

# The Bushy Times

Newsletter of the Bushy Park Allotment Association

Website - [www.bushyparkallotments.org.uk](http://www.bushyparkallotments.org.uk)

Issue 56

MAY 2020

## ***SATURDAY 16<sup>TH</sup> MAY PLANT SWAP***

Our normal May event will be a “***closed day***” plant swap. It will take place in the shop car park from **12:00 Noon on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> May**. The rules for attendance are: -

- 1) **ONLY FOR PLOT HOLDERS, NO GUESTS**
- 2) Trestle tables will be set up to deposit any spare plants/seedlings etc that you have. **PLEASE LABEL THE PLANTS.**
- 3) You can also collect plants that you need and will use on your allotment or at home. **LEAVE SOME FOR OTHERS!**
- 4) **OBSERVE THE RULES ABOUT SPACING – 2 METRES APART PLEASE – CHAT BUT AT THE REGULATION DISTANCE.**
- 5) **IT IS NOT A SOCIAL EVENT SO DON'T KEEP PEOPLE WAITING IN THE QUEUE**
- 6) **ONLY ONE PERSON PER PLOT – NO TRIBES!**
- 7) **THERE WILL BE A DONATION BOX – THE MONEY COLLECTED WILL GO TO A LOCAL CHARITY.**
- 8) **It will close at 2:00 PM or when there are no more plants to swap.**

I will put out some packets of saved parsnip seed and French beans for people to sow, see the following articles!

## ***CHILDREN & PARENTS BEHAVIOUR***

Children are welcome at the allotments and if they behave and stay on their parent's plot and established paths there are no issues. They can enjoy the allotments and the exercise and learning opportunities to hand. **It's important for children to have access to this space but during these times please remember that many plot holders are older and at risk and the physical distancing rules must be observed.**

Children have been seen running around the site and over other people's plots on several occasions recently. Young children were seen clambering over other people's equipment and furnishings, while their father worked oblivious on his own plot! Other kids are bicycling around the site.

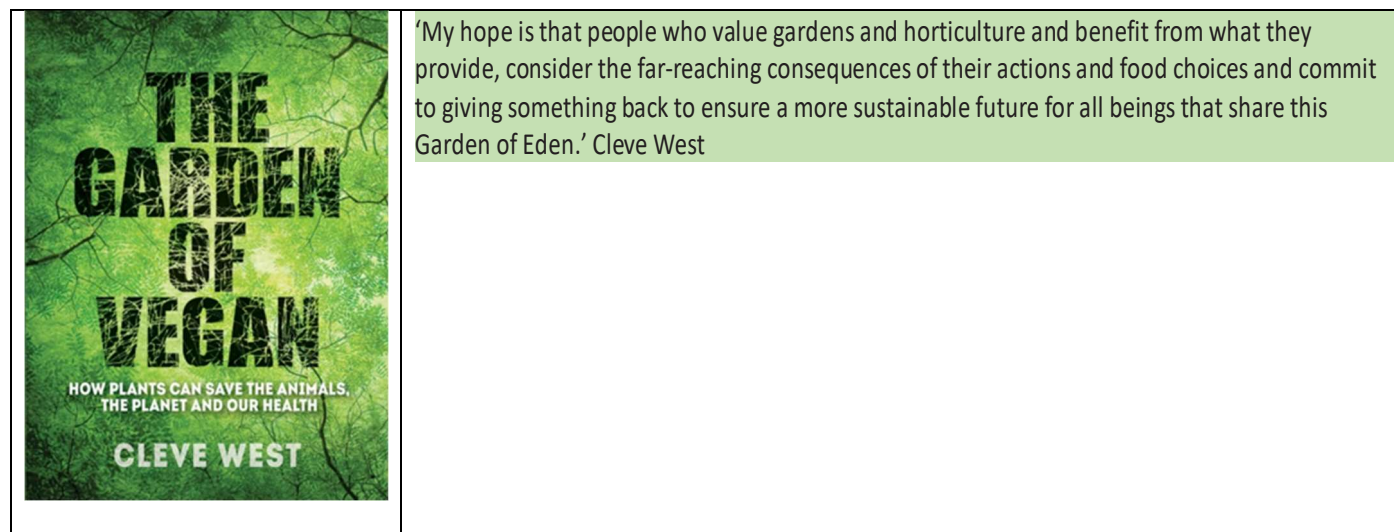
There are many hazards on an allotment and a trip to A&E at the moment is to be avoided! Cycling on the access track or near it is a particular danger. It is also very easy to cause damage to plots, seeded areas just look like bare earth and plants are fragile.

**The Council T&C Item 1.2 states “*All children should be properly supervised at all times while on the allotment site.*”**

## CLEVE'S NEW BOOK

Cleve West has written a new book, **The Garden Vegan**.

Extracts from the publicity handout: -



Cleve also makes the point that *"if we don't change our food systems then this pandemic could just be a trial run for similar health crises so let's be grateful for our allotments!"*

Cleve advises that books ordered through [hive.co.uk](https://hive.co.uk) will help support local bookshops.

## HOUSEKEEPING

### SOME FAMILIAR & NEW REMINDERS

No changes in the COVID 19 INSTRUCTIONS from the Council. The allotments are not a '*public place*' so you cannot arrange to meet someone there who is not a tenant!

Tenants are misusing the compost area to dump fencing and wood. Anyone seen doing this will be reported to the Council. The facility remains open but only for woody items grown on your plots. The Council are currently unable to clear the communal waste pile. It is attracting rats and efforts to control them are in place.

The communal area at the shop car park has been closed on the Council's instructions and has been cordoned-off.

I can act as a '*lost and found service*' for important items that are lost or found at the allotments, using the email list to message tenants.

