

Cripley Meadow April Newsletter 2016

www.cripleymeadow.org.uk

Working party

Next working party on 10 April 10.30 to 12.30 meet at the shed as usual. Do come along if you can. We have some plot clearing and covering to do.

Our AGM in March was very pleasant and productive. The officers and committee members were all elected unopposed and unanimously. I think most members know and appreciate our hard working and forward looking committee. **Many thanks** to the 48 members who attended. Susanna Pressell, our local and county councillor, came along. We do appreciate her sustained support. The Draft AGM minutes are on the web site until ratified at the next AGM.

The site is now getting busier with plots getting ready for the sowing and planting. In clearing please remember our bonfire code (on the notice boards and web site) and do not light a fire that will smoke anyone on the site or in the flats. Check the wind and make sure the material is dry. If we continue to be reported for smoky bonfires we will inevitably lose the right to have bonfires. The law which protects people from having to suffer the ill effects. Please think and follow the bonfire code

Membership fees

If you did not pay your subscription fees before March 31st you will now incur a £10 additional charge. Plots are automatically taken back if not paid before April 31 but you do need to be in touch and return your key if you are not renewing so we can manage the plot.

Badger fencing project is moving along well in spite of the

now regular mini flood after rainfall! We will query this with EA? Attached is the comments made by ODFAA about the proposed flood channel.

Jeremy is being paid to manage



this work and is responsible for working with members to clear and move (and at times replace sheds) fences and

materials that are on route. The new sheds are CMAA property to be maintained by the present member. Jeremy has overcome some major problems with imagination, diligence and sheer hard graft for which we are very grateful. We are very fortunate he was available as we could not have found a contractor who could have managed this as successfully. See the shed move!



Roger and Richard and Jean have had the most personal disruption on their plot and have been so supportive and helpful. We understand this has disrupted some members, some much more than others and we have been impressed by the cooperative response. Those who have had



the most to do have been really fantastic. Only a very few have not helped at all so we deem ourselves very fortunate in our membership.

All being well the light tree pollarding to clear the route will be finished soon and a small digger will be on site to dig the trench as soon as it is drained a bit. This goes down 18" and then bends out 6". I have attached a pdf spec of the fence. Please make sure this area stays clear and stay away from workings. Please do not try to negotiate any changes with the fencers. If you have problems let Jeremy or me know.

Raised beds. The structures are



complete thanks to Paid work by Jeremy and we have just applied and been granted additional OCC grant money for Jeremy to complete filling the raised beds. They are for less mobile members



so if you know of anyone who might be interested please let them know. The site is trying to improve access and are are making limited progress.



Please leave the soil piles

We did have a few members helping with this on shared basis bit that was clearly confusing for others who then started helping themselves. **Only Jeremy should now be using the soil piles... No other member.** Jeremy will also make a fire bin so we can process material that cannot be shredded better.

We are using the old fire area as material storage during the fence project so please keep anything for the burning pile on your plot temporarily if you cannot burn it or take to Redbridge. All the material stored here is not available for members.

Site grass cutting should start in April

Please do not put stones or glass on paths or headlands. This is can wreck the machines. Bag them up. Communal plot paths (on plots 47, 106 and 107) will be cut BUT only if clear. All compost bins on communal plots should be on the beds.

Waste!

In doing the clearing for the fence line yet more rubbish has been unearthed. Our waste situation is untenable! Some members are not only not removing rubbish but actually storing it until they leave and then the rest of us,

particularly committee members do the work and pick up the tab. The committee cannot keep doing this! Jeremy already goes through the skip to haul out weeds, rocks, wood etc.

Please take as much of your waste home as possible and DO not bring on and remove ANY glass or old windows.

The skip is for allotment waste, metal, glass and plastic and the remains of historic carpet! This regular skip was part of our reclamation which started in 2005. In 2006 we cleared over £6,000 of waste from the site and last year we cleared 8 plots with large amounts of historic waste. The skips are there to manage reasonable waste produced by present members. Most allotment sites have no regular skip and that 1, or at most 2, is a luxury!

Our rubble pile regularly has imported building waste, sometimes still in rubble sacks. After this year we will get back to the spring and autumn skip routine so members **MUST** stop bringing in glass and other stuff, 'that might be useful'. The association is not a refuse recycling unit and rubbish piles do encourage even more rats. **If you bring stuff on you must be prepared to take it**



off. The bins in the car park by Port Meadow are emptied daily and are sealed so should be used for any food stuffs, esp. BBQ waste and bottles and cans so we

do not get animals rooting in the skips.

