

# HW&DAA NEWSLETTER

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**HWDAAs web site: [www.hwdaa.co.uk](http://www.hwdaa.co.uk)**

## TIM FOSTER

### Practical workshop on PRUNING

Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> December

Alderman Moores Stores

2 – 4 pm

### Chairman's Comments

#### 1. PLOT RENTS 2009 - 10

Your bill for the coming year (1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2010) is enclosed with this Newsletter, **Please read the bill for full details of how to pay.** Payments are due on the 1st October 2009.

If you have not paid by **1<sup>st</sup> November** you will be sent a reminder with an additional administrative surcharge of £5.

PLEASE NOTE that if the rent + surcharge payment has not then been received by the Treasurer **by the 14<sup>th</sup> November 2009, your Tenancy will automatically be terminated, and your plot re-let.**

#### 2. PLOT RENTS for the Allotment Year 2010/2011

Notice is hereby given that the rent for the following year (2010 – 2011) will remain unchanged, ie:-

<b>Large Plot</b>	<b>£50</b>
<b>Medium Plot</b>	<b>£40</b>
<b>Small Plot</b>	<b>£30</b>
<b>Very Small Plot</b>	<b>£16</b>

#### 3. WATER USE

There has been a substantial increase in water usage on all sites over the past six months, despite the seemingly incessant downpours we have suffered. At Alderman Moores, this can partly be attributed to a leak in the toilets, but it is otherwise due to (a) forgetfulness in turning off taps and (b) unnecessary watering.

In July, a tap at Bower Ashton was left on all night – next day there was a river running down the haulingway. What a waste of a precious resource!!! We are metered, so this forgetfulness adds to the HWDAAs bills – shared by all in the form of rent.

When other taps on site are being used, the water pressure can drop, so that little, if any, water emerges from your tap. In these circumstances it is all too easy

to forget about a tap, but then the inevitable happens - the water pours out again when people turn off the other taps.

Once seedlings are established it is often counterproductive to water, as it encourages plants to develop shallow roots (which makes them prone to wind damage), rather than the deeper roots which enable them to search out water and nutrients from a greater area - and shallow roots form a self-perpetuating cycle of needing to be watered in drier weather.

Some reminders for good water manners...

1. If you switch a tap on, turn it off (firmly) when you've finished watering or filled the dip tank. If someone else wants to water, avoid confusion over whose responsibility it is, by letting them turn it back on!
2. ALWAYS check the tap before you leave the site.
3. Report all leaks (and occasions when people have forgotten to turn off taps) to your site rep as soon as possible.
4. Do NOT wash tools, produce or hands in water tanks (to avoid cross contamination by water borne bacteria and viruses from one plot to another). Use a bowl or watering can for washing, and empty the water onto your plot.
5. Hoses are banned - except for the few people who have written permission from the committee (on medical grounds) to use hoses for the limited purpose of filling water butts on their plots from the standpipes. Please report anyone who is using a hose directly on plots/crops to your site rep.

It is a very good idea to install water collection arrangements on your sheds where possible. Water butts are available from the stores and we can give advice on guttering and piping. It saves an awful lot of carrying and the (very slightly acid) rainwater is better for crops.

#### 4. FIRES

Please read the bonfire guidelines on the HWDAAs website (if you don't have access to the internet, ask your site rep or the newsletter editor for a hard copy). There have AGAIN been complaints from adjacent housing (and other plot holders) affected by smoke. If you are asthmatic it is no joke to have to close windows and vacate gardens in the summer.

The trouble is not the fire, but the smoke it can generate if green material is burnt (which applies to a fire in an incinerator, as well as an open fire). Some tenants are

burning green materials such as grass clippings and weeds which can ALL be disposed of by composting, either on a heap, or in a compost bin (available from the stores) or buried in a two-spit trench and covered with soil. Do not waste the goodness that composting provides!

Plastic must never be burned as it gives off toxins injurious to health. Take it home and bin it.

Larger pieces of (not easily compostable) woody material should be reduced in size and placed under cover to dry and possibly combusted in the winter. This also applies to horses tails and convolvulus (although these can be composted when killed by drying out). In short, I see no reason why there should be any fires until the winter.

### 5. SECURITY – gates

The gates at Alderman Moores have been found unlocked on several occasions. Was this because your key didn't work (in which case speak to your site rep)? Was it because someone else said they were just about to come out? Don't be polite and leave the gates unlocked for other people. They have a key – let them use it!

