



SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

No: 4 October 2014

I don't usually boast about my own successes but I am so pleased about my second crop of French beans. I sowed the tag ends of 3 different varieties of beans in my greenhouse in July and planted them out in August and thanks to the warmth and regular watering I have been harvesting wonderfully thin and crisp green beans since mid-September. Much better than the ones I put out in June.

Chris Locke

Chairman's notes:

Now it's autumn we can carry on harvesting, prepare for clearing up and wonder what to do with all those squashes.

There are some piles of wood on SSO which tenants can use for various gardening purposes such as raised beds or compost heaps. There are also about 3 sheds - or more depending on carpentry skills, so if you are interested see Ted at or around the tea hut on B15. A donation to the society funds would be appropriate.

Unfortunately there have been some break-ins or attempts on SSO. If this happens to you please report to the police so they can be aware. I suppose if you have something that you would really, really miss, don't leave it on the allotment.

If you have discovered metal on your plot and cannot dispose of it yourself, please contact a member of the committee.

There is plenty of woodchip around, especially on SSN - so please help yourselves.

If you spot a water leak please don't just ignore it. If it is at a tank, try to turn it off at the local stop-cock if there is one. In any case please tell someone such as Ted or a member of the committee. The telephone numbers are in this newsletter.

Good gardening
John Eaton

Allotment Rent

Please remember that allotment rent payments are now due; you should have received an invoice from Berkhamsted Town Council. Rents can be paid at the Civic Centre, by post or by bank transfer.

If you have moved please inform Berkhamsted Town Council and Sunnyside Allotment Society so we can keep our records up to date.

Annual General Meeting

To make sure you know what you need to know about Sunnyside matters and have your say, come to the AGM, date and Agenda on the back of this newsletter.

Many of the committee members are willing to stand for election again, but there are vacancies on the committee so please feel free to nominate tenants (with their permission) or self nominate if you prefer.

Also Sunnyside subs (£3) for 2015 can be paid at the AGM.



The origins of Allotments, in the UK and at Sunnyside

Allotments have been in existence for hundreds of years, with evidence pointing back to Anglo-Saxon times, but the system we recognise today has its roots in the nineteenth century, when land was given over to the “landless poor” to grow food. This measure was desperately needed due to the rapid industrialisation of the country, and to the many thousands of families evicted from their rented cottages and smallholdings as common land was cleared by landowners in the nineteenth century. Neither was there any welfare net.

In 1908 the Small Holdings and Allotments Act came into force, placing a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments, according to demand. However, it wasn't until the end of the First World War that land was made available to all, primarily as a way of assisting returning servicemen (Land Settlement Facilities Act 1919). The rights of allotment holders were strengthened through the Allotments Act of 1922, but the most important change can be found in the Allotments Act of 1925, which established statutory allotments that local authorities could not sell off or convert without Ministerial consent. Further legislation affecting allotments has been enacted in the intervening years, the latest of which is the Localism Act 2012. (information taken from NSALG website)

Berkhamsted Allotments

The first mention of allotments for Berkhamsted comes in a record dated 1898, which indicates that Northchurch Parish Council (whose responsibilities extended to the Sunnyside area of Berkhamsted) was interested in acquiring ‘9 acres in George Street and district, 7 acres in Dudswell and 26 acres in Northchurch.’ In 1899, a Mr Benjamin Waite requested sufficient allotment land for his two donkeys!

It appears that the land known as Sunnyside Old Allotments was leased by Berkhamstead (sic) Urban District Council from Adelbert Wellington Cust, 3rd Earl Brownlow and owner of the Ashridge estate. In the Indenture (or deed of sale) of 1925 it was already referred to as “being in the occupation” of the Council as allotments, though it is not clear from this document when this arrangement began. (*Local oral history suggests 1912 – I would be extremely grateful for any evidence of this – Lin*) These 10.28 acres were bought for £2,000 when, following the death of Lord Brownlow in 1921 and having no heir, the estate was put up for sale.

Two years later, the land across Ivy House Lane was purchased by the Urban District Council of Great Berkhamstead for £529 from the Dwight family, farmers and

keepers of the pheasantry on Gutteridge Farm, who had in turn leased this land from the Brownlow estate in 1920. Again, the Indenture refers to these 8.31 acres as already being “in the occupation” of the council for use as allotments.

In the case of Sunnyside New Allotments, a few yards of the land adjoining the railway line were owned by the London, Midland and Scottish Railway Company; this was acquired up to the present boundary. Nationally, it would appear that much of the land purchased by Councils for allotments was situated along railway embankments, as it would have been cheap and not particularly desirable for other purposes. To this day, you are likely to see allotments along the tracks as you travel by train across England.

