

# Hotwells and District Allotments Association (HwDAA)

## NEWSLETTER

HwDAA website [www.hwdaa.co.uk](http://www.hwdaa.co.uk)

Issue 2 June 2014



### WELCOME TO YOUR NEWSLETTER!

..In this edition:

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### MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

After the winter rains and gales – and a welcome spell of spring sunshine - I hope your seeds are germinating and your crops flourishing.



**Talks, demonstrations and other events:** during the past four or five years we have arranged a few afternoon and evening events, aimed at helping us become better gardeners. These have proved very popular and we would very much like to plan more events for the coming allotment year, but we need someone to take on the role of co-ordinator/organiser. You don't have to be an expert yourself, just come up with some creative ideas of what might be of interest and who might be the best people to approach. We have already got a few good contacts as a starting point, *so if you think you might be able to help, please contact either me or another committee member.*

We also need ideas and suggestions for the type of event that you think we could arrange, so please get in touch via the Newsletter Editor email:

[newsletter.hwdaa@outlook.com](mailto:newsletter.hwdaa@outlook.com)



**Stores:** I am pleased to report that both sets of Stores are doing really well and takings are up on the same period last year - compost and organic feeds being the biggest sellers. My thanks to Steve Fay, Lesley Woodward, Phil Cass and the team of volunteers for all their hard work stocking and running the Stores. All profits are ploughed back into improvements to our sites, as well as helping to keep plot rents at reasonable levels.



### Proposed Residents Parking Scheme for Bower Ashton

If you have a plot on The Meadows, Kennel Lodge 1 and 2, or Bower Ashton, please be aware that Bristol City Council intends implementing measures to control parking in the immediate area. The proposals are currently out for consultation until 1 July: please see notices on lamp posts or at [www.bristol.gov.uk/trafficorders](http://www.bristol.gov.uk/trafficorders). We discussed the plans at our June committee meeting and will be responding on behalf of the Association.

**Rent discounts for 2014/15:** If you are in receipt of certain benefits, you can apply for a rent discount for 2014/15 direct to Bristol City Council. Late forms will be disallowed without exception (the old excuse that 'it must have got lost in the post' does not work!) and the full rent will have to be paid for the plot concerned. **Please ensure that you are eligible before sending in your form as only the benefits shown on the form will be allowed.** It is a good idea to contact the allotment office a few days after you have posted the form to check that they have received it, as they do not contact tenants to confirm either that they have, or have not, received their application.

**To qualify for a rent reduction please ensure that you get the completed form to the Allotment Office by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> August with evidence of your benefits. The address is: Allotments Office, Brunel House, St Georges Road, Bristol BS1 5UY**

Please note this discount is administered and awarded by the Council Allotment Office. Our allotment association is not involved in any decisions to award discounts or otherwise. However, a successful application for a discount will be shown on your HwDAA invoice for 2014/15. Any queries about rent discount should be addressed to the Council Allotment Office and not the HwDAA.

**The rent discount form can be found at the end of this newsletter.**

### **Important reminders**

- **Plot inspections:** are now underway. If you have a good reason for not being able to tend your plot (e.g. injury or serious illness) or know that you are going to be away for a length of time, it really helps to let your Site Rep know at the earliest opportunity please.
- **Water:** the new water tanks which have been installed on all six of our sites should make things much easier during dry spells, but our water bills are hefty so please do your best to collect rainwater and use this before water from the main supply.  
**Barbecues:** these are exempt from the city-wide bonfire ban which is currently in force, but please have regard for your neighbours before lighting up as not everyone likes the smell of burning meat!

### **Committee meetings: a summary of the main items we have dealt with over the past three months**

- Site-specific issues
- Financial updates from the Treasurer
- Approval of 'structures' (greenhouses, sheds, polytunnels, large fruit cages)
- Plot inspections 2014
- Manure deliveries and how best to manage these
- The state of sheds: revising our repairs and replacement policy
- Capital works programme: progress reports: replacement gates; repairs to the Kennel Lodge walls
- Removal of parking spaces in the lane outside Bower Ashton allotments
- Proposed Residents Parking Scheme for the Bower Ashton area and possible impact on tenants
- Sale of land adjacent to White City

*Our committee meets on the second Thursday of each month. If you have any important matters for possible consideration by the Committee, please contact me.*

**John Holland, Chair: plot 53 White City email: [chair.hwdaa@outlook.com](mailto:chair.hwdaa@outlook.com)**

### **EDITOR'S PICKS AND SEASONAL ADVICE**

Did you know that the peas you may have planted originate in Europe and are one of the oldest known vegetables. Humans have been eating peas for thousands of years and so have mice, birds and slugs! As the saying goes: 'one for the rook, one for the crow, one to rot & one to grow'. Peas produce their own nitrogen in the nodules of their roots. When the peas are done, compost the stems and leave the roots in the ground to release their nitrogen for the next crop.

