

Allotments Newsletter



The Big Bug Hunt

The torment of a gardeners life without doubt are bugs and slugs destroying our hard worked for produce.

After weeks of care, having your harvest destroyed by a sudden influx of pests can be extremely disheartening. The problem is that most pest control methods available to gardeners rely on prevention - knowing when the pests are likely to strike, so action can be taken before it's too late!

I thought I should make you aware, if you are not already, of an exciting project being run by the University of York that you could be involved in and benefit from!

As gardeners ourselves, we know just how useful it would be to receive alerts about which pests are heading our way. Many organic control methods need to be put in place before the pests strike - it's often too late to save a crop once the bad bugs have arrived.

Big Agriculture already has proprietary systems for pests on crops such as corn, soy and wheat. So, why shouldn't gardeners have access to state-of-the-art warning systems too?

The Big Bug Hunt is possibly the largest citizen science project of its kind, ever! Working with leading gardening companies and publications around the world, they are reaching out to millions of gardeners, asking them to let them know when and where they spotted a bug. They are tracking everything, including beneficial insects, and **they will be making the results available to you as the data is analysed.**

Reporting your pest sightings couldn't be easier. Just go online and go to:

<http://bigbughunt.com/index.htm?report>

to enter the details of any pests you have seen in your allotment or garden. Plus, soon there will be a handy app available to make reporting even easier while out in the garden.

I will update you as I find out more!



Live in each season as it passes: breathe the air, drink the drink, taste the fruit.

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Special points of interest:

- Bug Hunt
- Plot holder Recipes
- Shows and Meetings
- Jobs For July
- Site Rep reports



The Countryside—Anton Phelvin

Deep into the wood where
the Bluebells grow

Next to them the wild garlic
will show
An old oak creeks with a cen-
tury of age
With brand new shoots and
the sun they crave

A crystal clear brook where
the Sticklebacks nest
Flows into a stream where the
bull rushes rest

The Swifts swoop down like
dive bombing planes
In a field of mown hay set in
country lanes

In the distance a Wood Pi-
geon coos
And the rest of the birds also
voice their views

Beneath this sun filled clear
blue sky
Hear the distinctive sound of
a Pheasant cry

As dusk sets in with moon
rising higher
far away glows a farmers pyre

Soon to come the majestic
Bat
Skilfully collecting Moth and
Gnat

These are the delights that the
countryside brings

Peaceful bliss as the Nightjar
sings



Park Road Rep Report—Keith Petty

Park road allotments held its annual Big Lunch Barbeque on the 3rd June something we have been doing now for about eight years.

The big lunch is a project run by the Eden project and sponsored by the National lottery

A Big Lunch can be anything from a small gathering in a garden, park or driveway, to a larger party with trestle tables down the middle of your street. The official Big Lunch date isn't practical for every community, so you can run one at any time you fancy.

Why host a Big Lunch? The idea is that by starting simple, all sorts of friendships, ideas and projects can come out of a Big Lunch.

It gets people together and talking — and with a few inspired folk, it can lead to people doing more within their community, and tackling the issues that matter to them most.

About Forty people attended throughout the afternoon some did not eat but came along to socialise and have a chat.

The weather for once was good to us and we did not have to see how many people can shelter under a gazebo to shelter from the rain which we have done in previous years!



All Sites Water & Council Inspection Update

— Ian Palmer

Water

As you may be aware, we need to upgrade many of the water tanks in order to be compliant with the water boards current regulations.

Currently we have 2 sites signed off by the water board as meeting their requirements.

Other sites will simply see their tanks being modified and some sites will experience major changes to meet with the water board inspector's requirements.

This work is expensive in parts and time consuming in

labour. Plot holders will need to remember that occasionally changes will need to be made that will be inconvenient. Please bear with us while we try to complete this work.

Council site visits

All sites have now been visited by the Asset Manager as part of the Council's process to develop a long term agreement for the management of all 8 Brentwood sites.

These visits have gone well with the Council Officers having a better appreciation for the amount of work required to both cultivate and manage the sites.

The Council officers are expected to produce both a report and a proposal for the future management strategy of all sites that will go to the appropriate Council Committee in September.

We will keep you advised on further progress via the newsletter.



July Jobs (With thanks to Gardeners World)

July is a month for reaping the rewards of your labours – lots of crops, such as runner beans, potatoes and raspberries are ready to harvest. But it is also a time for planning ahead – now is the time to sow winter crops, including potatoes for Christmas.

The weather in July can be fickle. If there's a drought, you'll need to prioritise which crops to water, and if it's damp, you'll need to watch out for blight.

Here are some jobs you can be getting on with on the allotment in July.

