

# SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

# NEWSLETTER

4/2005

This autumn will surely be remembered for its sunshine and warm days right until the end of October. Gardeners have been out on their allotments in full force and it is good to see so many new faces. The demand for plots continues, Sunnyside New is increasingly popular and most weeks, would be tenants are shown what is available. The long growing season and ripening sun have produced excellent crops and have helped to increase our enthusiasm for fresh fruit and vegetables. Have you compared the taste of a shop bought sweet corn to that of a cob cooked within hours of growing on the plant? That in itself is almost enough reason for deciding to have an allotment!

Apart from gardening, the main activity in the past few weeks has been the completion of the toilet on A15. You will read a report from Angela about the details. This has been a project long in the pipeline (forgive the pun) and it has involved a lot of communal effort. Labour and materials have been given freely, expertise drawn upon, and we now have a facility, of high standard, which has been needed for years. Our thanks go to everyone who has helped achieve this marvellous result.

## Annual General Meeting

The AGM will take place this year on Saturday, 26th November at 10.30am at the Training Centre of Sunnyside Rural Trust, Ivy House Lane. We are grateful to the Trust for making their premises available to us again.

The agenda is attached to this newsletter and should be brought along to the meeting but if you wish to raise any other topic for discussion, please do so under any other business. We hope that as many members as possible will be able to attend.

Most members of the committee are willing to serve again, but Clive Weakley is standing down. Therefore we will be looking for one or two new committee members to represent tenants on New. We would like to thank Clive Weakley for his contribution to the committee and his hard work. If there are any other nominations please let our secretary, Jenny Sippings have them in writing by 14th November.

It will be possible to pay your annual £2 Society subscription at the meeting. This payment is quite separate from the payment for your plot which is made to the Council. It helps to run the Society in your interests and gives you the opportunity to participate in the annual seed order, which is a money saving venture.

It is hoped that the new toilet will be officially opened after the meeting.

## Clearance days

We shall be having our clearance days again this year during the winter months. This is a communal effort to improve both Old and New sites. Last year the Middle Road on Sunnyside New was widened and grassed and it has greatly benefited tenants on this site.

Our first project this year will be to tidy and work on Birtchnell's Copse and also to plant an oak tree there. This

will be on **SATURDAY, 19TH NOVEMBER**. Your help and support would be greatly appreciated. We start at 10.00am and go on until dusk but you are sustained by hot soup and a light lunch!

Further clearance days are – 14 January 2006, 11 February 2006 and 11th March.

## Christmas drinks – Sunday 18th December

Christmas at Sunnyside will be celebrated with mulled wine and hot mince pies on Sunday 18th December from 12noon to 3pm. Every one is most welcome to join in at the Tea Hut and please bring a contribution with you.

## Sunnyside New is booming!

Over the past few months there has been considerable interest in the gardeners on New. We have let 6 plots in the last 3 months. Of the main block of gardens there are just one and one half plots vacant. Alongside the Railway there are 14 vacant plots including the 3 plots nearest the gate which had been used by the Railway contractors and for which we have been trying to attract the interest of Age Concern or some other organisation, for use by people with special needs. 5 plots that had been 'pencilled-in' as a possible wildflower meadow will now be offered as gardens.

Given this level of demand from the public, the Society's Committee has been surprised to hear that the Council is to let 6 plots alongside the Railway to SRT to create further 'wildspace' area. The Chairman has written to the Town Clerk registering the Society's objections and pointing out the occupations by SRT (a Company limited by guarantee) cannot be allotment tenancies, and that were it desirable that they be let to SRT they should be subject to special procedures under the Allotment Acts.

## Relief is at hand!

At the time of writing, work on the *long-awaited toilet* on Sunnyside Old *is almost complete*. It just needs some landscaping and a few finishing touches. It should be available from 26th November.

The Mayor of Berkhamsted will perform the official opening ceremony on Saturday 26th November at about 11.30 to 12.00 noon, after the AGM, and we hope the Press will be there. Come and have your first look then but bring your wellies if it's wet!

When the project was first mooted (about 2+ years ago!) we decided to opt for a fully flushing toilet rather than the "greener" option of a composting loo, because the main town sewer runs under the gardens on the south side of 'A' road. It was a comparatively simple job to plumb into it once permission had been obtained. So we have a properly flushing toilet and a wash basin with cold running water. (Perhaps the engineers amongst us could come up with a solar powered system to heat the water in the future?)

Berkhamsted Town Council paid for the Planning and Building Regs costs, and for the connection into the sewer. The concrete for the base and some of the insulation were paid for out of SAS funds, but most of the rest of the materials, furnishings and fittings etc. were either recycled or donated. The toilet door was once the front door of one of our tenants and it still has the number on it. No doubt "going to 116" will soon become the Sunnyside euphemism for going to the loo.

