



Cripley Meadow Allotment Association

Chair Wendy Skinner Smith **Vice Chair** Ed Todd **Secretary** Sheila Allen **Treasurer** Alison Campbell **Committee members** Carolyn Dutton Sally Gillard John Sivell Gina Cowen Andrew Honey **Contact:** The Secretary 19 Southmoor Road OX2 6RF

Newsletter June 2006

AGM

Thanks to everyone for a great turn out at St Barnabas School. Minutes and priorities were posted on the notice board and many of you will have seen these already. Cripley Meadow is changing fast and our regeneration project has allowed us to take on many new members to join our longer standing (or longer suffering!) ones. Please make sure you keep up to date with changes.

Waste pile

We have raised the £6,500 needed to clear the waste pile on Plots 147/8. This will start during the week beginning June 26th. Thanks are due to Andrew Saunders Davies, Chairman of Berkeley Homes (Oxford & Chiltern), and Richard Vincent, their Project manager. Berkeley Homes have donated £2,000 to the costs and will be doing the removal. Oxford City Council has allocated the rest from the new allotment funding. Thanks to Mike Gass, Oxford City Allotment Officer, for his help with this. We expect it will take 2-3 days to remove the rubbish from the site to the Port Meadow car park and during this time the site will be **totally closed** to members. They will obviously do their best to minimise disturbance but some is inevitable as the squatter site was embedded in the earth. If you are next to Plots 147/8 please move everything you can **well** away as heavy machinery will be used with little room for manoeuvre.

We will open the site to members as soon as possible but the car park will remain closed until 1st July to ensure access and safety. During this time the rubbish will be removed from the car park so there will be limited access for vehicles but we will try getting members through ASAP after 28th. Please look out for OCC signs as the time approaches. Apologies in advance for the inconvenience. It has been a long struggle to get rid of this monument to past neglect and it will be a great relief to see it gone. There is still a pile of rubbish on Plot 141. **Please join us on Sunday May 25 at 10.30** for some heavy moving work to get this the 25m to the pile before it is removed. We need strength, levers and rope and the more the merrier (and lighter).

Closure of site June 26th –June 28th

Closure of Car Park June 26th-July 1st

Car park

We have had a number of complaints from members about problems with access through the car park. We have written to the council about the necessity for signs to protect our access and make the cyclists aware there is dual use of the bridge.

Gates

The gate posts were reset on Wednesday 7th. Please remember to keep both locked **at all times**. Other Oxford sites have reported major tool thefts recently. If your key sticks **DON'T USE**, contact Sheila.

New Outer fence/ Ditch clearance

The City Council funding for allotments (£430,000 over some years) means we will get our new security boundary this year. We have yet to finalise details but plans are for a fence (1.8m) on the north and west boundary and ditch clearance on the south and east. The new fence will require some 3m to clear the old fence and put in a new one. If your plot is next to an outer boundary **you will be disrupted** in the short term but to considerable advantage to all in the longer term. We have been told the work may start as soon as September but will keep you informed as we know more. If you have a shed or a fence that is on the boundary please talk to the Chair(Plot 40/41) or write to the Sheila as soon as possible so that we can discuss plans and problems.

Paths

We have booked a mowing contract for the summer. It was late starting due to the rain in May but there will be monthly cuts with a maximum of 5 in all. This should establish the paths and reclaim some other areas where mowing is possible. Please keep your 2 ft of headland (up to the path) clear and ensure invasive roots/seeds do not spread from your plot. It is important you do not put any rubbish outside your plot boundary where it will interfere with the machinery. You should manage any rubbish from your plot after the waste pile removal by taking it to Redbridge and weeds should be managed on your plot by composting or covering.

Jericho Street Fair

We took part in the Jericho Street Fair on June 10th selling cakes, salads and seedlings donated by members of the committee. We were busy all day and raised about £400 and contributed to an important and enjoyable community event which raised awareness and members for Cripsey Meadow.

Working Party Days

The AGM's decision to expect all members to contribute a few hours to a Working Party is working better and so far we have had a very good response. It has made a huge difference to the work load and we can keep to 10.30 to 12.30 with better numbers. We have got much more done and in good company. If you have not already done your bit please make a note in your diary and come and help. Everyone could be working on their own plot and the work we do means everyone benefits from a better managed site so don't put it off. The dates for first Sundays in the month are on the board and the next ones are **July 2, August 6 and September 3.**

Members' Summer Lunch

We hope after the next working party (July 2) to 'christen' the central area with **Members' Summer Lunch if the weather is predicted to be dry.** If wet we will try again in September. The future communal area in the centre will have been cut at least once, maybe twice and we will set up a few tables for you to put any finger food/drink you bring to share. It will be rough and ready but will give us all a chance to think/discuss/dream of what we want there before we discuss plans at the next AGM. Please come for 10.30 if you can do your working party bit that day or come anyway for 12.30 with food/drink. We think it is time we celebrated everyone's hard work as the spirit of cooperative cultivation is very apparent.

Carolyn Dutton

Carolyn's husband was involved in a car accident in April and was very badly injured. As a result we accepted her request to resign as Membership Secretary but asked her to stay on the committee and hope she will join us again when she can. We all wish Richard a speedy recovery. Her work will be shared by Wendy (letting), John (machinery) and Sheila (keys and back up). John can be contacted on Plot 46 at weekends after 12 to hire the rotary mower (£5 per hour inc. one tank of petrol). The other machines were Carolyn's personal property and we cannot take responsibility for them. Please do continue to send Carolyn recipes for the Cripsey Cookbook.

Botley Road Allotments' Sunday shop

Is open 10 am to 11.45 am and sells seeds, plants, tools, etc. We are told prices are good so worth a visit and if it seems like a good idea it might inspire members to start one of our own.

RHS Certificate

Anyone wanting more horticultural knowledge may be interested in a 'taster' session for the 'Introduction to RHS Level 2 Certificate in Horticulture' (a year-long, one morning a week course) on Thursday, 6th July at Bicester Community College. Cost: £7.20 (concessions available). Tel. Lucy Pickering of the Adult Learning Service 01865 727148 for further information or 0845 351 0646 to enrol.

Allotment Competition

Nine members entered this year and the judges did their first round on June 8. Good luck to all