

Cripley Meadow Allotments Newsletter September 2010

Allotment competition

Second judging Monday September 7th

The site and members entered again this year and this was the second and final judging.

All the committee and members who entered the competition are invited to the allotment evening in the Town Hall on Thursday November 4. Do note this is a change of date.

Next working party is.

Wednesday September 8th 6pm to 8pm (this is the last Wednesday session for the year and usually finishes a bit earlier as the light can fade.)

We may not repeat the Wednesday session next year as although attended and managed by committee members it has not proved a popular time for members.

Sunday Sept 12 10.30 to 12.30

We meet at the shed as usual. Please bring spades, forks, rakes and wheelbarrows... and loppers if you have them. We shall be tumping and cutting some willow whips and clearing some released plots.

Lunch on the Green

Do join us on **Sunday September 26th** for Our annual lunch on the green.

Bring along your own allotment food and drink. The association will contribute to the food for barbeque (provided) and drinks (wine, beer and juice etc) to say thank you to members for their work on their plots and on the site. Do bring along family and friends. The thank you is to all as we are all dependent on one another to be able to grow local food.

We plan to have music from 'Horns of Plenty

They are a twelve to twenty strong street band playing a lively mix of township, jazz, New Orleans & east-European music. Formed three years ago for the Cowley Road Carnival in East Oxford, we comprise brass, saxophones and percussion.



We will be giving them a donation (they use money for instruments and they hope to help us eat up your lovely grub

Last year we had

Two sorts of home brew beer, gazpacho, cous-cous roasted vegetable salads, allotment salads in glorious Technicolor, wheelbarrows celebrating produce, Salsas, Quinoa with veg, spinach and feta pastries, Cripley Meadow pear and blue cheese oatcakes, barbecued burgers and sausages and chocolate and courgette cake! What is more there was sunshine galore and great company.



Rubbish

People rarely leave plots clean as required but this year we have had to move a lot of rubbish from plots that have



been released. Apart from the time taken from more positive working party work it means the association bears the expense of another two skips. Please note Rule 14

Members must not deposit any rubbish or building materials on their plot or the site. Also This metal pipe was left out on a headland and it nearly wrecked the mower! There were a number of such instances this

month so please take particular care to keep headlands clear and do not put out any rubble or rubbish. We will not get a better mowing contract!

Headlands and crops

Most members now have fences and part of a fence against a headland. Please make sure you go round your plots regularly to make sure you are not causing a nuisance with bramble and weed growth on or outside your fence.

Members can still grow blackberries on the headlands next to paths (**not on adjacent fences**) so please respect this and other produce and do not pick it. Similarly some fruit is on unfenced plots but however tempting it must not be picked by others, not even children!

Bonfires

We have had a number of complaints from Castle Mill. Please remember that bonfires must adhere to the OCC code. This bans bonfires on bank holidays and 4 were reported on site on that day. The committee will be discussing the complaint at their next meeting and reporting to members but meanwhile please watch the wind direction to avoid inconveniencing our neighbours.

Oxford City Council Code of Practice for Bonfires on Allotment Sites from Environmental Health

There is no law against having bonfires, though it is an offence for the smoke, or the smell of the smoke, to cause a nuisance. Smoke from garden bonfires in a residential area can seriously affect the residential amenity and enjoyment of other premises. It can also contribute to local air pollution levels and, in some locations, reduce visibility on nearby roads.

If materials are dry and burn quickly creating little smoke, then there is usually little problem, providing the smoke does not blow directly towards occupied premises. Damp vegetation, however, does not burn well as it produces large volumes of smoke and smoulders for long periods of time.

The burning of this type of waste causes most complaints and so it should be disposed of in other ways.

The Council's policy with regard to bonfires is to seek the co-operation of residents in avoiding nuisance from bonfires by asking that garden waste and other material is composted or taken to a civic amenity site. If there is no alternative to having a bonfire then the burning should be carried out when the weather conditions are suitable.