Rubbish will be a major focus for this year's audit so please remove any excess NOW.

Rule reminders

- *Only materials for use on the plot may be stored there, such as beanpoles, cloches, pots, covers, netting etc. for seasonal use. Members must not deposit any rubbish or building materials on their plot or the site unless they have permission from the Committee for a building/structure. When this is agreed material must be used within 12 months.*
- *No timber, mineral, gravel, sand, earth or clay can be removed from the site without written permission of the Committee.*
- *Waste regulations apply to materials brought on site by members. Members should not bring on site tyres, asbestos, glass or non-compostable household waste.*
- *Members must not use concrete or other material that makes the land unusable for growing.*
- *Waste from external sources may not be brought on site unless by prior agreement with the Committee. We have organised green waste sites in partnership with a number of external bodies who bring usable green waste on site. These are on plots that are unusable. These are monitored by the Committee. These plots must not be used by members to dispose of their own weeds.*
- *For information only*
- *At least one skip per year will be available to manage waste that will not compost. These must not be used for compostable or external waste. Such use will put at risk membership.*
- *All potentially toxic material found on plots should be removed by the member and disposed of in the relevant civic amenity site.*

Committee Recycling Area by the green shed

This is **committee storage** of reclaimed material that we make use of for on-site projects. Jeremy used to store this on his plot but

this led to some problems and this is a more suitable site. **Members must not dump there nor take things from it. Please contact Jeremy if you think you have material we could re-use.** We will sometimes be able to sell some cheaply on through the shop as we do tools. The plant pots/rubble area at the left when facing the green shed are open for member use. Please do not put in more plant pots if the box is full.

Leaf mould and lots of wood chip arrived in March and was



very quickly used. Many members now use this material for mulching and paths between beds. **If you are in the centre near the source please bear a thought for others and only take a share!**



There is still some rough compost on plot 109 or there was as I write. I broke into the pile from the side and it is not bad quality although there are some clay lumps. Please put these in a pile. They are destined for filling in the pond on Cripsey Island Orchard if you feel like a walk! Please **bag** up litter and try make a pile of woody bits and green waste.

Green waste Plot 84a is now ready for re filling with green waste. Remember this is not for any member's green waste.

What to put where

Members should aim to compost /re use all their own green waste on their plot. Not all plots have compost bins but more have appeared since this was noted. Well done if you have made one as you re-use almost all that comes of the plot and recycle it back except for diseased material which must be burnt. A small garden burner is now better than a bonfire given the bonfire code.

Brassica stalks, sweet corn haulms, larger pruning can be put in the shredder box by the green shed. Most green pruning need to be chopped down small enough to compost.

Perennial or flowering weeds can be bagged up. They will rot down and the black gunge can be used in the compost bin when you are turning.

Rubble unearthed from your plot (not brought in), can go by the green shed. We have used it (on top of perforated plastic) for hard standing for sheds, and hard core for shoring up site paths.

Plastic, metal, glass, old carpets, tools use on site can go in the skip. No gas cylinders, petrol, tyres, machinery, paint, asbestos or chemicals as we get charged for these.

Pruning cherries, plums and damsons

Pruning is generally done after fruiting in the autumn but apparently you can prune these now the sap is rising... Kitchen Garden says 'this helps keep canker and silver leaf out of the wounds'.

Well diggers and Post driver

We have a set of well digger spades and a Post Driver available for member's use. They are located on Plot 40 where you will find a booking out board so we know where they are. They should be used and returned each day so not kept out when others could be using them.

Trading - The shop hours have now been fixed at 11 - 12noon every Sunday, until further notice. We were opening later on Working Party days, but decided to keep to

one time for simplicity. If you need to buy something from the shop when you are at Working Party, just take time out to do so. We have all the items on the price list, which is on the members' noticeboard and our website. At the moment we only have a few second hand tools, but there is some other equipment available eg a water butt and plenty of containers that could be used as water butts.

The shop also collects spare seeds from members and gives them away to other members for free. So if you are interested, come and see what we have or drop some spares in if you can.

The Hungry Gap is approaching with April and May often seeing an end to winter crops stored and in the ground. We are coming to the end of stored potatoes, onions, Jerusalem artichokes and the leeks, parsnip, beetroot and carrots which we leave earthed up in the ground are beginning to sprout.



White sprouting is being picked as is our chicory, forced off the plot. We are holding our breaths for the first signs of asparagus. This is now a common crop on site where it used to be a rarity. We are very fortunate that our generous sized plots allow for the space needed for crops like this and soft fruit.

Good growing to all Wendy