

Hotwells and District Allotments Association (HwDAA)

NEWSLETTER

HwDAA website www.hwdaa.co.uk



WELCOME TO YOUR NEWSLETTER!

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MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

Welcome to the winter edition of our Newsletter at the end of a growing season which has been very kind to us with bumper crops from the fruit trees and copious amounts from the soft fruit bushes. Many of you put that to good use and we tasted it at the Cream Tea - super produce and a super day despite the weather. It was an excellent turnout in our centenary year and a big thank you to all those who rolled up their sleeves on the day. John Holland's daughter Tess warrants a special mention for providing the world's supply of scones!



The long dry spells over the summer have seen high levels of water usage though I am pleased to say nothing excessive - so thank you for using your collected rainwater supplies. Recent wet weather has probably replenished most of our water butts.



You will probably know we have had some vandalism at the White City site with the compost toilet completely destroyed by fire. We will not be fazed by this and a replacement has arrived and John Holland with Kean Lamb have kindly agreed to organise the fitting out.



Over the next 12 months we would like to use some of our funds to replace those sheds in the poorest condition. For those affected we will need your help and forbearance in clearing out tools and preparing the foundations. We will talk to those tenants affected as and when.



The Association has been gifted a new STIHL shredder by Wilmott Dixon the developers on the land adjacent to Alderman Moores as a token of appreciation for the way we have accommodated their access to the site and worked with them in ensuring that the wildlife has taken priority. The shredder will be available at each of our 6 sites subject to arrangement with site reps. Machine will take cuttings up to 35/40 mm.

The next few weeks are a good opportunity to start the preparation for next year's growing season, in fact it can be as busy now as it is in the Spring dividing rhubarb, planting out spring cabbage, grease banding fruit trees, pruning apples and pears, painting sheds etc.etc.

On behalf of the committee I would like to thank Stephanie for her considerable efforts over the past three years in pulling together the newsletter which I know has not always been easy. This has been a major success and whilst we will continue to produce items

of news and interest it will not be as structured as these produced by Stephanie and her work is very much appreciated and will be missed.

A Merry Christmas to all our tenants!!

Roger Coffin – Chair AM 192 email: rogercoffin@sky.com



FUTURE EVENTS

Winter is upon us but never mind – we have **loads** of events to look forward to in **2018** :

- **AGM Saturday 6th January**
- **Potato Day Sunday 14th January**
- **An Evening with Kings Seeds Wednesday 7th March**
- **No Dig – Tim Foster Saturday 28th April**
- **Bristol Seed Swap Saturday 3rd February**
- **New Tenant Workshop tbc**

Our Association's Annual General Meeting (AGM)

Please note that the next Annual General Meeting of the Association will be held on **Saturday 6th January 2018, 2pm** at the Shop (Alderman Moore's site).

AGENDA

1. Welcome and 'In memoriam'
2. To approve the minutes of the AGM held on 7 January 2017
3. To consider any matters arising from those minutes unless on this agenda.
4. Presentation of awards by the President: (The Harry Green Shield for the best kept plot and The Eric Grimes Cup for the best newcomer)
5. Chair's report
6. Treasurer's report and presentation of HwDAA accounts for the year ending 30 September 2017
7. To vote on the audit of the 2016/17 accounts
8. To approve the 2016/17 accounts
9. Notice of plot rents with effect from 1 October 2018
10. Election of President
11. Election of Committee Officers to an agreed maximum
12. Any other business

Don't Miss POTATO DAY

Sunday 14th January 2018

10.30am – 1 pm

at the Shop (Alderman Moore's site)

- ❖ the Shop is open for an extra hour
- ❖ Snap up your favourite varieties before we sell out
- ❖ Pick and Mix to make your own selection. A great way to try out new varieties

- ❖ We will have a great range of **seeds** on sale as well as potatoes. Plus onion and shallot sets and garlic from mid January
- ❖ Enjoy a mug of hot soup as you choose your potatoes
- ❖ Remember that Parking is very limited and **Please bring change** – we do not take cards

What is on sale?

