



SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

No: 1 February 2010

This newsletter comes out at a relatively fallow and inactive time but there are some interesting contributions, both retrospective and forward-looking. After spectacular snowfalls and chilly days we are now starting to see signs of Spring. Which probably means that we're about to get more snow. Happy planning!

Chris Locke

Extract from Chairman's report at AGM

After a year of intense negotiations there is now basic agreement between the Town Council and the Allotment Reps for all three sites on how the allotments should be paid for. A lot of inappropriate costs were deleted and the remaining system reflects the actual running costs. However, all this discussion has focussed a bright light on any money spent on the allotments and any untoward costs will appear on future rent demands.

The biggest source of surprises is water. The supply is metered and readings are taken monthly. Monthly figures can vary – you would expect a dry summer to show a higher figure but when one site shows a markedly higher figure in a wet summer than the others there is something wrong.

It is down to ALL of us who want to keep the rents down to keep watch for leaky ball valves, carelessly turned off taps or anything which will raise water use. We are asking tenants to take responsibility for their own nearest tank. Please could we have some volunteers who would just go and look at their nearest tank each time they come on site?

Open Day was a huge success with thanks to everyone. In 2010 we shall need a new co-ordinator. Angela says it is great fun and everyone is willing to help but she needs to hand over the job to someone else.

The same thing applies to the seed order. Jenny has been doing it for years and she too needs a rest from it. The seed order doesn't do itself and, like everything else, if someone does not do it – it won't happen. Prue Scofield has offered to take this on.

“Write something uplifting” says the editor.

Here goes. There was a good turn out at the AGM from both sites which is really good to see. We have two new committee members (see list) and some volunteers.

With a good number present we were able to seek your views to take to the next AMT: on exceptions to the one shed/one greenhouse rule and what you thought about dogs on the sites.

This was because some tenants on Dellfield have been getting hot under the collar and prevailed upon Colin to put up notices banning dogs. Your view was that provided they are on a short lead, are cleaned up after and never go on any plots except their owner's, they are welcome. The public footpath on SSO now has notices explaining this to walkers.

You may have noticed the grotty patch by the Grantham Mews entrance to Old is being planted with shrubs and plants for wildlife after being scoured by Fred when the rabbit fence was done. Thank you Fred! The soil was too poor for an allotment after years of being used as a dump for flints and bits of old iron as well as noxious weeds. One of the plants is, at Prue's suggestion, a communal Bramley apple tree. We don't expect it to provide for everyone for a year or two. There are blackthorn, spindle, cotoneaster and winter jasmine and the snowdrops rescued last year will be re-planted. The aim is to provide food and habitat for the times in the year when there is not much available.

Angela and I drove over to Buckingham Nurseries who specialise in native and bare-root shrubs to buy them.

The winter brassicas are suffering from the snow and the pigeons, my leeks are still sulking but the bulbs are coming up. If I want some sweet peas I need to get moving. Spring may be a long way off still but it is on its way.

Working Parties

Due to the weather our January working party had to be cancelled.

Sunday 7th March

We need your help on this day. The bigger the group, the more work we can get done. A light lunch will be provided.

Site Rubbish Disposal

At the AGM it was suggested that skips be hired to enable plot holders to dispose of accumulated rubbish.

Two skips are being hired and will be available for two weeks from Thursday April 1st. They will be placed as conveniently as possible, one on either side of the road.

To maximise the content your rubbish should be placed considerably.

No organic compostable material will be accepted and your rubbish should only consist of metal, glass, plastics, rubble and large stones. No domestic rubbish please.

Any questions to John Powell Tel 878640 or anne.jo@btinternet.com

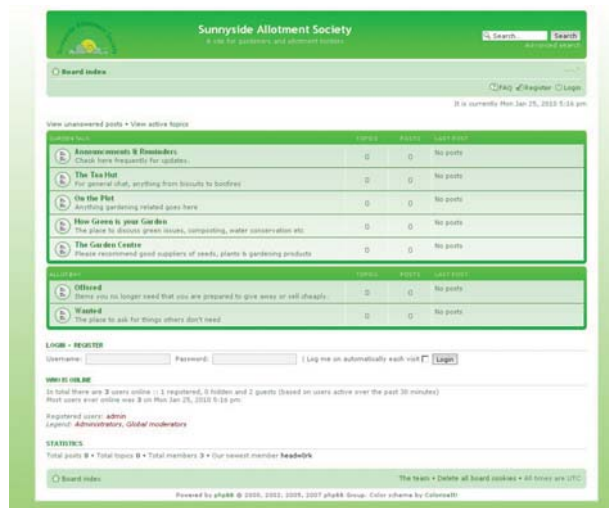
Take a look at our new website and forum

At the AGM there was some discussion about the Sunnyside website and the idea was also put forward to set up a discussion forum for our members.