Harvest

First early and second early potatoes should be ready to dig up this month – they don't store well, so enjoy them straightaway.

Globe artichokes and climbing beans will be ready to pick this month. Harvest garlic and onions when their tops have gone yellow and leave them to ripen in a dry, sunny spot. Strawberries and raspberries can be enjoyed this month, too – if birds are a problem, cover them with

netting. (The fruit not the birds!)

of cordon tomatoes – this will encourage the plants to put their energies into producing flowers, and therefore fruits.



Sowing and Planting

Now is the time to sow veg to harvest during the winter months, including kale, winter cabbage, spinach and radicchio.



It's a good time to sow carrots to avoid carrot fly, as well as continuing with radishes, beetroot, lettuce and runner beans. If you fancy growing potatoes for Christmas, now is the time to plant some.

Pinch out the sideshoots

Remove the growing tip once four flower trusses have formed.

General

In very hot weather, it pays to prioritise certain plants. Water flowering and fruiting tomatoes and cucumbers every day or two. Be generous with water on leafy crops such as lettuce, rocket, chard, coriander and spinach which are prone to bolting if they dry out.



Water strawberries, courgettes and runner beans frequently, along with veg that prefers cool conditions, such as cauliflower and cabbage. Also prioritise crops growing in pots.

Please pass your tips on to:

stevenmshepherd@gmx.com

Or Call me on 07990 593906

Birthday Celebrations!

Wishing Keith Petty a happy 70th Birthday for the 30th June!

I think most of you know Keith, he celebrated his 70th birthday in the sunshine with his family and friend's at the communal area on the Park Road allotment with a tasty

barbeque.

I recently discovered that Keith has been working his plots at Park Road now for over 40 years—That might explain the glorious Dahlias and other produce!

I think I have a way to go being at the start of my second year!



Hutton Trading Shed Reminder

Have you got your membership card for the Hutton Trading Shed yet?

As a plot holder and member of the Brentwood Horticultural Society you are entitled to a membership card allowing you to use the Hutton Trading Hut.

To obtain a card speak to your site representative who will be able to issue you with one.

They are free!



Some of the bargains and useful products for July are:

MiracleGro Soluble Feeds

all at £4.00 each
All Purpose Plant Food 1kg
Lawn Food 1kg
Ericaceous Plant Food 1kg

Kings Seeds all at the half packet price

Slug and Snail Control:

All manufacturers will be reducing the size of Mini Slug pellets to 350g.

For the **Organic Gardener** they have the following new stock of slug control

Vitax Slug Gone 1kg £2.15

The minute fibres are an irritant to slugs and the mat also absorbs moisture from the slugs foot. Contains naturally occurring slow release nutrients. Helps protect against cabbage root fly.

SMB Solabiol Ferric Phosphate Slug Killer 350g £3.70

Fast acting slugs stop feeding after consumption. Ideal for use when growing fruit and vegetables.

Breaks down naturally into iron and phosphate to enrich the soil around plants. Treats 70sqm

You will find lots of other good priced products and friendly faces to chat with!

Society Rules and Regulations Explanation Neil Hornsby - Vice Chairman BHS

The glory of gardening: hands in the dirt, head in the sun, heart with nature. To nurture a garden is to feed not just on the body, but the soul.

– Alfred Austin

By now all members of the Society will have received the Rules and Regulations which also contain details of the Non-Cultivation Procedure.

The list of 23 Rules are a good cure for insomnia but they are there to make sure that everyone pulls together and works to the same standards, which is particularly important since as plot holders we are only tenants on the Council's land.

I've picked three Rules to look at in greater detail; more to follow in future months. Rule 2. It is important that the Council can see that the land they are leasing to us is actually being used and is therefore *required* for the cultivation of flowers and vegetables. The "75% Rule" which has been in place previously, but not strictly enforced, will be enforced this year. If you are only in your first year on the plot, the percentage under

cultivation is reduced to 50%. Similarly, if you have been unable to cultivate because of illness, absence abroad, or similar, this will be taken account of. But you should have notified your site rep so that they can give you ideas to help you keep on top of the plot. Inspections will take place any time now. Always remember that there is a waiting list!

Rule 13. Neat paths either through the middle, or along the edges, of the allotment site, and between allotments, really do give good vibes about the site. During recent visits, the Council have been impressed by and remarked on neatly maintained "public areas".

Rule 20. Hosepipes are banned from being connected to the public water supply. If they are seen on site by a water company representative, they could bring penalties to

bear such as the site being disconnected from the water supply. Hosepipes may only be used for syphoning water from water butts not connected to the mains supply. For the good of all of us, please keep them out of sight.