We will have 22 varieties of potato. Full details will be on the website in the A-Z Guide to HwDAA Spuds 2018. A summary below:

First Early : Arran Pilot; Casablanca; Foremost, Lady Christl; Pentland Javelin; Red Duke of York; Sharpes Express; Winston

2nd Early: Gemson; Kestrel; Vivaldi

Main Crop: Cara; Carolus; Desiree; King Edward; Picasso; Record; Rooster

Salad: Anya; Charlotte; Nicola; Pink Fir Apple

Any questions ?

Q: *How do you choose what to stock?*

A. Tricky! Firstly I look at how fast varieties sell out, demand in other words. Although this can vary widely from year to year! (And not everything is available every year from the supplier.) Other factors to consider: cooking qualities such as which are best for chips/ boiled/ mashed/ roasties; a balance between old favourites and trying new ones; flesh and skin colour; disease resistance; storage quality; yield; FLAVOUR. And last but by no means least - YOUR COMMENTS and reviews in gardening press and websites.

Q. *Why should I buy seed potatoes from the Shop? My mate says he just uses the ones from the supermarket which have gone a bit sprouty in the bottom of his fridge.*

A. The 'Safe Haven' seed potatoes we stock are tested and grown to keep the UK free of very nasty diseases which are rampant in other countries (Ring Rot; Brown Rot; Dickeya and others). This does NOT apply to spuds on sale for consumption on the supermarket shelf. Read

more: <https://potatoes.ahdb.org.uk/growing/gardeners-guidance/growing-healthy-seed-potatoes-britain>

Q. *Why aren't you stocking some we had last year?*

A. **Pippa** is not available from the supplier ; **Abbott** performed erratically; **Sarpo Mira** sales were very poor
Lesley Woodward, Seeds Coordinator

An Evening with Kings Seeds

Wednesday 7th March 2018

7.30 pm at the Shop (Alderman Moore's site)

A talk by Kings Seeds about the company; seed sowing and germination.

This will include a practical demo and the chance to ask your questions .

We are very lucky indeed to host this and numbers will be limited!

Tickets on sale from January.

Kings Seeds were founded in 1888 by Mr Ernest William King at the tender age of 19, and became a Limited company in January 1920. So next year they are celebrating 130 years of trading. We can't find out how long we have been buying seeds from them, all records have vanished. They sent us the following message on our 100th Anniversary and an article about their own history which was written in 1918.

No Dig – Tim Foster
Saturday 28th April 2018
2pm – 4pm
at the Shop (Alderman Moore's site)

Tim Foster will be telling us how the No Dig approach to gardening can help improve soil and crop yields as well as reducing backache! Further details will be on the HwDAA website shortly.

Bristol Seed Swap
Saturday 3rd February 1pm – 4pm
The Station Cafe, Silver Street BS1

Bristol Seed Swap aims to encourage gardeners to save seeds and so preserve the diversity and independence of seeds (as well as saving money).

If you would like to help on the day please contact Diane Holness KL1 33 email: dianeholness@msn.com interest rather than knowledge is all that you need.

New Tenant Workshop – tbc

EVENT COORDINATOR

Anneke van Eijkern, allotment holder (AM 63A) at Alderman Moore's has kindly agreed to become the Event Co-ordinator for the Association and she will be organising workshops next year covering organic gardening, help for new tenants, pruning etc. Anneke is currently doing an RHS Level 2 course and her tutor is Tim Foster whom many of you will know.