I frequently ask my neighbour, Harry Phipps at number 64 White City for advice as he has a wealth of experience for a novice like me and he gave me this useful tip: put some potatoes in a big tub of soil in your greenhouse or indoors now and you'll have plenty of new potatoes ready to store for the winter – it's not too late!

## FOCUS ON OUR ALLOTMENT SITES – THE MEADOWS



**L to R Lyndsay Newman site rep, Carolyn Robinson deputy**

The Meadows is situated opposite the Bower Ashton UWE campus and is completely surrounded by a grade II listed stone wall. The wall shelters the site and protects the veggies from unwelcome intruders! The site was originally the paddock for the carriage horses at Ashton Court. Lyndsay discovered that Wilf the son of a shepherd at Ashton Court lives nearby. Wilf told her that after the horses came Jersey cows. The milking parlour buildings are still standing at the front of the site as is Jersey Cottage, in Bower Ashton, built for the dairyman. The site was given over to allotments in the 1960's. The Bower Ashton shop is next door in Park Farm where the tenant farmer used to live.

### **Lacewing made from willow by Heather Jenne Plot 5, The Meadows**



Heather produced this beautiful sculpture after attending a willow course!

## **LATEST NEWS FROM STORES AND SEEDS**

### **Stores Co-ordinator news (contributed by Steve Fay)**

Business is brisk as you would expect at this time of the year, but if you haven't visited either the shop on Alderman Moore's or the smaller satellite at Bower Ashton give it a try. We sell the basics – compost, fertilizers, seeds, poles etc as well as a few useful accessories. We are open at the weekends and mid-week. Exact details are on the website along with location maps.

We have started to sell old and second-hand tools (or at least we do when we have stock) because they are ideal for newcomers, in particular. If you have any old tools lurking in your shed for which you have no use, bring them to the stores. We can then sell them on at a nominal price to some grateful customers.

Finally, if you fancy helping out in the shops you can join our band of Volunteers. Just contact Angie Tonge (Alderman Moore's) ([angietonge@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:angietonge@yahoo.co.uk)) or Lyndsay Newman (Bower Ashton) ([lyndsayn@blueyonder.co.uk](mailto:lyndsayn@blueyonder.co.uk)). You would probably end up doing a monthly stint for about 1 ½ hours. You could freeze in the winter, boil in the summer, but just now – it's about right! (Just kidding you'd love it, I promise).

### **Seed Co-ordinator news (contributed by Lesley Woodward)**

#### **All Quiet on the Seeds/Perishables Front?**

The seed potatoes and onions sets have finally been sold and all goes quiet for a few months on the seed purchasing front. . . but not that quiet. I thought that readers might be interested in what goes on behind the scenes over the summer/ autumn.

June – remove all seed packets with a 2014 expiry date and return them to our supplier, Kings. Later in the month request the Autumn/ Winter planting lists from Kings and decide on how many and which onions, beans, peas and garlic to buy for planting out late 2014/ early 2015. These orders must be in by early August.

July – about the middle of the month it is time to order our seed potato catalogue from our supplier and start thinking about our 2015 potato order .

August – make sure we have ordered the seed catalogue from the National Allotment Society , ready to place our main order for 2015 seed stock. Make sure our potato order is sent in by the end of the month.

End of August/ early September means time to do the seed stock take. Last year I had 3 helpers sorting through every packet, recording which seeds we had + their expiry date. The information takes several hours to gather and the same amount of time to enter on a spreadsheet. The information goes to the Auditors and is also invaluable in helping me analyse what sells well and roughly gauge how many packets I need to buy.

September – the Autumn planting garlic, broad beans and onions arrive on my doorstep in large sacks. These are opened and inspected for quality, then taken off to the stores where they are weighed and bagged and priced up ready to sell.

October – the main 2015 seed order is sent off to Kings. The large boxes of seeds will arrive by early November. The sorting / checking / price labelling is done on my living room floor, fuelled by a glass or two of sherry. It takes hours and hours and hours. Depending on how much sherry I consume.... And then follow some lovely quiet weeks as we slowly sell out of onions and garlic bulbs and packets of broad beans and I plan my own allotment for next year.

