

Cripley Meadow Allotment Association Newsletter
March 2016

www.cripleymeadow.org.uk

Saturday Mar 5th is our OXCLEAN WP 10.30 to 12.30



OxClean is an **Oxford Civic Society** initiative. Oxford City Council supply sacks and bins – and collect the filled litter sacks and boxes. We clear the car park, willow walk and that side of Port Meadow and our boundaries. If you can make it please read the health and safety advice available on the day.

Sunday March 13th is our next site working party and this is also

Subscription Day at The Shed from 11am to 12 noon.

Fruit sales Andy of the **Heritage Fruit Tree Company** will be at our AGM at St Barnabas on March 14th selling in the car park from 6-7pm. His latest catalogue is attached. Not everything is available as already sold out a lot this season. He cannot fit everything into his van so it is best to pre-order and collect. **Do remember to check rules about fruit planting and get permission before buying.** **Claire does permissions so email her. They go to the next committee meeting which is March 11th.**

Andy Howard writes
Most on the list are suitable for allotments as they are on the smallest rootstock i.e. Cherry Gisela 5 or Colt, Pears on Quince

and Plums Gages, Damsons, on Pixy. Some of the apples are on M106 which is good for step-overs, cordons or espaliers. The Plums, Gages, Damsons or Peaches on SJA are also good for fans and I will also bring some dwarfing M27/M9 apples, and some non chemical products to stop fruit pests. You can also reserve other stuff from the sundries list as well i.e. stakes guards

Andy is giving a talk on fruit pruning after business at our AGM.

From Sara, our treasurer:

If you're not planning to renew your subscription to work your plot, please let us know so that the plot can be made available for a new member. Your invoice and invitation to the AGM should have arrived in early February. Only one invoice and invite is sent per plot, so do check with any other members on your plot. If your plot has not received an invoice in the first few weeks of February, please email Sara allotment@qtg.org including your plot number in the email.

Our new Gardening year starts on March 14th so please pay promptly. Do remember that there is a late payment surcharge of £10 which will be applied after 31st March 2016. Most members now pay by cheque by post or online. There is a **Subscription Hour** at the Shed on **Sunday March 13** from 11am to 12pm. If anyone has difficulty paying their subscription please be in touch with Sara or Wendy.

Our 2016 AGM is on Monday March 14th at St Barnabas School Hart Street, Jericho. Meeting starts at 7pm Members of the Committee will be present **from 6.00 pm** for you to pay your subscription. There will be nibbles/drinks/slides from 6 so that you can chat to us and other members. Do come along if you can. The main items this year are

- badger fencing,
- mitigation for Castle Mill
- reporting on the proposed new Flood alleviation Channel and its possible impact on allotments.

The 2016 **annual report**, copy of the invitation to the AGM, agenda, budget and accounts 2015 draft minutes, was sent by email on 17 February. A copy is on the Noticeboard.

Our St John's Leaf mould arrived a few weeks ago. Enjoy it as this will be the last for a while due to a St John's building programme. Do aim to take a fair share.

Phil Sylva and his team have mended the path damaged in the wood chip van accident in January.



As soon as it gets a bit drier **Phil (Sylva trees) will be doing the willow management on the island.** We keep these low to ensure enough light for the orchard.



Clearance has just started in preparation for the badger fencing and work will continue for most of March / beg of April. Work started at the south field end of the site and will progress to the gate, where the old metal fence behind plots 4 to 1 will be removed and replaced. This is a major project which we hope will ensure the protection of the site for many years to come. It will impact on some members more than others and their cooperation and help is particularly appreciated. Those whose plots abutt Fiddlers Drain, or Castle Mill Stream will need to move some things out of the way..... some more than others. We are doing our best to manage the route but at times there is very little, if any, room for manoeuvre.

The OU team is managed by



Danny.Robbie and Tim will be mostly on site. Walter Sawyer Head of OU parks worked out the schedule of with us. They are working to an agreed brief and they aim to be as careful as possible working around plots. Generally they will be clearing and pruning /partially pollarding any trees and stumps as well as removing any old fences, bramble, rubbish etc. Some small trees that have layered out of the willow line will be removed and the stumps ground out. Please try to be as helpful as possible. This work was unanimously voted for at the last AGM but if you have any queries or problems please ask Wendy or Jeremy. There will, of necessity, be more movement along the paths with a small tractor and a large shredder will be in operation based on the car park on Plot 54D. Fencing is due to start 30th March



Rodney and I have almost completed the necessary moving from the back of our plot. The fence once installed must be kept clear to be effective. We are working on how best to manage this.

We have done a first cane marking of the fence line and,

weather permitting, the clearance, shed movement, replacement and fencing will be in place before the end of April!

Jeremy Hyde (plot 91) is managing the materials /shed/plot work on site and he is working for the association during this time. Some sheds will be moved and some replaced so there will be a lot of material on site. We hope those members most affected by having to help with shed movement will benefit even if just with better hard standing. Some sheds will be replaced and we have organised this with those members. A map is attached of the general plan.

Jeremy will then install 15 large water butts on water access site paths. These should be easier than access to the stream so hopefully they will improve our harvested water provision. We will need to work out managing the filling of the water butts. This will be with petrol driven trash water pumps.

Please bear with us and help wherever you can. Yet again this major improvement to the site will be achieved by members working together. Many thanks in anticipation.

Web site and The Gardener's Year

Remember our web site has monthly lists of what to do. March lists

**Here's looking forward to another good gardening year
Wendy**