

Cripley Meadow Allotments Newsletter October 2011

Oxford University –
Castle Mill- Exhibition
Castle Mill Common Room Roger Dudman
Way,
25th October
4.00pm until 7.30pm.

I am writing to you on behalf of the University of Oxford in connection with a proposal to continue the development of the Castle Mill site for student accommodation.

Planning permission was granted for the site in 2000 and Phase 1 of the scheme was implemented in 2004 and is now occupied. This means that the planning permission remains valid and the remaining Phase of development could be implemented at any time.

The University has considered most carefully its options for developing the site and has concluded that it would be sensible to seek a **fresh planning permission** for the remaining phase of development. This would enable the scheme to be more energy efficient and sustainable and would provide the opportunity to build additional units of accommodation through a re-design of the scheme.

We have now completed the design works and are preparing to submit a planning application, before doing so however, we are holding an exhibition to illustrate the proposals and to listen to comments and answer any queries.

We would be pleased if you would bring this to the attention of your Members and invite them to attend the exhibition.

Terry Gashe
Consultant
Development Planning and Design Services Ltd

One week after this meeting OU plan to put in a formal planning application so we still have a chance to influence what is submitted. Please remember OU have moved a badger sett and will install a badger corridor and badger proof our fence. Do come along and let us know what you think. Members of the committee will be there.

Reclamation of the South Field



The digger has been in to remove the rubbish pile and put in a new path. Thanks to Tony for organising and supervising this. We plan to move the fence next with our new Lottery

money and complete the tree pollarding to allow light to the new plots. These willows are cracking. With this management they will last for hundreds of years as a home for wild life without taking out use of the land around them.



Some of you contacted me about the inaccurate letter from Mike Hamblett in the OT some weeks ago. Sadly Mr Hamblett is clearly not a supporter of allotments and local food or of asking those concerned? As was shown when he protested on the island he can get his facts wrong. We did not reply as it attracted neither support nor comment. We are **not** evicting a sett nor using one way gates. We have, yet again, worked with Natural England, as is required by law, to protect the sett which was pushed onto our ground by previous building.

Cripley Meadow has been flood plain for centuries so would never accommodate setts. The raised embankment was badger territory. There is a sett on our land by our boundary which was raised c.2003, probably unknowingly, and without our knowledge, by building work. We an electric fence our new south field. be moved as the reallocated. Our palisade will still badger sett on the access to related Castle Mill and



under the railway and in the car park via a corridor on Castle Mill ground. This was part of the Natural England requirements for OU closing the sett on Castle Mill. If all goes to plan this will allow travel between the related setts but **not through our allotments**. We left about an acre of trees and scrub (of designated allotment land!) for the badgers at the side and behind the south field. We discovered the hard way that we cannot accommodate badgers on site and sustain growing local food. A hard lesson for all.

October working party

was Sunday 9 October 10.30 to 12.30. A group from St Clare's joined us from 10 til 2. We cleared the old fence line of Plot 93 taking out metal poles and corrugated iron. We also cleared the fence by the central car park area. We strimmed some communal areas and made a start on picking up rubbish from the reclaimed ground. Thanks to the 20+ helpers. I had some lovely photos of all the hard work but managed to delete them whilst processing for the web site! A shame as some inventive lever work applied in getting out long poles and buried fences.

Lunch on the Green

About 50 members celebrated our long standing association, our Lottery award and the allotment season. The vegeburgers, burgers, chicken and sausages all



disappeared rapidly as did the mixed green salads, warm and cold potato salads, spicy apple cake, local cheeses, and delicious crackers with pear and rocket. Delicious pears and apples, cooked Quince and crumble meant we and



the band were all well fed. Thanks to Jamie and Michelle for supplying the BBQ, doing the shopping and cooking, Jeremy, Rodney, Wendy and John for erecting the pergolas and bunting. There was great music from 'Horns of Plenty and we gave them a small donation and hope they will join us again next year to help eat up our lovely grub.



We also awarded the prizes for new numbers. Hannah sent her apologies from plot 90, but we were happy to award a prize to plot 43/44a winners Frederick, Edie and Beatrice.

The 2nd Audit

Took place on October 2: The site looked wonderful and we will be contacting members where there are new or ongoing problems. Apologies for the delay in processing but committee time is limited. In spite of the numbers involved in such a large site we continue to go to great lengths to be as fair as possible to all and subsequently there is a much greater level of productivity in vegetables, fruits and flowers. Please make sure you take action on any reminders so that we can all continue to work together in accordance with our agreed rules and advice.

A member asks...

Could you remind everyone not to play radios/stereos and not to have endless mobile phone chats when on plots. We have a rule about no radios and not disturbing neighbours so please be considerate.

Competition Awards Evening In the Town Hall

OCC and ODFAA Allotment Competition Celebration of Awards and Certificates Evening took place in the Town Hall on Thursday October 13th at 7pm. The judges John Alcock and Mike Kent were there and Councillor Mark

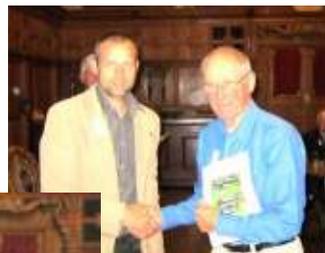
Lygo, the councillor with responsibility for allotments, presented the prizes and certificates.

Congratulations to everyone who entered. It was a good evening with about 100 allotment members present from across the city. The competition is about supporting, promoting and rewarding good practice in growing a



variety of fruit and vegetables.

John Sivell came third in the Over 70s category



Gabi Topliss came second in the Challenge Trophy for the best plot.



Gabi only entered on the day as the judges went round so did no special preparation.... it was just her normal good gardening practice that was recognised. Congratulations to them both. Like many others on Cripsey Meadow they have plots that are wonderfully productive with a great variety of healthy produce available through the year.

Next Working Party is Sunday 13th November

10.30 to 12.30. By then the fence should be moved and we will be picking up remaining rubbish and marking out new plots.

Cripsey Island Orchard

We also need to make sure the island is ready for winter. In spite of challenging weather since we put in the last big tranche of apple trees (in February) we have not lost any trees thanks to the hard work of John then Jeremy and members who have mulched and weeded... but never watered! When it is dry sitting on a bed of water is a positive advantage as long as you do not water and promote surface rooting. plants will survive and be stronger.

The season

There was an early frost during the last week which seems to have finished off the courgettes and outdoor tomatoes. Everyone seems to have reported a really good season with huge potato and onion crops in spite of the dry start and a mixed fruit season. Great apples pears and plums but grapes got hit by an early frost. Please do use the new member's board if you have any tips or recipes or additional produce to pass on. If the latter please remove if it does not go in a week so we not have a rotting pile.

Do remember Jobs for now are on our web site

<http://www.cripseymeadow.org.uk/gardenersyear.htm>

Rats

Are still a problem! Please see Richard if you wish to borrow an association rat trap as we want to try to reduce them without the use of poison boxes. We know some members use this on their own plots and follow safety precautions but it is expensive and proving not very long lasting. Richard will advise you how to use the trap safely and no doubt pass on his peanut butter tip!