Oxfordshire County Council provides civic amenity sites which collect garden waste for composting, a wide range of materials for recycling, and have containers for the disposal of other household waste:

Code of practice for bonfires on Allotment sites

- 1 Bonfires must be supervised and attended at all times either in a communal area or on the plot holder's own plot.
- 2. No household rubbish, rubber, plastic (including bottles and bags), foam, tyres or oils shall be burnt on site.
- 3 If a communal area is provided then this should be used if more suitable than the plot holder's own plot.
Ours is now by the island entrance
- 4 Bonfires must not be positioned within six feet of any fencing, hedging, shed or other building or within two feet of a pathway or roadway.
- 5 Any plot holder found to have caused damage with a bonfire shall be liable for the full costs of repair or replacement.
- 6 **There are to be no bonfires on Bank or Public Holidays.** Site restrictions on lighting times for bonfires must be obeyed.
- 7 Only dry material should be burnt and wherever possible, composting and/or shredders should be used.
- 8. No bonfire shall cause a smoke nuisance to the surrounding residents' as stated in Section 79 (1) (b) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.
- 9 Any plot holder found to be causing a smoke nuisance by the Environmental Health Department and/or a Committee Member to be in breach of this Code of Practice may have their allotment membership terminated.

Environmental Health Oxford City Council 2000

As we do not have a waste collection it would be difficult to manage a site this size, particularly one still in reclamation, without bonfires but we must be considerate of our neighbours and the environment.

Dogs

Please remember that when not confined on a fenced plot dogs **must always be on a lead** and must not enter or foul other member's plots. All members are expected to clear up after their own dogs. This is not a problem if everyone always sticks to this simple rule.

The September Audit

Is now booked for 19th September. All plots must be unlocked and available for inspection from 9.30am to 12.30. The audit committee were very impressed in May and the report was published in July. There are now only a comparatively few plots needing more attention. The draft audit criteria are on the web site and notice board. We will be bringing this to the AGM next year. Obviously we try to be as fair as possible to all so that everyone is supported. There is a much greater level of vegetable, fruit and flower growth than ever before and this is doing much to increase our insect, bird and.... animal population! Persistent weeds and insufficient regular attention are a problem on a few plots to the detriment of neighbours but these are now few and far between.

Waiting list

Our waiting list fluctuates but we have enquiries all year and it is regularly at 10-15 even though we have put in two new communal plots this year. Most sites in the city now have waiting lists. The new area should help us keep our generous plot sizes for those that can use them.

Disused area reclamation



As most of you noted the long expected tree work was started in July and the

bulldozer/JCB came onto the site on at the end of August.



The site has been finally levelled after having been unusable for many years. Sadly we uncovered yet another mound of rubble and shed rubbish but this has been tidied and contained and will have to remain as a mound as sorting and reclaiming the soil is yet another expensive job. Yet more reasons

for making sure we do not land our successors with such a cleanup operation.



We shall now be picking off glass and surface rubbish, mowing off, sorting out the fencing and with a bit of luck we expect to be opening up to new members next year.



There will be more pictures on the web site ASAP

Lost Rabbit?

On 31.aug Laura found a pet rabbit on her plot which she caught and took to a local vet. He was a dwarf rabbit, brown and white. Enquiries to Plot 133.

FYI

Barracks Lane Community Garden Harvest Festival 2010

Saturday 25th September, 11am-5pm

We will be holding a Harvest Festival on Saturday 25th September. Two of the events taking place include *The Great Fruit and Veg Swap*, and the *Winter Veg Plant Swap*. Bring along your excess fruit and vegetables, jams or winter plants, and swap them for something you don't have. Don't worry if you don't have anything to swap, come along and pick up something new to try!

Whether you garden at home, on an allotment, or have access to fruit growing in hedgerows, come and take part in the garden's Harvest Festival activities.

Further info below, or contact the Coordinator, Julieanne, on barrackslanegarden@yahoo.co.uk or 01865 236 088.

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<http://www.barrackslanegarden.org.uk/>