And finally for now, please remember that it is the plot holder's responsibility to keep minors under control. That means them not being allowed to go on to other plots, not being allowed to put things into the water butts and generally not to cause a nuisance. There is no specific Rule at the moment, but it will come!

If you have any queries about the Rules and Regulations, please send it to the Membership Secretary with your details (membershipsec.brentwoodhs@gmail.com) and it will be forwarded to myself. I will respond.

Brentwood Horticultural Society

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY CONTACT

*Membership Secretary, PO Box 12582 Brentwood CM14 9QR
Email: membershipsec.brentwoodhs@gmail.com*

If you are enjoying your allotment why not let others know about the benefits?

Brentwood Horticultural Society manages eight allotment sites within Brentwood on behalf of Brentwood Council.

The sites are Hartswood, Park Road, Ongar Road,

Bishops Hall, Honeypot Lane, River Road, Middle Road, and Crescent Road.

During the year a few allotments become available. So, if you know someone who would enjoy outdoor exercise, fresh produce and good company give them the details of our membership secretary.

/ www.brentwoodhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

NEWSLETTER CONTACT

If you have any information you would like published or any gardening tips you would like to share or would like to ask any questions about allotments or gardening please contact me by email or mobile phone on:

Mobile: 07990 593906

Email: stevenmshepherd@gmx.com

Don't be shy! I look forward to hearing from you.

Get Digging!

Ongar Road Site Rep Report Ann Matthews

You may recall photos of the Ongar Road working party early this year clearing three plots ready for re-letting!

We are delighted that all three have been re-let and all plots are looking great!

In total we have seven new plot holders this year and they are all getting stuck in!

There is a great buzz on the site as we gather round the water taps in the evening to fill up the cans to water the ever demanding crops!

Thanks must go to Ian Palmer and Stephen Fretten for the

new taps which many plot holders are appreciative of!

Ann & Jackie



Recipe No. 11

Crunchy Courgette Pickle



Try this fresh, sharp pickle with cold poached salmon, burgers off the barbecue or just buttered bread.

Makes 1 litre

Ingredients

500g Courgettes
3 Shallots
2 teaspoons of salt
For the pickling Liquid
500ml Cider Vinegar
140g Golden Caster Sugar
1 Teaspoon of Mustard Powder
1 Teaspoon Mustard seeds
Half Dried Chilli Crumbled
1 teaspoon Ground Turmeric

Method

Melt the butter in a large pan, slice and add onion

Thinly slice the courgettes using a sharp knife, mandolin or slicing blade on a food processor.

Put in a bowl with the shallots and sprinkle over the salt. Cover with ice-cold water, stir to dissolve the salt and leave for 1 hr.

Drain the courgettes thoroughly and pat dry using kitchen paper or tea towels. If they stay too wet, the water will dilute the pickling solution.

Meanwhile, put the pickling ingredients into a pan and bring to a simmer.

Bubble for 3 mins, making sure the sugar has dissolved, then leave to cool until warm but not hot. Add the courgettes and stir.

Scoop the mixture into 2 x 500ml sterilised jars
Seal and leave for a few days in the fridge.

Kept chilled, these will keep for a couple of months.

Recipe No. 12 Courgette & Mushroom Bread



Great accompaniment to soups and salads or just served with butter.

Serves 6

Ingredients:

2 medium Courgettes
2 teaspoons salt
2 teaspoons olive oil
1 small onion finely chopped
2 garlic cloves crushed
100g Chestnut mushrooms
350g strong plain flour
7g easy blend yeast
2 teaspoons chopped fresh basil
Half teaspoon sea salt to sprinkle

Method

Put the grated courgettes in a colander and sprinkle with 1 tsp of the salt.

Leave to stand for 20 mins, then, using your hands, squeeze out as much of the moisture as possible. Rinse the courgettes thoroughly, then squeeze again.

Heat 1 tbsp of the olive oil in a frying pan and cook the onion and garlic for 4 mins until softened. Add the mushrooms and cook for a further 4 mins until softened and browned, then add the courgettes and cook for another 2 mins. Strain well and set aside to cool; discard the liquid.

Heat oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7.

Place the flour in a large mixing bowl, stir in the yeast, the remaining oil and salt, the basil and the courgette mixture. Mix well to combine.

Make a well in the centre and add 125ml hand-hot water.

Mix well to form a slight-

ly sticky dough. Knead on a floured surface for about 10 mins, then shape into a ball and place on a greased baking sheet.

Flatten the ball of dough very slightly with the palm of your hand and loosely cover with oiled cling film. Leave to rise in a warm place for 25-30 mins until doubled in size.

Brush the top of the dough with a little water, then sprinkle with the sea salt and bake for 40 mins until golden.

Leave to cool on a wire rack before serving.