



SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

No: 3 July 2010

I see that allotments are now so popular that supply cannot meet the demand. Prospect magazine reports this month that a farmer is charging £250 per year for a half-plot! I wonder where that is and what sort of crop the allotmenters are going to grow....

Cucumbers perhaps? I'm including some interesting uses for cucumber which John Driver passed to me courtesy of the New York Times. Personally I find some of them pretty unlikely but then I haven't tried them (apart from number 4 – yes, there were no slugs but it has been very dry...). Please try them out and let us know how it goes.

Chris Locke

Chairman's Report

So what happened to the Barbecue?

The Barbecue usually takes place with a few family groups and a selection of individual members. This year there was no-one to run it and the family groups could not make it so we had to cancel.

There has been some mindless vandalism along the road-way on New. This is very sad for tenants but it emphasises why we ask for the gate to be shut at all times. An open gate puts ideas into the minds of mischief-makers and fly tippers. Please keep the gates shut at all times even if you are in the car park.

Pull up outside, open the gate, drive in, shut the gate, park the car. Once you get into the habit it's easy

An open gate is a temptation for tiny minds to think about coming back later. Somehow if the gate is never standing open it does not seem to register with these people. Its not much trouble compared with having vandals or fly tippers.

The skips were a great success. They were paid for out of SAS funds and were quite expensive but with help from tenants who kept down the number of skips needed when they sorted the rubbish and took the metal to the scrap merchant and had a bonfire of the burnable wood, we have given both sites a leg up. It looks tidier and a lot of dangerous rusty old iron has gone

We can't afford to do it again for years so please remember to take any new rubbish you may create to the tip

It may have rained by the time you get this - I hope so but if you are still watering you may find the article in our welcome pack useful. It will help you to water effectively. The idea is for plants to get their roots down into damper soil so that they can fend for themselves. The

plants that need help are the ones which are too tiny or newly planted to have managed to do this. The others are fleshy plants like lettuce or squash; and runner beans set better if there is moisture sprayed on the flowers. There is no point in putting water on your spuds but Fred always waters the next four plants he is going to dig about four days before he digs them which swells them up .

Our next event is the Open Day in August. Don't forget the photo competition. It's too late for snow scenes this year but there is plenty of interesting stuff to photograph.

Freda Earl

Science corner: Grow your own oxygen.

Yes, that's photosynthesis again. We need 150 – 200/240 ml of oxygen per minute according to our activity. So how many photosynthesising plants do we need to keep us alive?

Estimates vary – it can depend on the plant species and the health of the plants and where they grow and the estimator.

From North America:

"A mature leafy tree produces as much oxygen in a season as 10 people inhale in a year" (Arbor Day Foundation.)

"A single mature tree can release enough oxygen into the atmosphere to support 2 human beings" (McAloney, Mike: Arguments for Land Conservation).

"On average, one tree produces nearly 260 pounds of oxygen each year. Two mature trees can produce enough oxygen for a family of four" (Canada's environment agency).

Larger numbers of smaller plants will be as effective. Nice to think we're doing our bit.

News from Birtchnell's Copse Bird Boxes

There are 14 boxes and we had 4 of them occupied this year, lower occupancy than previous years, but that could be down to the extremely long cold winter.

Of the 4 nests we had 3 Blue Tits and One Great Tit.

These are the results:

Box 10 - Blue Tits - all 9 young were ringed and fledged

Box 12 - Great Tits - all 8 young were ringed and fledged

Box 9 - Blue Tits - 10 young, of which 9 young were ringed and fledged - 1 died.

Box 13 - Blue Tits - 10 young of which 9 young were ringed and fledged - 1 died

Sunnyside church extends a very warm invitation to all allotment holders and their families to come to the **Harvest Festival Songs of Praise Service** on Monday 4th October 2010 at 2pm, followed by a lovely afternoon tea in the church hall.

The service will be a traditional one with hymns and readings familiar to most of you. It would be particularly appreciated if allotment holders could provide some of their harvest produce for this service, which will go on display in the church during the Harvest Festival service and can be left at the Tea Hut on Sunnyside Old for collection before mid-day on Monday 4th.

