



# SUNNYSIDE ALLOTMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

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

No: 1 January 2018

## Editor's note

Happy New Year to you all! We have seen some very wintery weather, which has had a damaging effect on plants buried under snow and netting. Hopefully we will see the glimmerings of milder weather before long. In this issue you will find reports from allotment holders on Old and New on their growing successes or otherwise in 2017, an update on the working party programme, and a few words on the problems some of us have encountered with leeks – it seems there is a host of nasties competing for these tasty veg! Anyway, I hope you enjoy reading the newsletter,

Lin Phillips, Editor

## Chairman's notes

Once again, it's the start of a year and time to plan for a better season. Wet, dry, frosty - who knows? If the weather is not too bad and the ground not sticky there's still the time to dig - warm work and a way of shedding the seasonal pounds. The roadways are very wet so please try to avoid driving on them.

A thoroughly refurbished shed has been erected near the Grantham Mews end of B Road. Thanks are due to Clive Smith for masterminding the effort and to various volunteers for digging, lifting and painting. The Society's equipment such as tools, tables and gazebos will be at last be stored together in a dry, accessible place.

The Society's accounting period now ends at 31st December (instead of 31st October) and the AGM to review the year and plan ahead will be held on Saturday 20th January. One item on the agenda is to elect committee members, as well as to appoint officers and new committee members. Please have a good think about volunteering and feel free to put yourself forward.

Our treasurer, Andy will be on hand at the AGM to receive our annual subscriptions to the Sunnyside Allotment Society. This year your sub will cost you £4 for the calendar year; a small amount but so important in supporting the Society. Mainly, it goes towards our group membership to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners (NSALG), which provides a host of advice and information, including legal protection to SAS.

Finally, there was a recent incident where a dog walker on SSN allowed the dog to encroach on a plot and then took issue with the plot holder who objected. The incident escalated and the police and Council have been informed. Strictly, the public and dogs should be confined to A road on SSO. However it seems that dogs are walked

on other paths where, at least, they should be on leads and any mess should be cleared. There are notices on the gates reminding dog walkers of their responsibilities. Would plot holders try to avoid being drawn into trouble and inform the Council and, if necessary, the police of any issues arising. Plot holders should, of course, keep their own dogs under control.  
Good gardening,

John Eaton



Snowman on Sunnyside New—photo Lin Phillips



## What can go wrong with Leeks

### *Allium Leaf Miner*

In last January's newsletter, Neil and Tricia (C13 and B33B) reported finding the larvae of *Allium* leaf miner in their leeks, and sure enough this autumn, many of us have found them too – small brown maggots of said bug, along with shredding and rotting leeks. You can delve into the layers, stripping them off until you get to some clean and more edible leek, but it kind of takes the pleasure out of it all.

According to the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS) website, none of the pesticides available to home gardeners are likely to control the infestation. Plants can be protected by covering them with horticultural fleece or an insect proof mesh such as Ultra-Fine Enviromesh during the times when the adult flies are active and laying eggs (March to April and October to November). They also recommend crop rotation, as adult flies might emerge from pupae underneath the covering if susceptible plants are grown in the same piece of ground in successive years. (Although this solution assumes endless space on the allotment for rotation; Ed.)

### *Onion White Rot*

White rot is a serious disease of plants of the allium family, especially bulb onions, garlic and leeks. It is caused by a soil-borne fungus which can persist in the soil for many years. From mid-summer until early autumn, you may find the following symptoms:

- Above ground, yellowing and wilting of the foliage, especially in dry weather
- Under wetter conditions the plants may not wilt, but will become loose in the soil
- Below ground, the pathogen rots the roots and then invades the bulb

**White fluffy fungus growth appears on the base of the bulb and later this becomes covered in small, round, black structures**

**The RHS advises that onion white rot is** effectively impossible to eliminate once it has been introduced, and the long survival period makes crop rotation impractical. It is transported in contaminated soil, for example on tools or on muddy footwear. Take particular care in areas where cross contamination can occur easily, for example on allotments.

