



WEST WICKHAM ALLOTMENTS ASSOCIATION

www.wwallotments.org.uk

Newsletter - June 2015

OPEN DAY

This will take place on Sunday 16th August between 10am and 3pm. More details will be sent out as we get nearer to the day. For those of you who have never been to one of our Open Days we ask plot holders to help on the day if they can, to provide our produce stall with any surplus veg. and fruit you may have, bake a cake for the refreshment stall, donate any



surplus jams or pickles you may have made or just be on your plot and encourage visitors to sign up for a plot by your enthusiasm for the 'good life'

If you have already ticked the box for helping at the Open Day I will get in touch with you nearer the time to check your availability and what you would like to do.

BARBECUE

Our next social event is the Barbecue on Sunday 12th July from 1.00 - 3.30 pm, timed so that you can come along after working your plot and also to make it more of a whole family event. Let's hope that the Sun shines! Tickets are available now from the Trading Shed, price £7.50 for adults and £4.00 for children.

THE BATON IS PASSED ON....

With the death of John Scarnell I wondered who would be our longest serving plot holder. It appears to be Dave Townley who took over his plot in 1972/3. I was contacted by Michael Naish who wondered if it might be him and his wife Sally as they took on their plot on 4th November 1974. Their rent was £1.50p, Assn/Soc sub 25p and key deposit 50p! He did wonder if it was so little to pay as they had joined at the end of the year.

REMINDERS

Wheelbarrows. Please do not leave the WWAA wheelbarrows on your plot when you have used them to collect compost, as weed containers etc. They are for the use of all plot holders and should be returned to the storage areas by the lockers ASAP.

Water tanks. We are going to have to water our plots more often now as, hopefully, drier weather becomes the norm. If you empty the tank as you water your plot please refill the tank before you leave. It is so frustrating to go to fill your watering can to find 6 inches of sludge in the bottom of the tank!

Marian

Notes from the Trading Shed



Have you seen our new look shed? No, not as in the picture! That's the Editor just being silly. Seriously though, the internal cladding work has transformed the place; it's all much cleaner and brighter than before. Ron and Dave, our maintenance men, have been doing a wonderful job. Many thanks guys.

Sales have been brisk recently as the improved weather has tempted many of us up to the plots. We will be getting in a new supply of grow bags after 28th May. We sold out of everything we had on Sunday 17th May!

Our supply of multi-purpose compost will also be replenished then along with 6X Chicken pellets, Growmore, canes and other essentials.

Have you seen the price of Roundup solid stick weed killer in Sainsbury's and garden centres? We have it on sale for at least £1 cheaper.

We have had a few unhappy customers recently trying to buy stuff from us before we are open. Someone even argued that we'd always been open from 10am which is not so. We are open from **10.30am until 12.30pm**. We are dependent on volunteers, people just like you who have plots on which they could be working but who realise the importance of having a Trading Shed full of bits and pieces which is so useful to access on a Sunday morning.

PLEASE REMEMBER, SHOP OPENING TIME IS 10.30 UNTIL 12.30

Keith

Topical Tips from Paul

A few tips for the next few weeks.....

Attention to weeding and thinning will pay dividends

Thorough weeding now will remove annual weeds and make things easier later into the summer on your plot and those nearby. Take particular notice of mare's tail, a spikey weed with a rough feel. We need to slow down its spread across the site by weeding out its deep root structure or at least cutting down the spikes at ground level. Sadly, off-the-shelf weed killers do not provide effective control.

Rust on garlic plants (maybe on onions and leeks too?)

My garlic plants were looking great up until about two weeks ago - then the dreaded garlic rust appeared. This is identified by its powdery orange and yellow blotches on leaves. This fungus is spread by wind and plant contact. Rarely will the fungus kill the plant but it can decrease bulb size. I have yet to find something which kills the fungus, so just remove the most infected leaves. Don't put them in the compost bin! I am experimenting by spraying separately with aspirin (see

<http://www.plantea.com/plant-aspirin.htm>), baking powder and Bordeaux mixture to see if it can be halted. When using sprays, try adding a little mild soap solution which will enable the spray to best adhere to leaves. Also, don't overwater onions as this can cause white rot.



Tomatoes

Often we hear stories of members having trouble with outdoor tomatoes - with blight descending almost overnight. You may already be growing blight resistant varieties, (see <http://www.gardenersworld.com/plants/features/fruit-veg/blight-resistant-tomato-varieties/4626.html>. If not try

these tips: (i) plant marigolds between tomatoes as they deter blackfly and may have a fungicidal effect, (ii) remove lower leaves as the plants grow, especially if there is any sign of blight (don't compost), (iii) water at the roots, trying not to splash soil on lower leaves and (iv) if you are not an organic gardener spray with a copper based fungicide (see <https://www.rhs.org.uk/advice/pdfs/fungicides-for-home-gardeners>).



Epsom salts. If leaves start to develop yellow tips/patches, you might find an application of Epsom salts helps. Available from the Trading Hut at a very reasonable price.

Sweet Corn. It is arguable whether any home-grown vegetable tastes better than sweetcorn off the plant. Growing it seldom cause problems but plants can blow over in strong wind and you might wish to support them. Also try to stick to a planting distance of 45cm and protect the cobs with netting to put off birds and mice.

Swedes

Not everyone's cup of tea but if you are growing them thin early so that strong roots are developed in the maturing plants. Look out for whitefly infestations - control by spraying with a mild soap solution. Reddish yellow patches on leaves (and other brassicas) could be due to boron deficiency. Swedes can be badly affected with grey/brown concentric rings. Rose fertiliser contains boron and might be worth sprinkling around swedes at soil level. I have also heard that coffee contains boron - so you might try spreading your grouts!

Happy plotting!

Paul

From the Secretary's desk

When you read this I will hopefully be sunning myself on a Spanish beach! So as my report has been written a bit early this time it might be a bit dated!



No eye deer - We have visited again by a rose and strawberry eating deer, seen on the 17th May down the far end of the site. We had one last year, hopefully it won't hang around.

I have to unfortunately report that a plot holder has been dumping waste and slabs against the fence at the corner bottom of the site along side Glebe Way. I just don't understand how anyone could expect this to be acceptable. If this is you then please remove this immediately.

Bromley Federation Annual Competition

Would you like to enter your plot into this competition? We are entering our site again this year. The judging takes place 26th June - 3rd July. There are various classes including: new plot holders under 3 years (on the plot, not age!), under 35's, Ladies Cup, Honey and Wine cups, Cottage Garden. If you are interested then please give your details to Keith in the shop. Entries will go in on the 22nd June.

Matt

Maurice Kenn

We have heard from Michael Naish that one of our long term plot holders, Maurice Kenn, died recently. He and his wife Rosemary worked D5 for many years and were well known to many plot holders. They moved to Brisbane, Queensland some years ago to be with their family. Maurice died on 1st April 2015 and Rosemary e-mailed Sally and Michael to ask if they could let anyone who might remember them know of the sad news.

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**The West Wickham & Hayes Local Committee for Cancer Research**

Are holding a **FASHION SHOW** on **TUESDAY 23<sup>rd</sup> JUNE 2015**

The Warren, Croydon Road, Hayes BR2 7AL - Doors open 7pm - show starts 7.30pm

Tickets £10 - Free glass of bubbly/orange juice on arrival  
**High Street clothes - all prices slashed - bargains galore!**  
Contact Mary Jones  
All funds raised go to Cancer Research UK  
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