### 6. COMPETITIONS

It is with great pleasure that I report the following awards have been made by a team of external judges:-  
 - The Harry Green Shield for the Best Kept Allotment in the Association - **Nigel Perkins**, Alderman Moores Plot 78 (Nigel's plot was also awarded 3<sup>rd</sup> best in the whole Bristol area)  
 - Best First Year Allotment in the whole Bristol area - **Chris Walsh**, Kennel Lodge 2 Plot 11A

The Association has awarded Commendations to the following First Year Tenants:-

<b>Helen Bentley</b> ,	Bower Ashton	Plot 16A
<b>Angie Reid</b> ,	Kennel Lodge 2	Plot 3A
<b>Chris Walsh</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 11A
<b>John Burgess</b>	White City	Plot 32
<b>Diane Williamson</b>	--/--	Plot 43B
<b>Melody Carter</b>	--/--	Plot 43B
<b>David Passey</b>	--/--	Plot 62B
<b>Julia Heckford</b>	The Meadows	Plot 6A
<b>Louise Holmes</b>	--/--	Plot 8A
<b>Alex Firth-Williams</b>	--/--	Plot 8B
<b>Jenny Hodges</b>	--/--	Plot 20B
<b>Jenny Ibrahim</b>	--/--	Plot 22B
<b>Diana Mankova</b>	Alderman Moores	Plot 131B
<b>Caroline Bowler</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 138A
<b>Sam Tonge</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 190
<b>Vanessa Tomaz</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 208
<b>Gillian Stein</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 225B
<b>Pierre Fox,</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 253B
<b>David Parry</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 273B
<b>Steve Walters</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 283B
<b>Sue Wooding</b>	--/-- --/--	Plot 140A

We have never had so many first year Commendations and it clearly reflects the dedication of these most welcome new tenants. Well done everyone!

### 7. IN MEMORIUM

That Billy Fuller's funeral was attended by so many friends and relatives speaks volumes for this popular tenant who, for many years, was a feature of Bower Ashton, where he won Bristol City awards for his plot. He was on his plot in all weathers, rarely missing a day. Generally considered a loveable rogue, he was always ready to assist those less able or knowledgeable than himself. He will be well remembered for his countryman's lore. His son Allen continues with Billy's plot, having assisted him for so long.

**Bob Franks**

### Strimmers for Hire

Strimmers are now available for hire at the incredibly cheap price of £5 per session. Contact your site rep to arrange use.

### Stores News

Seeds prices are shortly going to go up, so you may want to buy from current stock as soon as possible, particularly over-wintering crops and green manures.

You're harvesting your summer crops and leaving bare earth. What is there to plant in Autumn? The stores can help...

**Overwintering Onions**, £1.80 for 500 gms

- 'Troy' (white Globe variety)
- 'Electric Red' (Semi-Globe variety)

**Overwintering Broad Beans 'Aqua Dulce'** These are for sale at 50p for 4oz (about 70 beans) – over half last year's price! (because we have bulk-bought 56 lbs)

**Large Garlic 'Iberian White'** for Autumn planting only.

AVAILABLE NOW till stocks run out.

If you are thinking about seed potatoes ... Advance notice that the Stores are going to stock the following varieties next spring (more details in the next newsletter) :-

First Early: Foremost, Duke of York, Rocket

Second Early: Kestrel, Wilja

Salad: Pink Fir Apple, Charlotte

Main Crop: Desiree, King Edward, Picasso, Sante

### Cycle track alongside White City – badgers

As you may know Bristol is a 'Cycling City'. A new cycle track is going to be created by the Council from Kennel Lodge Road to the Create Centre. (This is part of a larger cycle network and will link up with the Greenway coming from the Nailsea direction.)

There will be new traffic lights (+ traffic calming plans) crossing Clanage Road. It will run along the edge of the playing field into the little lane used for getting access to White City and Bower Ashton allotments, go past the W.C. entrance, then along the allotments using the access way to the stonemasons yard, out under the

flyover and onto the old railway bridge, where it will join up with the cycleway beside the New Cut.

This involves relocating the White City entrance/ gate so allotment cars and bikes on the cycleway can use the area safely together. We are giving them a small bit of allotment space to do this, and in return they are going to replace the water supply to the site and install some extra standpipes. They will also upgrade the White City fencing beside the new cycle track to palisade fencing with anti-scale barriers.

During the preliminary investigations, an eco survey found a large sett of badgers living on the scrub land near the entrance, which is going to impose restrictions on the building works. We had hoped to bring this area back into use as allotments but now cannot.