Many thanks to a very public-spirited tenant who found a wallet dropped at the gate and returned it to its owner at the weekend.

I have circulated a 'lost keys' message. Both of these items are important and worth our attention.

## ***SEASONAL NOTES***

It is warming up and time to start planting out the tender plants like French beans & courgettes. If they have not been acclimatised to the great outdoors it is worth covering them if a cold spell is predicted, look at the 7 day forecast. Cold may not kill the plant but can retard growth.

It is not too late to sow seed, long term crops like chard, winter broccoli and carrots will catch up with the seasons and short-term crops like lettuce, peas and radish will have time to yield produce. Late pea sowing also misses the ravages of pea moth. That is the only bit of bug news for this newsletter!

## ***SEED SAVING & ACTIVITY IDEAS***

Food production once depended on the manual collection of seed, a practice largely since replaced by industrial-scale processes. Despite this, it remains important for the preservation of rare crop cultivars and is central to global plant conservation. It's also an ideal way to learn and share knowledge about how plants grow and reproduce. I save bean, parsnip, sweetcorn, fennel and tomato seed each year.

So looking ahead to the summer and autumn here are some seed-saving tips: -

- ✿ You cannot save seed from F1 cultivars, nor the squash family, they cross fertilize thanks to our abundant bee population and will not be true to type.
- ✿ If you gently shake the dry flowerhead and the seeds fall away, or if you hear the seeds rattle, this is a sign they are ready to collect.
- ✿ For beans, let the pod dry fully on the vine and then collect the seeds.
- ✿ For tomatoes, select a really ripe fruit, cut in half and scoop out the seeds with the gelatinous coating. Eat the flesh! Gently rub the seeds and coating around a sieve to break down the coating and free the seeds. Give them a good rinse in the sieve and when you can actually feel the hard seed, spread them out on a plate to dry. They will stick to the plate but can be prised off gently.
- ✿ Edible berries are often not suitable for propagating from seed as they won't come true, but can be used to demonstrate germination. Shoot cuttings or root cuttings are the best way to propagate fruit for free plants.
- ✿ Herbs are ideal plants for seed collecting. Coriander, basil, and chives can all be grown from saved seed. Basil is easily cross-pollinated, so if growing two cultivars together only let one of them flower and seed.
- ✿ Only collect seeds from healthy plants and when it is dry.
- ✿ Make sure that the seed is thoroughly dry before storing, bean seeds should clink when shaken together. A sieving will remove dust and plant fragments.
- ✿ Keep the seed in packets or screw topped jars, the little breakfast marmalade pots are ideal. Label them and include the year of collection. Store them in a cool, dark and dry location. Keep packets in tins, not plastic bags.

You will end up with plenty of seed to store for next year or in the case of beans and tomatoes for 2-3 years as the seed keeps well. If you have doubts about germination, soak a sample of the seed and spread out on damp paper in a jar and count how many germinate. This could be a good education project for kids. They can also help with the seed saving process!

Some further education/activity ideas for families are: -

- \* Select a set of objects, including different seeds and non-living things such as small stones, twigs and plastic, for kids to sort through, identifying the seeds. This can show that new life can come from something that may look 'dead'. A good use for some old seeds!
- \* **Collect and examine** a range of dry seeds to show variety in shape, colour, size and style (taken from flowers, vegetables, etc). You could also include dried foods such as rice, beans, fennel seeds, peas and popcorn.
- \* Soak broad bean seeds in water for a few hours and let your learners peel off the coat to discover what's inside.
- \* To show germination in action, sow some quick-growing seeds in a tray, on damp kitchen paper, a few days before you need them. Use peas and runner beans to show the difference between hypogeal and epigeal germination respectively, where the former seed remains underground during germination (peas) and the latter is lifted above the soil by its developing shoot (beans). Don't waste the seeds, pot them up and let them grow.
- \* Compare dried seed with germinating seed, to visualise clearly what happens with the correct growing conditions.
- \* Discuss what the seeds needed to grow (water, warmth, light).
- \* Demonstrate planting a seed, clearly explaining each step of the process.

This could be education for parents as well, unless they did biology at school!

### ***CEVIZ & TULUM ERISHTE***

A recipe shamelessly purloined from Selin Kiazin's Kyseri restaurant menu. It was the top dish on our first visit in November 2018. The combination of short flat noodles, walnut, lemon braised greens (unspecified), sage, *tulum* cheese all topped with a raw egg yolk to stir in was outstanding.

1 shallot or small onion chopped fine and caramelized in olive oil  
 70-100 gm walnuts roughly crushed to a crumb, (whole pine nuts would also do), fried after the onion to colour,  
 the zest and juice of a lemon and 3 de-seeded and thinly sliced salted lemons added to pan,  
 150-200 gm mixed greens from, chard, cabbage, kale, chicory, parsley, anything to hand or foraged at the allotment, shredded and braised in with the other ingredients, add a little pasta cooking water to slacken.  
 10 sage leaves sliced fine, add to lemon greens towards end of cook  
 200/250 gm fresh flat wheat noodles, ideally thinner than tagliatelle or similar dried noodles cooked – make sure that they are in short lengths, about 2 inches.  
 70-100 gm, any hardish salty white cheese, crumbled over the plated dish, as a substitute to the Turkish cheese *tulum peynir* used by Selin.  
 egg yolks to top each plate (whites reserved for meringue)

This makes two good suppers and a good cold lunch.

Phil Iddison On behalf of Bushy Park Allotments Association	Please contact the Council via their website <a href="https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/parks_and_open_spaces/allotments">https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/parks_and_open_spaces/allotments</a> for any matters relating to your tenancy or the T&Cs. Contact, Joe Ambaye (Chairman) or Robin Hewitt (Secretary) for allotment issues and me about the newsletter
---	---