### *Leek rust*

Leek rust is a disease caused by a fungus which grows on leeks. They are rarely severely affected, but rust can be serious on onions, garlic and chives. Most attacks occur from mid-summer until late autumn. You may see bright orange pustules on both sides of infected leaves. These are initially enclosed by the surface tissues of the leaf,

but break open to release dusty, orange, airborne spores. Severe attacks may cause leaves to shrivel prematurely and will reduce vigour.

Infection is worse on nitrogen-rich soils with low potassium, so take care with fertiliser applications. Don't crowd plants, as this raises the humidity and increases the likelihood of infection. Dispose of all plant debris at the end of cropping. Check for rust-resistant varieties when ordering seeds or sets.

There are no chemicals approved for control of leek rust for gardeners.

*(Lots more information on all these leek problems on the RHS website. Ed.)*



Snow laden fruit cage— photo Clive Smith



A winter scene—photo Lin Phillips



Tea hut noticeboard in the snow—photo Deirdre Ahern

**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 – ([jennysippings@virginmedia.com](mailto:jennysippings@virginmedia.com)).



### Christmas Drinks Event, Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> December

About 35 or so different allotment holders and other guests attended at one time or another throughout the 2 hours. Not a bad turnout considering the biting wind and extremely wet weather – even the Carol Singers were rained off. But lots of lovely savoury food was donated and consumed with not a mince pie in sight. Drink donations consisted of 2 bottles Home Made Apple Juice, 3 bottles of commercial mulled wine and 10 bottles of assorted red wine.

Between us Wendy and I mulled a total of 16 bottles of wine which were all consumed. So, after using 5 bottles from the office store and purchasing 8 bottles with the Society donation of £25 and Angela's £5 donation, we put 10 bottles back into the office store for use at a future event. Cheers!

Cynthia Fulks, A32

*Thanks to Cynthia for this report about the seasonal miracle of turning wine into more wine. The mulling recipe seems just right and the mulling elves did a fine job. The drinkers played their part as expected. The weather just tested our spirit and we passed with flying colours!*

*Thanks to everyone more making it such an enjoyable time.*

John Eaton, Chairman



Christmas Cheer—photo Clive Smith



Ted's bench in the snow—photo Lin Phillips

### Working Parties Update

So far we have had three of the five Sunday working parties scheduled for this winter. In November and December we concentrated on the new communal area on the Grantham Mews / Millfield side of SSO, beside the new communal shed: earth moving, helping to level the site for the second SAS shed, clearing undergrowth from the area which had been cleared of trees in the spring, and moving, sorting and storing wood and guttering materials from their previous storage areas.

In January it was the turn of Millennium Coppice (lower) for its four-year coppicing cycle; a big thanks to Bernard Axford for doing the heaving cutting work in advance. Following a good day's work, there is now a large supply of bean poles and pea sticks for tenants to use in the coming year. Tenants are welcome to take a quantity for their own use, but please leave a small contribution in the honesty box above the Tea Hut, B13. Clearance also took place in the wildlife area on B Road.

Volunteers are always welcome on the first Sunday of the month, to help with the programme of work. A lunch of hot soup and rolls is provided at the Tea Hut, so do put these dates in your diary and come along, if only for a couple of hours, on 4<sup>th</sup> February and 4<sup>th</sup> March.

