



SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

www.sunnysideallotments.org.uk
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No: 1 January 2013

Perennial weeds: bin them or burn them?

I realise that the topic of weeds is not uppermost in people's minds amid the current snow but when they do show their heads.....latest wisdom from the Allotment magazine suggests bagging them up, mixing in a small proportion of grass cuttings to speed up decomposition and then leaving the bags until compost is formed. I wonder how long this would take? Has anyone tried it? Has to be better than smelly burning.

Chris Locke

From our chairman:

Well, it's the start of a new year and time to re-kindle our optimism for a better gardening performance this season. My own approach is to reduce the amount of potatoes (good looking outside, rotten inside) and to try more soft fruit and also to stick with the old favourites of beans – broad, runner and French. Each plot and gardener is different, so good luck!

Other points:

There is the possibility that a designated shooter could do some rabbit control so if anyone is suffering from rabbit problems please notify a member of the committee – or, of course, Ted

As you know, the Council requires us to keep our plots in good order and the committee carries out inspections during the growing season, usually in March, May and July.

If your address changes, please inform the Council so that rent renewal requests reach you in time.

Council involvement in the problem of non-fruit trees continues, so can I remind you to remove saplings before they grow up.

John Eaton

AGM 2012

If you missed the AGM you can now read the minutes (which contain the annual accounts for 2012) on the website.

Grass roadways on the allotments

When the roadways are very wet in winter, please do not drive on them unless absolutely necessary. They are slippery and it damages the surface. There are car parking areas on site and in Ivy House Lane.



Notices

Border fork left by bottom gate of SSNew before Xmas - available to be collected from Tea Hut B15

Manual lawn scarifying tools need a good home! Available from Tea Hut.

Christmas drinks

Christmas drinks and lunchtime nibbles went well and, as nearly always, the weather was kind. The tea hut (well, David actually) provided liquid refreshment.....



.....but this is not tea that David is serving



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).

Working Party Report 3rd January 2013

After such bad weather and before the snow, we were very lucky to have a reasonably mild, still day for the Working party. We had a good lunch with homemade parsnip soup, and the sun even came out in the afternoon.

A group of eight of us cleared the brambles and weeds in the Jubilee Hazel Coppice on Sunnyside New where the first half of hazels had been cut last winter. We had a good fire which took care of all the arisings and somewhere under the snow is a heap of ash which can be used on your onion bed or fruit bushes. There is also a pile of hazel wood on the corner of the middle roadway which is available for fires or woodburners.

John and Geoff continued the work at the Grantham Mews gate on Sunnyside Old to re-lay stones in the gateway to help drainage and to prevent such a muddy access point into the allotments. Thanks to our Grantham Mews neighbours for the stones.

Jenny and Clive continued work to reinstate the pathway which runs between the top of A road plots and the bottom of B road gardens. This is an ongoing project and tenants whose plots will be affected have been contacted and asked to clear the areas so that the path work can be done. Early spring is the ideal time, weather permitting, to do work on paths so it would be helpful if the preliminary clearing could be done as soon as possible.

Angela Wheeldon

Working parties

The next Working Party will be on **Sunday 3rd February**.

We will be working on the Jubilee Coppice again; this time creating bean poles and bundles of pea sticks for use on our plots from the other half of the Coppice which is being cut this winter. We also need to complete the sorting of the wood heap on Sunnyside Old so that the top half of the plot can be let. And there may be some painting work weather permitting. The jobs done by the working parties help to maintain the communal areas of the site, they are fun and a good way of getting to know other tenants. If you can just spare an hour or two during the day, you would be very welcome.

Sunday 3rd March

We will be working in Birtchnells Copse.

All are welcome and a light lunch is provided.

Plots and paths, the differences

Over the years I've noticed some plots always have nice safe, smooth good looking paths and many others don't, yet they all must have started off much the same.

The difference is that those green and pleasant divides must have been actively looked after and the others, presumably just used and it seems by looking at some, abused.

So what are plot holder responsibilities (tenancy agreement!) ?

Keep the whole allotment garden and surrounding pathways and boundaries clean and in a good state of cultivation, condition and fertility and keep surrounding pathways clear of obstruction.

Please value your paths, they should not be cut into, or undercut at the edges. A good minimum width to observe would be 27" (2¼ feet, traditionally known as 'body')

Plot holders should respect that paths are a shared resource, and not a dumping ground, as apart from safe passage and general access, the grass surface will suffer in time.

If you do use powerful weed killers please make sure they do not spray or drift onto paths, something seen recently... Use a line when straightening the edges. If you have a wire fenced plot, then additional work may be required to keep the edges tidy and prevent clumps building up.

One obvious danger are where side slopes have developed for whatever reason. This and other effects of neglect or damage will take considerable time and commitment to correct...

Mainly, a good philosophy is to realise that paths are not to be taken for granted. If not respected, mowed and maintained regularly, they can degrade quickly. On a positive note, some help and advice is available, if you want to make a repair, but first please take a look as it seems many are blind to their paths .☺

Clive Smith

Sunnyside Church extends a very warm welcome to all allotment holders and their families to come along to our **Easter Songs of Praise Service on Monday 25th March @ 2pm**, followed by afternoon tea in the church hall. The service will be a traditional one with hymns and readings familiar to all. We very much hope you will be able to attend the service and look forward to seeing you there if you can make it.
John Driver

Master Pumpkin Carver



To see more of these amazing carvings from Ray Villafane visit the website: <http://villafanestudios.com/gallery/the-pumpkins-2>

Tenancy changes

Goodbye to:

Old

C27 Lewis Eckett

New

N2 Andrew Walker

N3 Shawn Baggs

N40 Nicola Stevens

N64B Adam Connors

N68, N69 George Liddell

Your current Committee Members

Chairman: John Eaton 865307

Vice Chairman & Lin Phillips 862882

Minutes Secretary:

Secretary: Jenny Sippings 865890

Treasurer: John Powell 878640

Newsletter Editor: Chris Locke 877326

Other members: Wendy Calder 862728

Andy James 865061

Annick Mulcahy 862572

Angela Wheeldon 874440

Sunnyside Allotment Society Subs 2012-13

All members are invited to pay the SAS a membership sub which at present is £3 pa. Of this a fee, of presently £2 per member, is paid to the NSALG (National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners) and the names of paid up members registered with them.

The seed scheme is one of the benefits of membership. However there is much more to this organisation. If you are interested visit their web site <http://www.nsalg.org.uk/> it covers a large range of relevant subjects. A magazine is issued quarterly by them (together with other literature and anything of interest) and is available in the tea hut.

Sunnyside Allotment Society Subs

Subs for 2012/2013 (£3.00) can be sent with this slip to John Powell (20 Castle Hill Avenue) or left at the tea hut on B15. (Cheques payable to Sunnyside Allotment Society please).

Name: _____

Address: _____

Plot Number: _____ Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Amount enclosed: _____ cash/cheque (please circle)