



WELLINGTON FIELDS ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER

Wellington fields Allotments Newsletter - Autumn Edition.

The second publication of 2017. Don't forget, if you wish to contribute to future issues, please contact a member of the committee.

Committee Notices

October 2017

Rail Crash Memorial

The site is developing nicely with the plants starting to put on some growth and the memorial stone/plaque awaiting delivery. The site can be found on the corner of the footpath bordering the church and the footpath from Sycamore Drive to St Peter's School.

It seems that the Memorial will be getting some added publicity from the BBC who are now getting involved. Unveiling of the plaque will take place on Saturday 6th January, to coincide with 50th Anniversary of the crash.

Rats.

Rat Bait has been put down in some of the boxes to keep on top of the situation. If anyone feels they have a problem though, they should contact the Committee.

BBQ.

Unfortunately it was felt that there wasn't enough time to arrange a BBQ for this season. But it is intended that we will have one next year.

New Plot Holder!

After the redefining of the rules we have our first Plot Holder from outside the village of Hixon. They come from Weston and their arrival heralds new hope of filling every plot vacancy and keeping them filled!

Runner Beans.

Runner Beans have just about finished now, but will everybody remember to remove any and ALL PLASTIC STRING from them before composting.

Using The Compost.

When you are digging over your plot this Autumn why not use some of our own Compost from the covered bin? OR if you are filling a raised bed you can use our own free compost to top it up. Simply peel back the blue cover and dig out what you want before replacing the cover.

Edging Boards.

It is still hoped that edging boards will become available free of charge for down the Main Drive to more clearly mark the ends of plots.

New Tenancy Agreements.

For some time the Committee have felt that our Tenancy Agreements needed updating, so new ones are being developed and will be on the way soon.

FaceBook Page.

Dont forget we have our own FaceBook page that we would like to see more people using! You can post anything you want within reason about the Allotments.

www.facebook.com/WellingtonFieldsHixon

Allotment Blog.

One of our Plot-Holders writes a Blog for the Stafford And Stone Talking Newspaper once a month. It is not a traditional Gardening Tips, but does have some interesting information in it. This is one from a few years ago that is very relevant now.

Hixon Allotments Diary Article Number 43.

Winter Crops

Our allotments has a waiting list like all other sites and sometimes people on it are offered a plot, but turn it down saying they are not ready for it and they then go to the bottom of the waiting list. This often happens when a plot becomes vacant part way through the season and the person believes that they have missed the planting time and consequently they couldnt make use of it until the Spring, but there is always something to plant on an allotment whatever time of year and early Autumn, especially, is a good time for taking over a new plot.

Not only is it the ideal time to give you the chance to thoroughly dig your plot, weed it, get it to a fine tilth and generally prepare it before the spring planting, but it gives you the ideal opportunity to dig in loads of manure to fertilize it well before the Winter so that the worms can work on it, spread the goodness and make it even more suitable for Spring planting. If the plot is fairly tidy there are quite a few things that can be planted later in the growing season anyway, depending on the actual month. Late plantings of some vegetables can often be made and the garden centres sell a whole range of Autumn Planting Vegetables these days. They include things like Winte/Spring Cabbages, Purple and White Sprouting Broccoli, all year round Lettuce and even Christmas New Potatoes. Japanese Onion sets planted late in the season will harvest earlier the following year than ordinary Onion sets planted in the Spring. At home, one year, I had a large Angelica plant that had spectacular seed heads in the Autumn. I read that the seed does not keep very well and becomes infertile very quickly, so I sowed some and it germinated well before the Winter set in. The little seedlings went through the Winter outside and grew away in the Spring to give lots of big plants the following year. We are fond of Garlic and Jerusalem Artichokes which both also need to be planted in the late Autumn/early Winter for best results. Other seed that can be put in through the Winter, if the weather permits, include a variety Broad Bean called Aquadulce and Onion seed is traditionally sown on Boxing Day.

Fruit bushes and trees were always traditionally planted in the Autumn/Winter months when the plants were dormant and didnt mind being disturbed. In the good old days this was mainly because everything was bought Bare Root, and it would die if sold like that with leaves on in the Summer months. However, even pot grown plants will suffer if planted in hot weather and need to be planted in a cool, or damp spell of weather to give them the best chance. So, Autumn is still the best planting time for these as well, because they will have no leaves on them then enabling the roots to get better established over the Winter. In the Autumn, you can even dig up fruit bushes from home and move them on to the allotment to give them more room. A Gooseberry bush

may well have branches that have rooted into the ground where they have bent down and touched it. These can be cut off in the Autumn and make ideal free plants to fill up a new allotment plot with as do divisions from an established Rhubarb Crown. In fact it has always been said that Rhubarb does best after it has been dug up in the Winter and the Crown has been left exposed to the frosts!

Not that many Herbaceous plants are grown on allotments, but these are best planted after the foliage has started to die down as well. They can also be divided and replanted in Autumn when they will get better established, ready for the new season. Some allotment holders like to grow a few herbaceous flowering plants for cut flowers for the house and the true Herb Bergamot, or Monarda is one that we have decided that we like. It produces lovely sprays of purple/mauve/pink flower heads that fill the room with a minty smell and they last quite well in vases as well. There are some flowers seeds such as Sweet Peas that are traditionally sown in the Autumn, but there is much debate over whether Autumn, or Spring planting gives the best flowering plants for the following year.

Autumn means harvest time to everybody and if you have taken over a plot after the harvest you may think that all the crops will be gone, but that is not strictly true as many crops can be harvested later, in the Winter months. It is possible that your new plot may have been planted earlier in the season with Leeks, Jerusalem Artichokes, Kale, Brussels Sprouts, or Parsnips that are all harvested in the colder months. Indeed they always say that Parsnips are best to eat after they have been frosted and Brussels Sprouts are a Christmas favourite. Another crop that might have been planted is the old fashioned, forcing Chicory that has to be dug up at the first sign of frost. Chicory is well known to be a little bitter, but we have found that the Summer version, Raddichio, seems more bitter than the traditional Winter grown type. The Winter Forcing varieties are planted outside at the same time as the Summer, but are not harvested until they have been dug up and re-planted inside, in a frost free place, such as a garage, or greenhouse and then the blanched Chicorys, are harvested in the depths of Winter.

If you would like to contribute to future publications, or have any comments regarding the format, please contact one of the Committee Members listed below. **HAPPY GROWING!**

Current Committee Members

Chairperson - Simon Ellin.
Treasurer - Karen Appleton.
Secretary - Jane Garner.

Committee Members: -

Joe Craen;
Barry Williams;
Mark Connell;
Chris Hilton;
Alan Hartley;
Rose Jones.

Dont Forget

This years Annual General Meeting was held on Friday the 14th July in the village hall. The reports will be posted on our website in a few days.

We still have vacant plots, so if you fancy taking on another Plot to grow a few more vegetables please see Jane Garner.

Contact Details For Jane Garner, Secretary -
fjanegarner@hotmail.com

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www.wellingtonfieldsallotments.org 

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