



WELLINGTON FIELDS ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER

Wellington fields Allotments Newsletter - Winter Edition.

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

Committee Notices

December 2017

Rail Crash Memorial

The grand unveiling of the memorial plaque will take place on the 6th January with a starting time for the unveiling ceremony - 12 Noon. 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. There will also be an Exhibition/talk taking place in the Memorial Hall on that Saturday commencing 2:00 pm and the Sunday commencing 11:00 am.

Plots

After the redefining of the rules we have several Plot Holder from outside the village of Hixon. They all come from Weston and with them we only have 1 vacant plot now.

Kings Seeds.

Your annual orders of seeds and potatoes should arrive soon, but Karen will advise each of you when they do.

Rubbish and Recycling.

We are all for Recycling old pots, tubs and trays, etc, but please try and keep the area tidy and DONT put any old rubbish around the bottom of the drive. It does appear to be accumulating again and somebody has to then take it to the tip for the lazy people who put it there!

Using The Compost.

One compost Bin has again been emptied and the other turned into it thanks to John Martin. Please feel free to dig into it to use to fill raised beds as one plot holder has been doing already. Simply peel back the blue cover and dig out what you want before replacing the cover. A little reminder not to put woody stuff, or Brambles into the compost, but please put them in Johns tractor bucket instead. Please dont put any plastic material in the compost bins at all! I am sorry, but you must take that home with you. Please dont put waste vegetables like Pumpkins and Marrows into the compost either as these encourage rats.

Water.

The water has now been turned off for Winter to avoid burst pipes. There will be some water available in the Tubs under the taps for some of the time. The water usually gets turned back on as Spring approaches.

Rats.

The pest control man is having an uphill struggle to control the rats because people are still putting vegetables into the compost. Rat Bait has been put down in some of the boxes to keep on top of the situation though. If anyone still feels they have a problem, they should contact the Committee.

Woodchip.

Hopefully, by the time you read this there will have been another load of Woodchip delivered. It is FREE for anyone to use on the site.

Manure.

Please remember to return all the empty manure bags that you use, because he needs them to bring us more in. Without them being returned we wont get any more as they cost him a lot of money to keep replacing.

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. They are just undergoing their final revision.

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 a recent one that is still very relevant for a lot of people.

Hixon Allotments Diary Article Number 129.
Still Things To Be Done.

We may be into November, but there are still plenty of things to be done on the Allotment including some planting. At about this time of year I always start off some Broad Bean plants. As with Sweet Peas, Garlic and Jerusalem Artichokes there is some debate as to whether they do better started before the Winter, or afterwards. My thoughts are that, although any snow we get does sometimes knock them about a bit and you can lose the odd plant, generally they go through the Winter pretty much untouched and put on a growth spurt in the Spring that makes them mature about a month ahead of Spring sown Beans. This in turn means that you will be picking Beans before it warms up enough for Black Fly to develop and they become a nuisance. Consequently, while everybody else is having problems with Fly, your Beans will be safely harvested and you will just be clearing up the remnants. The Beans need to be of the Aquadulce type and are probably better started off in pots before planting out, because of problems with Mice. The older, traditional variety of Jerusalem Artichokes is probably best put in now as well, but the newer improved types like Fuseau can go in, in the Spring, as they are quicker maturing. Generally, I plant some Garlic about now and this year I have put some Japanese Onions in as well, although, normally I dont bother with them. Of course things like Spring Cabbage can still be put in if they have been started off and are well into growth, but it is now too late to sow the seed.

Again it is getting a bit late, but some places are still selling a few Spring Flowering Bulbs, often at a reduced price to clear them out. Recently I have put in some more including one that I found called Nectaroscordum, or Sicilian Honey Garlic, that also goes under the name of Allium Nectaroscordum. It is of course a member of the Onion Family like all Alliums and as its name suggests has Garlic scented leaves. However, it is not to be eaten! The Allium like flowers are more exotic than ordinary Alliums and are nectar rich which Bees love. Seed heads can be cut, dried and used in dried flower arranging in the same way as other Alliums. Another type of

bulb I have planted is some Bluebells dug up from my garden at home. I have planted them under my fruit trees to add into the mixture of bulbs and to increase the diversity and flowering times. I think they are English ones and not the Spanish that the powers that be are trying to discourage us from growing. After a little time they will divide and also start to spread by scattering their seed which can become invasive, but I will keep them under control and stop them getting into the adjoining field as they are poisonous to cattle and horses.

I am doing well with cut flowers at the moment - cutting great armfuls of Alstoemeria of differing varieties that seem to flower at slightly different times. Cutting them hard also seems to encourage more flowers even later. The Kaffir Lilies I planted earlier in the season are very pretty and seem to multiply up well. I have been able to divide several clumps up and give lots away to everybody that has been admiring their beautiful, bright pink flowers. They are late flowering the same as my Chrysanthemums that have also done exceptionally well this year. Last years plants didnt go through the Winter at all well, so I bought some fresh, young healthy plants from a specialist grower back in the Spring. They were dashed down a bit by the strong winds and rains that we had recently, but I managed to get up to the Allotments and cut them before they were spoilt and lost to the first of our seasonal frosts. I will try to keep the plants for next year, but I have decided to plant some Hardy, ones for next year. They are I think, a fairly new idea with more varieties now available than ever before, but like Hardy, Fuchsias, they will probably benefit from good Winter drainage and something like Wood Chippings over the Stool, for a little added protection.

Elsewhere, the strong winds blew the fruit off my Medlar tree before I could pick them. This will be one of the last fruits to crop, apart from, the odd Cape Gooseberry of which I have already been able to pick one, or two fruits, the big Strawberry Tree at home and my Goji Berry.

The Weather is definitely changing now and I have been starting to prepare for winter as I have taken things like the Bananas, Orange, Lemon and Kumquat into my Greenhouse for Winter. I did of course line the Greenhouse with Bubble Polythene before taking the plants in so that they wouldnt be in the way. The first frosts seem to have been a bit later coming this year, although the plants seem to think Winter is coming now and are starting to shut down with leaves everywhere and some Herbaceous plants starting to die back.

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

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



Please Visit Our Website @ www.wellingtonfieldsallotments.org/ and our
FaceBook Page www.facebook.com/WellingtonFieldsHixon