I decided to completely rewrite the website using a different software system, that is easier to keep up to date. The site is in no way finished, but the majority of the work has been done. Please take a look at the site: www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk and let me have any feedback and your ideas for further development – time permitting!

I will be putting together some photo galleries of old events and projects, so if you have any photos that would be suitable please email them to me: jenny.sippings@ntlworld.com.

You can find the new discussion forum here: <http://forum.sunnysideallotments.org.uk/>



The first thing you need to do is register on the forum. You need to invent a username for yourself and a password which you will need to remember! Then start posting ...

There are several different areas to post in which should be self-explanatory eg. "On the Plot" for any gardening topics, "The Garden Centre" for recommending good suppliers for seeds, plants etc. There will also be a members only section for SAS members, where you can discuss specific Sunnyside issues (however this should not be discussions about individual plots or people). The forum will be moderated by Clive Smith and Freda Earl, and I will be the site admin.

Jenny Sippings

Sunnyside Calendars

There are still a few 2010 calendars left. These can be bought from Jenny Sippings (82 George Street 865890) or Angela Wheeldon (10 Chapel Street, or the Tea Hut B15 874440). The calendars cost £5.50 each and feature seasonal recipes).

Photographic Competition

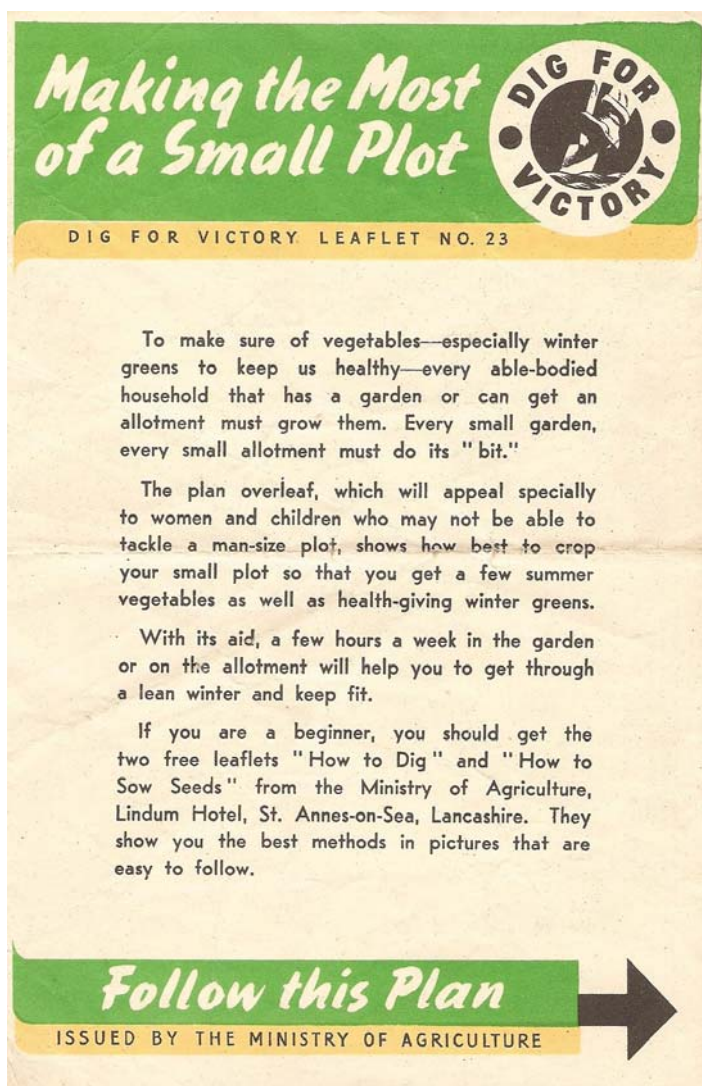
As part of Open Day this year in August we are planning to hold a photographic competition. The only rule is that the photograph should be taken anywhere on the allotment sites. We are giving you advance warning so you can start taking / saving your photos.

Barter

Some 'informal' fencing on Allotment 56B (New Sunnyside Allotments) is collapsing due to the recent snow. A petrol lawn mower in good condition is offered to any other allotmentee who can repair the 'fence' to a sturdy condition to last for a few more years. Please contact Elsy Ambrose on 01442 – 877230.