Once given the go-ahead by the Council, the Readymix concrete was delivered at the end of June and from then on it was all systems go. In spite of being in the middle of the growing season, all the labour was provided by tenants and the job has been accomplished with enthusiasm and good humour. It has been a real cooperative effort and the result will be of great benefit to both current and future tenants. Special thanks are due to the Carpenter and carpenter's mate, and to the Plumber and plumber's mate who have given so much of their time and expertise. But our grateful thanks go also to the



many other tenants who willingly became labourers, tilers, decorators and fitters.

Now we come to the practicalities of operating and maintaining the toilet.

Firstly, any problems you notice with the building or the plumbing should be reported to any Committee member.

Secondly, the construction of the loo was a team effort for the benefit of us all. And so we need everyone who uses it to be involved in its maintenance. The toilet is situated on A15. The door will be operated with a numerical padlock. The code number can be obtained at the AGM or from the Tea Hut on B15 from 26th November. This is a non-transferable number and it will be changed periodically. Those who

receive this number will be included on the cleaning rota; in other words, those who make use of the toilet will be involved in its maintenance. This is to prevent it becoming a chore for just a few people. The rota will be sent out to those involved and displayed in the toilet. You will be responsible for the cleanliness of the toilet over a one week period, from Sunday to Saturday. Cleaning materials, paid for from SAS funds, will be provided, but we would ask you to supply toilet rolls (1 plus a spare as required), and to wash and return the towels. Further details will be given to you when you are given the code number.

We hope everyone will find this facility a great asset to the allotments.

## Tenancy Changes

IN	
Neil Laidler	N7
Ian & Mrs Lesley MacDonald	A41A
John Whittington	N43
Fay Beckley	B33B, B31B, N4
Christine Locke	B31A
Sam Hukins & Rebecca Gee	N63
Angus Laing	N41
John Anthony Lightfoot	B33A
Sarah Johnson	A3A
Tessa Willy & Terry Patterson	N11
Jacqueline Williams	N44
Eric Blanchard	N53
Joe Tattum	A5
Pru Scofield	B35B
Ruth Holland-Elliott	N64 & 65
Hannah Rennie	N66
Neil Laidler	N8
Vera Chambers	A17A
Robert Rieckenberg	A17B

## OUT

Rupert & Merryn Crisswell	A41
Simon Bird	A44B
Anthony Rainbow	A5
Dan & Kylie Bartlett	B31
Beverley & Michael Corcoran	B33
Mark Gibbs	A3
Melanie Llewellyn	N38
Adam Stokes	N53
Julie Dixon	B35B

It would be helpful if tenants could put number signs on their plots to help identify them.

## Calendar

The calendar will be on sale at the AGM at £3.50 each. As well as general views, there are photos of several projects and events that have taken place over the last year. There are also water saving tips. We are hoping to have a sample copy at the tea hut before the AGM for people to look at.

If you can't get to the AGM, calendars can be ordered at the tea hut or through committee members.

## Did you know that?

- LEEKS were revered by the Romans? The Emperor Nero believed that they would improve his singing and he ate them in such large quantities that he was known as Porrophagus, the Leek Eater.

- You should plant GARLIC on the shortest day and harvest it on the longest.

- You should plant CROCUSES near a lavender hedge because the smell is supposed to keep the birds away.

- A POTATO in your pocket can draw out substances in your body which cause rheumatism.

Any truth in these old wive's tales?

## Your current Committee Members

### Chairman:

Bruce Jones 866078

### Vice Chairman:

Ted Dyer 872684

### Secretary:

Jenny Sippings 865890

### Treasurer:

John Powell 862734

Fiona Duck 874334

Patrick Stileman 874457

Brenda Baynes 865853

Angela Wheeldon 874440

Clive Weakley 875373

John Driver 878640

**Please note:** The copy date for the next issue of the newsletter is January 10th 2006.

## **SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY**

### **AGENDA FOR THE NINTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON**

**SATURDAY 27TH NOVEMBER, 2005**

**AT THE SUNNYSIDE RURAL TRUST, IVY HOUSE LANE, BERKHAMSTED AT 10.30 A.M.**

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approve the minutes of the last AGM
3. Chairman's report
4. Consider and approve the Society's accounts
5. Open day, barbecue and future events
6. Future projects
7. Vegetable record keeping proposal – John Powell
8. To receive any nominations for officers/committee members
9. Election of officers and committee:
  - Chairman
  - Vice Chairman
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
  - Committee members
10. Election of Allotments' representative on Town Council's Allotments Management Team
11. Any other business
12. Official opening of the SAS toilet

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There will be an opportunity to pay Society subs for 2005/2006 at the AGM but if you are unable to attend the AGM then subs can be sent with this slip to John Powell or put into the post box on the tea hut on B15. (Cheques payable to SAS please).

Name .....

Address .....

Plot Number ..... Telephone .....

Amount enclosed ..... cash/cheque (please circle)