Post-war Developments

The “Dig for Victory” campaign during the Second World War, coupled with the privations of the post-war years, saw a rise in people taking up allotments to supplement rationing. At its height there were over 1.5million allotment plots across the UK. The 1970s, with the three-day week and trade union unrest, saw a further interest in self-sustainability, as immortalised in the BBC show “The Good Life”. Today, with economic uncertainty on a global scale, the desire for more space to grow food locally and experience life's simple pleasures has reignited the call for more allotments. Figures suggest there are approximately 330,000 allotment plots in the UK, but to meet current demand at least a further 90,000 plots are needed. (NSALG)

Lin Phillips

Open Day

After such a lovely summer, it was disappointing to see rain forecast for our annual Open Day. It poured on us while we put up the gazebos & it threw in thunder & lightning for good measure. But brave people came & supported us with true Dunkirk spirit, including several from other allotments. Our takings for refreshments & the raffle were understandably down, but sales of produce, including local honey, apple juice & plums, were up.

Our grateful thanks to Councillor Antony Armytage for braving the elements to draw the raffle for us. Half the takings went to the Hospice this year, & half went to one of our tenants, Sarah Marshall, towards funding for her trip to New Zealand where she will represent her country in the Blind Bowling section of the World Disability Games. Good luck in February, Sarah. Many thanks to all those who helped in the run up to Open Day, & who helped on the day itself.

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).

Your Current Committee Members

Chairman:	John Eaton	865307
Vice Chairman & Minutes Secretary:	Lin Phillips	862882
Secretary:	Jenny Sippings	865890
Treasurer:	John Powell	878640
Newsletter Editor:	Chris Locke	877326
Other members:	Wendy Calder	767289
	Cynthia Fulks	879410
	Andy James	865061
	Adrian Scarborough	384974
	Angela Wheeldon	874440

Tenancy Changes

Welcome to:

A1B	Kerry Ewing
B33B	Neil & Trish Kennedy
B35A	Simon Nicolle
N1D	James Berry
N3	Sara Jefferson
N10	Tiffany & Bruce Courtney-Berry
N13	Melanie O'Brien
N53	Soloman Beere
N62B	Graeme Duggan
N67	Maryann Pearson

Goodbye to:

A6B	John Driver
B20B	Darren Flint & Donald Green
B31B	Jackie Nilsson
B33B	John Anthony Lightfoot
B35A	Matthew Shapland
N1D	Patricia Selley
N8	Betty Patterson



Manure

Now is the time to start thinking about adding some manure to your soil as you start the winter digging. You may have your own source of supply, but the following have all delivered to us:

Phil Marks, Tring (farmyard)	01442 823357
Dave Burgin, Flaunden (farmyard)	01442 832997
Ian Gibbs, Bourne End (horse)	07775696500

SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

All tenants are invited to

Christmas Drinks (mulled wine, mince pies etc)

on

Sunday 21st December
12.00—3.00 ish

at the Tea Hut B15

Please bring a contribution.

Working Parties

The first working party took place on 5th October & we would like to say a big thank you to the ten or so tenants who gave up their time to help maintain & improve our allotment site. We cleared the grass from the Millennium Coppice which had been mown & strimmed in advance, & left the arisings ready for disposal. And we also worked on the Wood Chip & Leaf bays on SSO, clearing bindweed & preparing them to receive this autumn's deliveries. We have already received 3 deliveries of wood chip. These materials are available to everyone. Rotted down leaves make a good soil conditioner, & wood chip can be used for paths or as a mulch. Another area to be tackled was the wood heap where brambles & nettles were cleared & wood rationalised. After our exertions, we all enjoyed a good lunch including Maria's tasty minestrone soup.

Our next working parties will take place on:
Sunday 2nd November 2014
Sunday 11th January 2015
Sunday 1st February 2015
Sunday 1st March 2015

More details will follow in due course.





**AGENDA FOR THE EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON
SATURDAY 29TH NOVEMBER, 2014 AT THE
SUNNYSIDE RURAL TRUST, IVY HOUSE
LANE, BERKHAMSTED AT 10.30 A.M.**

1. Apologies for absence
 2. To approve the minutes of the last AGM
 3. Chairman's report
 4. To consider and approve the Society's accounts
 5. To receive any nominations for officers/
committee members
 6. Election of officers and committee:
 - Chairman
 - Vice Chairman
 - Treasurer
 - Secretary
 - Committee members
 7. Election of Allotments' representative on Town
Council's Allotments Management Team
 8. Future developments
 9. Any other business
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Please send in any nominations for officers, the
committee and allotments site rep to Jenny
Sippings, 82 George Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 2EQ
or email to jenny.sippings@ntlworld.com. Please
make sure your nominee is willing to stand.