Thanks to Andy Dolwyn for sending me some pages of a MAFF Dig for Victory leaflet which his mother found. I'm including one page but the other pages can be found on the website. Women and children take note!



http://www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk/?page_id=771

Home Grown is Best – a talk and quiz by John Negus

Thursday 25th March 2010, 7:30 to 9:30pm
Civic Centre, 161 High Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 3HD

John's talk will be about successful growing of a multitude of different vegetables. There will be tips on getting the best from raised beds, coping with difficult soils and thwarting pests and diseases. There will also be a fun quiz with seed packet prizes.

Trained at Wisley Gardens and Merrist Wood Horticultural colleges, photo-journalist John Negus (Dip. Hort. Wisley) enjoys sharing his passion for gardening and other outdoor pursuits. He is a regular broadcaster on Radio Surrey, writes features for 'Woman's Weekly' and answers queries with a team of experts on the Daily Mail nationwide Gardening Road Shows.

Entry: £3 suggested donation.

Refreshments available.

Talk arranged by Transition Town Berkhamsted

Grow your own - fruit and veg event

Sunday 23rd May 2010, 11:00 to 15:30

Sunnyside Rural Trust – Ivy House Lane, Berkhamsted

Transition Town Berkhamsted and the Sunnyside Rural Trust are organising a day to help and encourage people to 'grown their own'. The main focus for the event will be:

- Ideas for growing food in small spaces
- Help for people who would like to learn more about how to grow food
- Encouraging biodiversity to the garden.

There will be indoor stalls for information, outdoor demonstrations and chances to make your own container or hanging basket. We are still working out the details, but please put this date in your diary. Although we have lots of ideas, we would readily welcome any suggestions for activities on the day or offers of help either with the organisation leading up to the event or on the day itself.

Going by some of the wonderful fruit and veg that is grown on Sunnyside Allotments there is a real wealth of knowledge and expertise around. There are many people starting out on gardening for the first time or with new allotments, so if anyone would be willing to do something like a guided tour of their plot, do a demonstration of composting or planting, or maybe share a few hints or tips as visitors wander around please let me know.

If you would like more details, or would like to be involved please contact Marion Baker on 01442 874732 or email MARIONB@DSL.PIPEX.COM

First meeting of the East Chiltern Permaculture Group

Saturday 27th February, 3pm to 5pm
The Green House, 50 High Street, Tring, HP23 5AG

Permaculture is about creating sustainable human habitats by following nature's patterns. An ecological design system that provides ways to design and create healthy productive places to work, rest and play.

The East Chiltern Permaculture Group has just formed. Their aim is to support people with gardens and growing areas in the East Chilterns (Amersham, Berkhamsted, Chesham, Hemel, Tring and the surrounding villages), by sharing knowledge and exploring new projects. At this first meeting they'll be showing a film and discussing future projects and events. Everyone is welcome.

If you would like more details, or would like to be involved in any of the above events please contact Marion Baker on 01442 874732 or email MARIONB@DSL.PIPEX.COM

Your current Committee Members

Chairman:	Freda Earl	865661
Vice Chairman:	John Eaton	865307
Secretary:	Jenny Sippings	865890
Treasurer:	John Powell	878640
Minutes Secretary:	Prue Schofield	878559
Newsletter Editor:	Chris Locke	877326
Other members:	Nick Hood	878331
	Rachel Lyon	876311
	Annick Mulcahy	862572
	Andy Walker	07966 245732
	Angela Wheeldon	874440
Associate member:	John Driver	862734



Sunnyside New in the snow

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 – (jenny.sippings@ntlworld.com).

Christmas Drinks

This happy event was held, as usual, on the last Sunday before Christmas, on 20th December, 2009. About 30 people gathered at mid-day on a bright, sunny day. All had walked through the snow to reach Sunnyside Old, to enjoy the warming punch and refreshments. Many thanks to Angela for organising the event, to Ag for making the punch, to Ted for clearing the snow around the tea-hut and to all who brought food. This is a very relaxed time and gives an opportunity to meet and chat in the middle of the winter, when little work can be done on allotments.



Sunnyside Old in the snow

Subs for 2009/2010 (3.00) are now due and can be sent with this slip to John Powell (20 Castle Hill Avenue) or put into the post box on the tea hut on B15. (Cheques payable to Sunnyside Allotment Society please).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Plot Number: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Amount enclosed: _____

cash/cheque (please circle)