After the service, all donated produce, will be parcelled up into gift boxes and delivered to the elderly and needy in our parish.

Sunnyside church very much hopes you will be able to attend the service and looks forward to seeing you there.

John Driver

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

Seed Order

If you paid your subs for Sunnyside Allotment Society then you should receive your seed catalogue and letter during August or early September.

Hosepipes: there have been a couple of instances recently where hosepipes have been used but taps have not been completely turned off after disconnection. Please check for drips!

Grow Your Own Fruit and Veg event at Sunnyside Rural Trust

From all accounts this event organized by Transition Town, hosted by Sunnyside Rural Trust and Sunnyside Allotments was very successful and all the feedback I had from those I met was extremely complimentary - we hope it can become an annual fixture.

The link below will give you access to photos that show how well the day went, and how fortunate we were to have such good weather.

www.transitionberkhamsted.org.uk/gyoday.php



Plant swaps



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).

Magic Cucumbers



1. Cucumbers contain most of the vitamins you need every day, just one cucumber contains Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B3, Vitamin B5, Vitamin B6, Folic Acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc.

2. Feeling tired in the afternoon? Put down the caffeinated soda and pick up a cucumber. Cucumbers are a good source of B Vitamins and Carbohydrates that can provide that quick pick-me-up that can last for hours.

3. Tired of your bathroom mirror fogging up after a shower? Try rubbing a cucumber slice along the mirror, it will eliminate the fog and provide a soothing, spa-like fragrance.

4. Are grubs and slugs ruining your planting beds? Place a few slices in a small pie tin and your garden will be free of pests all season long. The chemicals in the cucumber react with the aluminum to give off a scent undetectable to humans but drive garden pests crazy and make them flee the area.

5. Looking for a fast and easy way to remove cellulite before going out or to the pool? Try rubbing a slice or two of cucumbers along your problem area for a few minutes, the phytochemicals in the cucumber cause the collagen in your skin to tighten, firming up the outer layer and reducing the visibility of cellulite. Works great on wrinkles too!!!

6. Want to avoid a hangover or terrible headache? Eat a few cucumber slices before going to bed and wake up refreshed and headache free. Cucumbers contain enough sugar, B vitamins and electrolytes to replenish essential nutrients the body lost, keeping everything in equilibrium, avoiding both a hangover and headache!!

7. Looking to fight off that afternoon or evening snacking binge? Cucumbers have been used for centuries and often used by European trappers, traders and explorers for quick meals to thwart off starvation.

8.. Have an important meeting or job interview and you realize that you don't have enough time to polish your shoes? Rub a freshly cut cucumber over the shoe, its chemicals will provide a quick and durable shine that not only looks great but also repels water.

9. Out of WD 40 and need to fix a squeaky hinge? Take a cucumber slice and rub it along the problematic hinge, and voila, the squeak is gone!

10. Stressed out and don't have time for massage, facial or visit to the spa? Cut up an entire cucumber and place it in a boiling pot of water, the chemicals and nutrients from the cucumber will react with the boiling water and be released in the steam, creating a soothing, relaxing aroma that has been shown to reduce stress in new mothers and college students during final exams.

11. Just finished a business lunch and realize you don't have gum or mints? Take a slice of cucumber and press it to the roof of your mouth with your tongue for 30 seconds to eliminate bad breath, the phytochemicals will kill the bacteria in your mouth responsible for causing bad breath.

Offer of aluminium greenhouse (probably 6ft by 4ft) free to someone who can dismantle it. My daughter is buying a house with a greenhouse which she would want to remove. If you are likely to be interested and able to remove it around the first week of August can you let me know. (Chris Locke tel.877326 or chris-tine@locke.gotadsl.co.uk) Expressions of interest at this stage as house purchase not complete.

Offer of wood:

Hannah from Sunnyside New says: My next door neighbour has taken up her decking. If anybody wants it to make raised beds they can have it for free. They should contact me on 864132 to arrange collection.

Paving Slabs

We have acquired some 2' x 2' paving slabs for use on the allotments as shed bases etc. They are currently on the car park at the West end of B Road on Sunnyside Old (by Grantham Mews), where they can be easily loaded into a vehicle or wheelbarrow. If you need any, please collect as soon as possible, before they have to be moved for storage. A donation to SAS funds, please.