FOCUS ON OUR ALLOTMENT HOLDERS

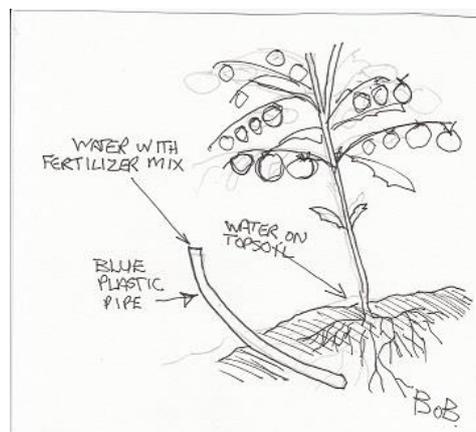
An experiment in growing tomatoes

Having read in a newspaper gardening supplement some time ago that tomatoes like to be watered with just water on the top of the soil they're planted in and a mix of fertilizer and water on their roots, I set up the tomatoes in my greenhouse this year so that I could apply fertilizer to their roots without disturbing them.

As soon as the flowers had starting forming, for each plant I inserted a length of blue plastic pipe about a foot long with the end about 6 – 7 inches into the soil so the end was right where the roots were located. When I watered the roots I used a mix of water and liquid seaweed (available from our shop) to the right mix. I watered the topsoil with rain water and I alternated the watering so one day I did the roots and next the tops.

It was a fantastic success – we had a bumper crop of tomatoes of various kinds. It was the best harvest of tomatoes I've ever had. It's well worth trying and I shall be using this method from now on.

Here's a quick sketch of how it was set up.



Bob Corfield, KL1 Annex 6

LATEST NEWS FROM THE SHOP

The end of September is the end of our year at the shop and we all feel it has continued to thrive. This means we're still managing to provide the basics needed for our allotment activities at competitive prices and generating additional income for the Association in about equal measure.

Just in case you need reminding the shop is located on our biggest site Alderman Moores. It also has the greatest turnover of tenants which means I often see Phil Cass the site rep giving newcomers a grand tour of the emporium as part of the introduction process. This isn't possible of course if you take over a plot on one of the other sites but I recommend you coming over to take a look at what's on offer.

Speaking to tenants on these other sites it's clear that it's worth emphasising that during shop opening hours (details and location on the website <https://www.hwdaa.co.uk/shop.htm>) there is unrestricted access to Alderman Moores – just come on in.

It's always a bit of a challenge to anticipate and keep up with changes in demand. This year for example we've sold less pest control items including slug pellets and I'm getting the impression that use of Growmore fertilizer may be diminishing. Demand for the 'rolls' (black plastic, ground cover, netting & fleece) has been strong and our pre-loved (OK, second-hand if you insist) tools etc have been popular. On this last point members continue to make the effort to bring unwanted tools and equipment to the shop and I'm pleased to be able to take the opportunity to thank those who have done so. It is particularly gratifying to us working here because it is a sign of goodwill and support for the enterprise. We're all volunteers here and we wouldn't consider it a problem if we were overwhelmed by offers to join in. If you think it might be your next career move feel free to contact Angie Tonge (angietonge@yahoo.co.uk). Turns to man and woman the shop come round about once a month and full training in till operation, being nice to customers, hiding irritation if management puts in an appearance, moaning at management if something has run out, etc will be provided.

Steve Fay, Shop Manager

MESSAGE FROM THE TREASURER

Our accounts for 2016-17 have now been audited although they still need to be accepted at the AGM. The shop did well again this year although profit was down from last financial year by just over £1000.00 to £5176. Nevertheless, it still adds a considerable amount to our funds.

Once again, Site Maintenance was our biggest outgoing but we ended the year with an overall surplus of £1490 which will be ploughed back into the Association.

For those of you who have joined the Association recently, you will see that we are registered with the Financial Conduct Authority as a "Benefit for the Community" organisation. What this means is that any small profit we make must be put back into our funds. We are not allowed to make a profit for anything other than the Association itself.

Much more detail will be revealed in my speech at the AGM.

Bob Corfield

EDITORS FAREWELL

This will be my last newsletter - I do hope you have enjoyed reading them!

Stephanie Beaven, Newsletter Editor