..And then in January the sacks of seed potatoes will arrive, the seeds are up on the shelves and off we go again. Happy Growing! (**Editors note:** Phew! I'll remember that when I buy all my stuff at the stores! Do feedback your comments to Lesley when you see her at the stores).

## **HWDAAs FINANCES by Bob Corfield - Treasurer**

*An industrial and provident society is an organisation conducting an industry, business or trade, either as a co-operative or for the benefit of the community, and is registered under the Industrial and Provident Societies Act 1965.*

If you've ever received a letter from us or looked at the website you will see that HwDAA is registered as an industrial and provident society. In fact, we were first registered under a previous piece of similar legislation dating from 1917 so we've been around for a long time. Industrial and provident societies along with other such organisations are collectively known as "mutuals".

### **What does this mean?**

Although our six allotment sites remain the property of Bristol City Council, our Association leases the land on the basis that we run our own affairs. Being a mutual society sets various constraints on how we manage our finances and, as you can see in the definition at the top of this article, we should be run for "the benefit of the community". That community is, of course, you the tenants and indeed any future tenants since we exist within the Bristol community to offer allotment gardens to Bristol Council Tax payers.

This also means that we must plough back any financial profits into the running of the Association – we are not allowed to make a substantial profit of any kind. This fact is monitored by the Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) when I submit our annual returns to them in January each year.

### **How are we financed?**

There are really only two revenue streams into the Association: 1. Plot Rent and 2. Stores. These incomes are closely related since the more we have of 2 the less we need to increase 1.

Plot Rents. We collect plot rents (which includes a one off-charge for a shed, or shared shed, and a subscription to the National Allotment Society) whenever a new tenant joins the Association on a pro-rata basis. From then on, invoices are issued to every tenant at the end of September each year. The current charges have been maintained at the present level for the past four years. Each year the committee carefully considers the level of rents and then decides the maximum increase we might charge for the following financial year. These figures are then announced at the AGM in January and notice given in our Newsletter. Then, just before the start of the new financial year (1<sup>st</sup> October) the committee decides whether to increase rents up to this maximum figure, or less, or no increase in the coming financial period. This may seem unduly complicated, but it is widely-accepted practice and in line with FCA standards.

Stores income. All I can say here is please use our stores at Alderman Moore's and Bower Ashton since the income helps us to keep rent charges down.

### **What are our main outgoings?**

Improvements to infrastructure have been our highest expenditure over the past few years. This is money spent on security, including fencing, gates, locks etc. Our main expenditure over the last couple of years has been on improvements to water supplies and hauling ways. Prior to this was the construction of Alderman Moore's stores building, albeit with a lot of self help. Future expenses must include repairs to various walls, in particular those surrounding the two Kennel Lodge sites and The Meadows, which are listed as being of historic interest (formerly the kitchen gardens of the Ashton Court estate). This means that any repairs to structures have to be done to the required standard. Our water charges are also large and

this is another major expense. The supply is metered so we keep a careful check on the costs in this area but all tenants can help to keep costs down by storing rainwater from shed roofs etc.

There are two funds within our financial structure which remain ring-fenced. This means they have to be used for the reasons they were collected in the first place. These are our Shed Fund and the National Allotment Society (NAS) subscription. As mentioned above, we charge a one-off payment of £15.00 or £30 for either a shared or whole shed respectively. These charges are paid into the Shed Fund and we use this money to repair and replace sheds. The money collected for the NAS is paid yearly to that organisation and is based on the number of tenants registered. The benefits of this are that the National Allotment Society is the leading national organisation upholding the interests and rights of the allotment community across the UK. They work with government at national and local levels, other organisations and landlords to provide, promote and preserve allotments for all. They offer support, guidance and advice to their members and those with an interest in allotment gardening.

### **Conclusion and an appeal**

This has been a brief summary of how our finances work and I hope you have found it informative. As you can see we are entirely self-supporting; we have no income from any other organisation except very occasionally from the Council when they may have some monies to share out among the various allotment associations in Bristol, raised from the sale of disused allotment land.

Before I close I would like to appeal to you the tenant to pay your rent on time please. The invoices (over 500) are sent out in September each year and by the end of October, a number of tenants have not paid. Indeed some have still not paid by mid November. For me as Treasurer this means a lot of extra time spent over my computer and spreadsheets as well as phone calls and sending emails and also a loss of interest income. So, if you can, **please pay your rent by the second week in October** and it will make my task a little easier.

