

**Next working party
is Sunday Nov 1st at**

10.30 til 12.30. We meet at the shed as usual. Please bring spades, forks, rakes and wheelbarrows... and loppers if you have them. Current jobs are

- tumping and bonfire on the island (if the weather is ok)



This is the October tumping party and here is patsy with a tump.



More photos will be on the web site shortly.

- moving some black plastic

- clearing of neglected plots that have been reclaimed by the audit.

There is a St Clare's Working Party organised for 15 November. Thanks are due to Caroline Crook for helping with this. We start at 10.30 and go through til about 2.30/3ish with a break for lunch.

There is no December working Party as the committee have a holiday til the beginning of January. So if you have requests please let us know before the next committee meeting in November. Dates are always on the web site and notice board.

Intruders

Sadly both notices had notices removed by intruders who clearly used them to light a bonfire on the island. These are not allowed other than in supervised working parties. They appear to have scaled the fence with the aid of cleaning cloths but hopefully still got covered in grease as it not easy to climb in. The most determined can always get in so we must live with it and know that at least it is not easy. They also used the wood from insect log piles on the island which we had carefully preserved. Please keep an eye as you wander the site and let us know if you see anything suspicious and use the local telephone number. All this is on the web site.

A few members also reported finding the gate open and other members going through and leaving it on the grounds others were probably coming back. All members must lock the gates at all times so that we do our best to help each other and keep the site secure.

Allotment competition

Cripley Meadow did very well in the city allotment competition. I have the overall marks if anyone would like to have their score... but not the breakdown. The judges feedback in general was great this year and they clarified how you now get points for number and variety of crops and that many people lost out as they did not have compost bins on their plots.

Cripley Meadow came second in the Alderman Knight Award for best site. We did well in our environmental management of site composting and, recycling facilities, our reclamation and management of plots and notice boards and fences. We lost in sections on maintenance of headlands, weeds (we did well in the first judging but not so well in the September one), lack of plot numbers and rubbish on plots. We were delighted to have done so well and Aja collected our prize for the committee. She was moving fast.



Not many sites entered this year so we were possibly lucky but very proud as some good sites were in competition. Well done everyone!

In the individual competition Reneth Mackenzie on Plot 46a was awarded a certificate in the newcomer section.



There were only 3 awarded across the city so she did very well. John Sivell on Plot 46 was second in the over 70 class of the Challenge Trophy. I won the Challenge Shield for the best plot. I was 'chuffed' as the newspaper reported. http://www.oxfordtimes.co.uk/news/4710493.City_allotment_prizes_handed_out/ The allotment evening in the Town Hall was well attended and we had good feedback from the judges and Councillor Bob Timbs who awarded the prizes.

The September Audit

released a few plots but thanks are due to everyone for their cooperation with this. The greater level of vegetable, fruit and flower cultivation is very obvious across the site making underused plots much more evident. Some are still in the process of reclamation but obviously we must all use the plots we are lucky to have as others are waiting to have some growing space.

Badger and Muntjak

We are trying to interest the university in a research project exploring the environmental benefits and conflict of local food and animal diets!

Ink caps on The Green



There is a little clump of these this year and a few more types as yet to be identified on the Island.

Cripley Island Orchard

John has done the first of the fruit tree orders for February planting (weather permitting). These are the trees he has ordered to date

Blenheim Orange -
Cambridge Queening -
Deddington Pippin -
Eynsham Challenger -
Holbrooke -
Jennifer Wastie - Lord Lambourn - Nuneham Courtney - North Aston - Oxford Oarsman - Oxford beauty - Oxford conquest - Peggys Pride - Wytham Old Tree - Yarlington Mills - Aynho Scarlet. Unfortunately "Hens Turd" has sold out so we are getting another good cider apple "Captains Kernel". We are also getting three trees from Iffley Marsh. These are grafted from really old trees growing in very wet conditions. Varieties unknown but Andy (MSOG and our supplier) says they would have been esteemed ones at the time as they were part of a planned orchard.

Wonderful names! As I reported before Jamie Forbes built the new Island notice board and John Langsbury has now painted itbeautifully as ever. It still needs a roof and pin board but new notices and photos will appear when I have a moment. Parks have tended to the broken branch and stated removing the trees from Castle Mill Stream but not yet finished.



We have benefitted from the wood chip.



Please share this resource.

More leaf litter should be landing on Waste Plot 109 over the winter as Arcadian Living will be using this for collected leaves. They will continue to use for small branch trimmings etc.

The warm weather has continued and given a few extra weeks yet again of cultivation before the frosts knock back more. Do check the web site for some ideas of 'what to do now'!

I have been a bit distracted of late as have finally moved. I am still unpacking so will not be at this working party but John will be organising as usual. When I unpack my brain I will let you know ... apologies for any errors.

Good gardening to you all
Wendy