

Cripley Meadow Allotment September 2015 Newsletter

Next Working party is

Sunday 13th September 10.30 to 12.30

As usual meet at the shed. Please make sure you wear suitable clothing and footwear for strenuous work. Jobs to do include yet more clearing of plots. Do come and join us to learn more about the site and meet and work alongside other members.

The shredder will be in use so please bring any suitable material if you wish to take the shreadings away for your compost bin.

Orchard Fruit. We will also be looking to see if there is fruit ready so if you want a share come along and help. Members should not pick fruit outside of working parties or picking days ...unless it is a windfall or the odd one as you pass.

Despite the very slow start this year things have caught up. The trees on Cripley Island Orchard trees are true survivors but have struggled with the last 4 years of strange weather. There is little fruit here but some on the new orchard... thanks in part to Wendy, Killian and Emilie who watered during the dry spells. If ripe we will do some picking and sharing.

Trading shop is open again

Following the August break, the Trading shed is open again on Sunday mornings. Our regular hours are 11 - 12 noon, but on Working Party days it's 12 - 1pm. Email Sarah for a one-off sale if you can't do Sunday mornings - sarahjehome@aol.com.



Jeremy's birthday

Jeremy's celebrated his birthday with a splendid pizza night (dough and toppings to make your own) cooked in Tom's magnificent pizza oven. Fantastic .

There was also a an OU newcomers celebration on Plot 50. Picture to

follow

Bonfire This is now being used by some members as a weed pile! The committee really cannot manage others weeds and are a bit amazed as to what they expect the committee

(all volunteers remember) to do. It takes over an hour to



produce a bag full of shreadings. This work was simply to try to reduce the pile as it is



The pile is now far too large for us ever to light so we have had to make a smaller area for burning. Now we can only burn with the wind away from the flats we are limited in this and managing it and with weed clumps it will be far too smoky. You must manage your own weeds. The pit on 66 can be used for some excesses.

Audit. Thanks for all your positive responses and actions. The audit is a big commitment of time for the committee but now largely well understood as being the way we keep the site within our lease and rules ...and most importantly fair for all. A couple of the replies to serious plot audits leave us puzzled as to the amount of work expected of the committee. Thankfully it is a rarity. The next audit is in October (date to follow) so if you had a reminder of something to do please follow up so the reminder does not escalate.

Reminders

Parking on site. Please let us know if this is your car so that we can find out what is the problem. Parking is only allowed when members are present and never overnight.



Headlands and fruit

Please remember that blackberries and other fruit on plots and headlands belongs to the member ...whether fenced on not.

Potatoes

Many potatoes are now being harvested and it is now past the usual time for this problem but you can sign up to blight warnings in this area by going to <http://blight.potato.org.uk/signup.html>

Additional crops

You can share extra crops by putting them by the member's board

Woodchip

We are still living in hope!

Our mowers were here this week and the site



is looking trim and very bountiful. It is the **second competition judging on Sunday**. The site is entered as

usual and the site prize is now increased to £150, 100 and £50 for 1/2/3 places.

Generally we enter to ensure that the benefits of allotments stay in the eye of the council but these are significant sums and could contribute to the site. Please manage any headlands next to site paths. If the mowers have to sway out it means your headland needs chopping back. In some places the path is narrow but generally the headland can be cultivated and extend a little but should not limit the access nor have perennial weed. You are responsible for the area between the mowing and the end of your plot and for keeping fences managed.. that means the outside too.

Castle Mill

The Environmental Statement Addendum has been submitted by the University of Oxford and was registered on Wednesday 2 September by Oxford City Council.

Following consultation of the voluntary environmental statement from the University of Oxford, registered on 29 October 2014, the ES Addendum was requested by Oxford City Council for the University of Oxford to provide further information concerning the environmental effects of the Castle Mill's development.

The ES and ES Addendum are submitted voluntarily to replicate the requirements of the Town and Country Planning (Environmental

Impact Assessment (EIA)) Regulations 2011 as far as possible, given that the planning permission has already been granted, the site has been developed in full, and the assessment is retrospective.

I attach to the email a PDF copy of the notice that informs interested parties that the ES has been submitted.

The ES Addendum may be viewed via the Council's website under reference 14/03013/CONSLT.

If you wish to make comments regarding the ES Addendum please put them in writing to: Head of City Development, Planning Control and Conservation, Oxford City Council, St Aldate's Chambers, 109–113 St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1DS

Or email planning@oxford.gov.uk (noting planning reference 14/03013/CONSLT) before 14 October 2015.

The committee will publish the comment we agree. For information for members asap. Section 7.2 is we think the most important. It is too big to attach so please look up online. We will try print this section for the notice board. Please look up online and print if you can for the meeting.

I managed to skim through-

- The contamination stuff still seems to my simple eyes to be more stuff saying the same ie ameliorated and we are safer than we were before. However it requires a lot of technical knowledge. OCC Environmental Health have always assured us they will let us know of any problems they find.
- There is no mention of the good conclusion about water testing. The water info does not include ref to our failed supply to water butts.
- The water vole info seems more reasonable.
- The badger info is as opaque as ever but as ever we are aware too much info it only brings pain upon us as we are not credited for the vast amount of effort we have put into living alongside badgers. We just cannot manage them on our site.
- Of note is the continued but wrong assertion that the badger run was in place before construction

- There are even more detailed plans re trees in the badger run. It says we **will be** consulted. Given we were consulted and commented before with serious misgivings I would have assumed we would be consulted before the ES was published. This does have badger fencing but not clear as to any badger protection for them or us.
- We will need to address the badger run tree planting to ensure it does not interfere with our site re badger protection on this side and the trees do not grow over or under our land and block the path and more light.

Perhaps it is just too simple to talk to us before rather than after. Meanwhile the present fence is now overgrown and has bramble (which we know from past experience will destroy this stretchy fencing) The badger run was not mowed or sprayed as agreed this year.

Badger fencing

We are making progress with working with the possibility that OU's will fence the rest of the site. This seems to be the only way we will exclude them and recover from the problems associated with building on the embankment. We have had two more site visits with Nigel Fisher of Wytham and Walter the OU Head Gardener to look and estimate for fencing line and the pollarding needed to put it in.

We are waiting for a visit from EA and

- costs and time scale re badger fencing project or October will be upon us and we know that **can be** closure with regard to working on site
- shed moving and costs as they do not seem to be in OU estimates we could not cover them
- conclude how we manage the work with members affected consultation.

When we have some idea of costs OU will look at where to find the funding? OCC have been aware of this problem and project for many Years and we have kept Parks informed. You will recall our local councillor, Susanna Pressell came round with us for the February OU site visit before our AGM. We discussed the options then and now it seems this is the only way forward.

There are some sheds that will clearly need to move or be replaced as they are too near the boundary as we need to be c8-10m away from Fiddlers' Stream and Castle Mill stream. If this looks likely we will contact you if this means your shed will need to move to discuss the best

way to do this. Meanwhile **do let us know if you have any questions.**

Good gardening,
Wendy