### **Land Adjoining Alderman Moores**

The City Council have received a planning application for up to 253 dwellings and a young person's home on this land. We have asked them to make it a requirement that the developers put up 8' palisade and angled barb wire fencing at the boundary with the allotment site, and also that land should be released from the project to create 20 new large allotment plots, to become part of Alderman Moores.

### **Seed Stories**

'**Forgotten Fruits - a guide to Britain's traditional fruit and vegetables**' by **Christopher Stocks** tells the history of long-cultivated fruit and veg, and the stories behind the names of some varieties and the people associated with them. [Paperback - £8.99 - 9780099514749 (published by Windmill and Guardian Books)] The title is not entirely accurate! It is true that some of the plants are no longer grown - but quite a few are with us and available from the Allotment Stores! For example ...

### **Runner Bean 'Painted Lady'**

This may have been among the first varieties to have been sent from America to Britain - around 1633! Its flowers have both white and scarlet petals, which explains its alternative name, 'York and Lancaster' (after the opposing sides in the wars of the Roses, whose heraldic colours were respectively white and red)

### **Brussels Sprout 'Bedford Fillbasket'**

Sandy soil, the Great Northern Railway and, it is said, gargantuan heaps of virtually free horse-manure from London combined from the 1860's onwards to make Bedfordshire one of the great market gardens of Britain. Brussels sprouts - then still quite a novelty - rapidly became one of the county's major exports. They were often interplanted with potatoes and provided a useful winter income. It has been estimated that by 1926 around 40% of Britain's sprouts were being grown in this county and, though there seems no record of its introduction, Bedford Fillbasket certainly pre-dates 1925, and lives up to its name with a heavy crop of extra-large sprouts which despite their size, stay solid and retain their flavour.

### **Brussels Sprouts 'Evesham Special'**

Second only to Bedford in the sprout-growing stakes, Worcestershire also boasts light soil and direct rail connections to the London markets, but with an added advantage: the sheltered microclimate in the Vale of Evesham, giving its market gardeners the chance of earlier cropping. This variety was first listed in a nursery catalogue in 1926 and was trialed by the RHS 2 years later

### **Cabbage 'January King'**

This pan-European cabbage was introduced from France at some point before 1867, where it was known as Pontoise or chou Milan de l'Hermitage. (In Germany it is known as 'Blaugruner' because of its attractive blue-green leaves)

### **Cabbage 'Wheeler's Imperial'**

George Wheeler set up a nursery in the then small market town of Warminster in 1773, supplying the local town and its surrounding gentry (eg the Marquess of Bath at Longleat) with fruit, vegetables and ornamental plants. In 1819 he passed the business on to his son, George Junior who was interested not only in producing plants for sale, but also in actively breeding new varieties. He introduced many new plants, including the first double fuchsia, but his cabbage seems to have been introduced in the early 1840's and its seed was widely sold both in Britain and overseas.

### **Thanks**

Alison Larkman (AM Plot 227) has been taking surplus veg donated by allotmenters to the Wild Goose café on City Road, St Pauls. This organisation, which is funded only by voluntary contributions, provides meals for homeless people, up to 300 a day! (giving them meals is a way of getting them in contact with people who can directly help them with their underlying problems). The cafe was really grateful for the fresh veg so she wishes to pass on their thanks to everyone who contributed. She will do the same next year when the gluts start, so watch for details of where and when to leave your 2010 surplus, knowing it will go to a very worthwhile cause

### **COURSES**

Organic Vegetable + Fruit Growing with Tutor Tim Foster

1. Windmill Hill City Farm Thursdays 9.30am-12.00 starting 1<sup>st</sup> October 2009 (A comprehensive course on growing organic fruit and vegetables spread over two 10 week courses: first is Fruit and Organic Techniques, second is Vegetables and Pests and diseases.) 2 hours theory per session plus 1 hour practical on the Farm allotments. Cost: (Per 10 week course) £74 plus £5 materials. concessions should be available

2. CREATE centre, Smeaton Rd, 10 week course starting 22<sup>nd</sup> Sept 09 (a beginner's course in organic food growing. Concise and compact) Cost: £80 / £40

3. St. Pauls Family and Learning Centre, Grosvenor Rd., and Ashley Vale allotments Wednesdays 6.30-

8.30pm (Theory) Saturdays 9-11am (Practicals)  
(Everything you need to know about organic food production in allotments and gardens) 20 Wednesday evenings and 12 Saturday mornings starting 6<sup>th</sup> Jan 2010 Cost: £192 / £20 concessions