John Goffey, working parties organiser, B18

### Your current committee members

<b>Chairman:</b>	John Eaton	865307
<b>Vice Chairman &amp; Newsletter Editor:</b>	Lin Phillips	862882
<b>Secretary:</b>	Jenny Sippings	865890
<b>Treasurer:</b>	Andy James	865061
<b>Minutes Secretary:</b>	Cynthia Fulks	879410
<b>Other members:</b>	Wendy Calder	767289
	Angela Wheeldon	874440
	John Goffey	864967
	Kate Rankin	

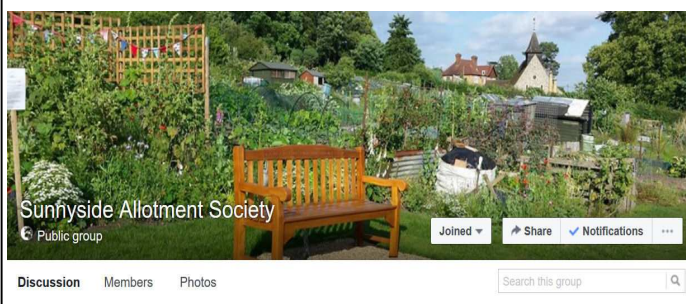
You can email any member of the committee by putting their first name in front of:

@sunnysideallotments.org.uk apart from John Eaton who is: johne@ and John Goffey who is: johng@

### Facebook group

Please join our group for allotment gardening chit chat.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/1466477513362340/>



### A Year on Sunnyside New

This year was another excellent one for us. All the crops that we enjoy growing: runner beans, broad beans, chard, pumpkins, quinoa and rhubarb grew happily for us. Maybe the load of manure that we puffed and hoofed late in 2016 was a great incentive to our lovely plants. We continue to struggle with the chick peas but the difficulties we had last year with the quinoa (labour intensive cropping) have been overcome, thanks to a marvellous e-fan which blows off the chaff from the seeds and at the same time electronically send good wishes to the onlookers!!

We had an excellent collection of blackberries from the surrounding path areas and lots of fruit from our garden at home of red and black currants and raspberries. In total we had lots of jam (which is much appreciated by loved ones), about 1.5 kilo of quinoa and about 20 to 23 pumpkins!

As for weather, we remember the wonderful spring and the wet summer, but in autumn a strong breeze blew our runner beans over and the whole thing looked like a ship-wreck. Fortunately, most had been harvested by then.

Wishing you all a fruitful 2018. Elsy & Mike, NSS 56B

### And meanwhile, on Sunnyside Old....

This year on the growing front I found disease-resistant varieties of beetroot, carrot and parsnip were worth the extra seed cost while the red cabbages are superbly tight and great for chilli cabbage or pickled cabbage. Cheers!

Keith Shaw C7B

### Tenancy changes

*Welcome to:*

A41A Ian Griffiths

B12A Linda Ablett

B26 Michael Stone

N3 Vicky Sibley and Nick Westwood

N44 Jacqueline Williams

*Goodbye to:*

A36B Siobhan Doran

N10 David Hulbert

N44 Helen Reeley

N61 Robin Wiblin

### Warning!

To those few tenants who haven't yet paid their annual rent to the Council (it was due by the end of September), please do so as a matter of urgency. Otherwise there is a real risk of losing our plot. If you have changed your address, do notify the Council.



Sunnyside Juices—photo Clive Smith



Autumn Produce—photo Kitran Eastman

### Need a Little Help around the Allotment?

Our youngest tenant, Sam Barley, is looking to increase his earnings in 2018, and is available to do work on your allotment. In the last year he was a godsend to a lot of us, mowing paths, weeding, digging, clearing plots, watering crops when tenants were away and general maintenance jobs. His rates are very reasonable, (and he is a very conscientious worker – Lin, Ed.) You can contact Sam on 07594625651, or by email on [sambarley15@gmail.com](mailto:sambarley15@gmail.com)





**AGENDA FOR THE TWENTY FIRST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING TO BE HELD ON SATURDAY  
20TH JANUARY, 2018 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 representative to Jenny Sippings, 82 George Street, Berkhamsted, HP4 2EQ or email to [jennysippings@virginmedia.com](mailto:jennysippings@virginmedia.com). Please make sure your nominee is willing to stand.

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Subs for 2018 (4.00) can be paid at the AGM on 20th January, or sent with this slip to Andy James (4 Field Way) 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)