open Day and other events (when possible!). SAS is also required to report to the Town Council on matters of vacancies and waiting lists, and it represents the interests of tenants at regular Council meetings. All members also receive this exclusive quarterly newsletter!

Subs for 2021 (£4.00) can be sent with this slip to Andy James, 4 Fieldway, HP4 2NX. (Cheques payable to Sunnyside Allotment Society please).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Plot Number: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Amount enclosed: _____ cash/cheque (please circle)



Photos Clive Michel, A17





Here's one from 2010, a few months after I had taken on my allotment. Lin, A18



Geoffrey Giles at the Chinnor windmill where he spent many Sundays helping with restoration—photo Clive Smith



Photo Clive Michel A17