3. City of Bristol College – Ashley Down site Mondays 9.30am-3.30pm 10 week course starting 18<sup>th</sup> January 2010 (A modular course accredited by City and Guilds in conjunction with Garden Organic. Units include Managing your soil, Designing a sustainable garden, Habitat creation and biodiversity, Vegetable production, Pests and diseases, etc. Each day's work will be assessed by a multiple choice test and there will be practical assessment, too) Cost £182

FFI contact the organisation concerned or Tim Foster (tutor) on 0117 9241282 or [timfoster@wildmail.com](mailto:timfoster@wildmail.com)

City of Bristol College (at Ashley Down Centre + Tyntesfield) are offering the RHS level 2 Certificate in Horticulture 9.30 – 3pm 1 day a week for 35 weeks starting September. FFI see college prospectus or speak to Andy Coombe FED Faculty on 312 5584

University Botanic Gardens  
RHS (Level 2) Certificate in Horticulture  
Weekly morning meetings taking place over three terms. 9.30am to 2.45pm, Wednesdays starting 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2009 – June 2010

(This popular theory based course covers all aspects of horticulture including propagation, pest and disease recognition, plant biology, garden layout and design, ornamental horticulture, fruit and vegetable growing, soil science and general horticultural practice. Plants from the new Botanic Garden will be used in the weekly plant identification exercise. The course requires no prior knowledge). Contact The Courses Administrator, 331 4906 or email via website

### **GOOD GUYS on the allotment**

I always wonder which insects I come across are good guys and which are baddies. When I first started allotmenting I came across ugly grey things which looked evil – but I subsequently discovered they were ladybird larvae - which of course are great aphid eaters and so definitely on the side of the angels. And for some time when digging, I had been squashing some light brown pupae which turn out to be the pupae of ground beetles who are excellent slug fighters. There are lots of books about pests - their lifecycles, how to identify them and control them, but not similar one about the helpful insects. So here, in honour of the ones we want to encourage, are the top useful insects you will come across. For pictures to help you identify 'friends, creatures with some bad habits and enemies' go to [www.dgsgardening.btinternet.co.uk/insects.htm](http://www.dgsgardening.btinternet.co.uk/insects.htm)

**Hoverflies** – the adults are not carnivorous but the larvae are voracious hunters each apparently eating about 900 aphids in its short life, together with scale

insects and young caterpillars. The larvae look like small flattened green maggots.

**Lacewing** – both adult and larvae eat aphids and other soft-bodied insects.

A single **ladybird** larva can eat 100 aphids a day and they will also consume whitefly, potato beetle, bean beetle and mealy bugs, among others

**Tachinid flies** look like bristly versions of the common house fly, but their larvae are parasites on butterfly, moth and sawfly caterpillars and sucking bugs.

**Wasps** collect insect larvae such as caterpillars for food, and also aphids

**Ground beetles** – shiny black or metallic in colour with obvious grooves down the wing-cases – they are voracious predators of slugs and slug eggs. The larvae are light brown/darker brown with bristly heads

**Earwigs** often regarded as pests, actually prey on aphids, codling moth caterpillars and vine weevil eggs. Although they can destroy flowers they do little other damage – if you find an earwig in a cavity in a fruit or tuber, it didn't make the hole – it's just a squatter!

**Centipedes** feed on ground-living and soil-dwelling insects and will also eat slugs and their eggs

This information comes from Natural England information leaflet NE20 'Wildlife on allotments' (to download the whole document go to [www.naturalengland.org.uk](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk) and enter NE20 in the search box at the top right and follow links)

### **SEASONAL RECIPE**

#### **Late summer cucumber soup** (Delia recipe)

400g cucumber  
4 – 5 good size spring onions  
1 medium potato, peeled (100g)  
1 round or cos lettuce  
1 heaped tsp butter  
850ml vegetable stock  
seasoning  
double cream / crème fraiche + snipped chives to serve

1. chop cucumber into chunks (no need to peel), same with the potato. Slice the spring onions (including the green part). Wash lettuce leaves and tear into pieces.
2. Melt the butter, add all the prepared vegetables, stirring them around a bit. Keep heat low, pop on a lid and let them sweat for 10 mins.
3. Pour in the stock, season if necessary and, after a couple of stirs bring it back to a gentle simmer. Put the lid back on and simmer for a further 20 mins.
4. Use a stick blender to puree the soup. Reheat gently and serve in warm soup bowls with some cream swirled into each one and a few chives sprinkled over. Surprisingly tasty.