Jam Jars

I expect a lot of tenants are beginning to make jams and chutney from their fruit. If you are in need of jars, there is a collection of various shapes and sizes available at the Tea Hut; just help yourselves. (When you are making your preserves, please consider making a few extra for the Produce Stall on Open Day. Home made jams etc. are always very popular with visitors.)

SAS Photographic Competition Open Day, Sunday 15 August, 2010

We have decided to hold another photographic competition this year, to show some of the attractive and unusual views of and from our allotment sites.

Competition Guidelines

The only rule is that the photograph(s) must be taken somewhere on the allotment sites.

Photographs submitted must not be larger than A4 and a minimum size of A5. We suggest you use a good quality photographic paper and the bigger the print the better, to make the job of judging easier. If possible the print should include a small white border to show off your photograph (they should not be mounted).

You may submit a **maximum of 3** photos (listed in order of preference); the organisers will display as many of these as possible for judging depending on the total number of entries. Please put your name on the back of each print.

There will be an entry fee of £1 per photographer. Each person submitting photos needs to complete a separate entry form.

The entries need to be received by **Sunday 1st August**. Please deliver them to 32 Trevelyan Way, Berkhamsted or the Tea Hut B15.

The prize will be a framed A3 print of the winning photograph (the judge may decide to award further prizes).

We would like to use some of the submissions in next year's calendar so it would be helpful if you could email full resolution versions of your photos (digitally) to jenny@sunnysideallotments.org.uk.

Prints will be retained for possible future displays.

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Entry Form

Name: _____ Phone: _____

Address: _____

Plot No: _____ Age (if child): _____

I enclose my entry fee of £1

Closing date for entries: 1st August

Completed forms should be returned to 32 Trevelyan Way. Extra forms will be available on the website or from the Tea Hut.

Untidy Gardens

The allotment reps inspect allotments three times a year. We are sympathetic to problems. A list of those needing warning letters is handed to the council. No one likes being inspected. We do not want the plots to be highly manicured but they cannot be allowed to go back to 'rough', **paths must be cared for and weeds must not be allowed to seed all over neighbouring gardens.**

If you are finding it difficult to cultivate the whole of your plot you can reduce your holding. Please talk to the council about it or Freda Earl or John Eaton on our committee. Until now some tenants who have started the year enthusiastically and then find the pressures of work too much have had a council letter but then have managed to tidy up sufficiently to avoid eviction and can carry on without worry. This will not continue in future. If the same happens the next year, the next letter will be cumulative.

This is the Town Council's agreed process:

Letter 1. A warning; stating that the plot is not being kept in a "good state of cultivation and fertility" in accordance with the contract and must be brought up to a suitable standard within one month to avoid eviction.

Letter 2. A second warning after one month; stating that there has been failure to reach the required standard so far and if there is no improvement within one month, steps to eviction will take place.

Letter 3. Eviction letter after one month; stating eviction will take place in 30 days and all equipment must be removed.

Remember the letters are cumulative from year to year.

Tenancy Changes

Welcome to:	
Susie Longboy	C5A
Shawn Baggs	SSN3
Holly Bowyer	B22A
Luke Stockbridge	SSN7B



Sunnyside Allotment Society

OPEN DAY SUNDAY 15th AUGUST 2010

Our Open Day takes place on Sunday 15th August from 11.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m., to enable local residents to visit and enjoy the allotments, with sales of produce, preserves and refreshments. There will also be guided walks around the sites and also a Photographic Competition in the Sunnyside Rural Trust building.

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. We want 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.

PRE-OPEN DAY JOBS

There are a number of tasks which need doing before the day: cleaning furniture, displaying signs, mowing and strimming of paths and general tidying up of communal areas. Any offers of help will be gratefully accepted.

VOLUNTEERS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

We will also need volunteers to man the produce and refreshment stalls and the raffle. Please return the completed form to Angela Wheeldon (10 Chapel Street or B15) or email to: jenny.sippings@ntlworld.com. We can then draw up a rota to share the tasks 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: _____

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 6th August**. Thank you.