Thank you. Bob Corfield, Treasurer

### **UPCOMING EVENTS**

- The 2014 **Festival of Nature** is taking place in and around Bristol until 27<sup>th</sup> July. You can choose from bug hunting and watching peregrines that live in the Avon Gorge to tree, wildflower and butterfly walks. Information at: [festivalofnature.org](http://festivalofnature.org) or contact the organisers: **Bristol Natural History Consortium on 0117 317 8751**
- The **HighWaterLine** is a project to “draw” a 32 mile chalk line around Bristol’s possible flood limits which run through a number of our sites especially Alderman Moore’s. Phil Cass will be taking part and will be drawing the line at Alderman Moore’s on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> July. If you are interested in flooding and its impact and want to join in please contact **Phil Cass (contact details below)**. **More information at: [http:// invisible-dust.com/project/highwaterline-bristol-eve-mosher/](http://invisible-dust.com/project/highwaterline-bristol-eve-mosher/)**

### **SEASONAL RECIPE IDEA**

#### **Summer pudding recipe**

When there is an abundance of summer berry fruits one of the best ways of serving them is in a summer pudding. A summer pudding recipe is quick, easy and so delicious; all the tastes of summer in one dish! Soft summer fruits suitable for summer pudding must have a rich, strong, colour and flavour. Great berries to use\* include raspberries, strawberries, red and blackcurrants, damsons and blackberries.

## Ingredients:

2 tablespoons water

5oz (150g) sugar

1lb (480g) washed, mixed summer fruits as available\*

5oz (150g) thin sliced white bread, crusts removed

Whipped cream or custard

## Method:

- Stir the water and sugar together and bring to a gentle boil. Add the berries and fruits and stew very gently until softened but still retain their shape. Put to one side to cool.
- Line a 1½ pint (700 ml) bowl with the bread slices ensuring there are no gaps. Fill with the stewed fruits and cover the top with more bread slices. Make sure to not add too much of the juices from the fruits. Too much and the bread will lose its shape. There must be enough to soak into the bread though.
- Place a saucer with a weight on top (a can of tomatoes or beans is ideal) and leave overnight in a cool place.
- The next day, before serving, turn the pudding out onto a plate and serve with the whipped cream or custard sauce.

## COMMITTEE MEMBERS

President	David Thornley	0117 330 0246
Chair	John Holland	0117 987 2238
Secretary	Angie Tonge	0117 902 0948
Treasurer and Webmaster	Bob Corfield	0117 907 8420
Plots' Secretary	Peter Tucker	0771 2848 431
Newsletter Editor	Stephanie Beaven	0117 966 9748
Stores Co-ordinator	Steve Fay	0117 921 4280
Maintenance Manager	Phil Cass	07811 623 136
<b>SITE REPS</b>		
Alderman Moore's	Phil Cass	07811 623 136
Bower Ashton	Roy Davis	0117 963 2102
Kennel Lodge 1	Bob Corfield	0117 907 8420
Kennel Lodge 2	Terry Hoskins	0117 923 1309
The Meadows	Lyndsay Newman	0117 966 8745
White City	John Lansdall	07855 477 369

***If you have not already done so please let Bob Corfield have your email address – it keeps our costs down***

If you want to feedback about the newsletter or offer your contributions do please contact me at:  
[newsletter.hwdaa@outlook.com](mailto:newsletter.hwdaa@outlook.com) Stephanie Beaven, HwDAA Newsletter Editor, Plot 65 White City

## TENANTS MUST APPLY BETWEEN JUNE AND MID AUGUST

**Return to** – Allotment Section, Bristol City Council, Environment & Leisure, Brunel House, St Georges Road, Bristol BS1 5UY

### ALLOTMENT RENT REDUCTION APPLICATION FORM

Plot no: \_\_\_\_\_ Site Name:–

Tenant Name (Please PRINT):–

Home Address:

I wish to apply for a rent allowance on the above plot on the following basis. (Please tick condition/s claimed, maximum total discount 50% on up to 3 plots).

Basis for claim	% Discount Allowable	(tick all applicable)
Income Based J.S.A	50%	
Housing Benefit	50%	
Council Tax Reduction	50%	
ESA/Income Support	50%	
Pension Credit Guarantee	50%	

**I enclose the documentation to support my claim.** (This documentation can be a photocopy of a page from a benefits book or a recent letter, but it must show the type of benefits that you receive and include your name and address). I will undertake to notify you immediately should my circumstances change.

**I understand that this claim applies to the current invoice year only.**

I declare that this information is correct.

Signed ..... Date .....

**Please note that tenants cannot qualify for a reduction purely on the basis of being a pensioner. Due to the large volume of applications we do not confirm applications unless the discount has been refused.**