

# The Bushy Times

Newsletter of the Bushy Park Allotment Association

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

Issue 66

end of April 2023

## ***SPRING PLANT SALE OPEN DAY***

**The Spring Plant Sale Open Day will be held on Saturday 13th May 2023, Noon to 3PM as usual.**

Help with this event to make it a success will be required, whether it is donating food, spare plants or assisting before or at the event.

- There will be food and beverages, primarily vegetarian,
- There will be a plant sale. Please donate any spare plants that you have and please label them!!
- Feel free to donate a cake or a savoury dish, sampling others baking skills is a treat.
- Any help you can provide on the day will be welcome.

## ***ALLOTMENT T&C UPDATE – Section 1***

In March the Council have revised the Terms and Conditions. Over the next few newsletters I'll be copying in sections of the T&C to keep you updated. The first section chosen was prompted by a tenant's concerns on safety and accidents. The site Committee do not have any First Aid Provision. Tenant's and their guest's safety is their own personal responsibility.

### **TERMS & CONDITIONS - General**

**Updated 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023**

The main purpose of your allotment is to produce food. Secondary purposes include using your plot for leisure, preserving wildlife and biodiversity, exercise, wellbeing and lifelong learning.

An allotment is a community and fellow plot holders can be a good source of advice and fellowship. We expect you to have your own compost area on your plot (to compost any green waste) as a matter of good practice.

1.1 - You must not use your allotment for any illegal, unauthorised or immoral purpose. If you are proven to be in breach of any of the above or other unseemly behaviour, your tenancy will be terminated immediately. If you are found guilty of any criminal offence committed on an allotment site this will result in the immediate termination of your tenancy without the right of appeal.

1.2 - All children should be properly supervised at all times while on the allotment site. They are not allowed on other plots without that plot holder's permission.

1.3 - You must use your allotment for your own personal use and must not carry out any business or sell produce from your allotment for personal gain, except for official fund-raising purposes.

1.4 - You must not erect any advertisement or display for commercial gain on or near the allotment.

1.5 - Neither you, nor any person connected with you, are allowed to reside on your allotment or stay more than one hour after sunset. This includes staying overnight in motor vehicles/caravans/campervans.

1.6 - Only you, or person(s) authorised by you, are allowed on the site. You must have permission to go onto another plot holder's allotment.

1.7 - You (the person(s) named on the tenancy agreement) must be the main user of your allotment unless you have obtained permission from the Council for temporary cover. The length of any temporary cover will be decided by the Council, with advice from your Site Committee or Site Representative. According to individual circumstances a maximum of 12 months temporary cover is allowed. Granting temporary cover does not give the people helping you any rights to take over your plot should you decide to terminate your tenancy.

1.8 - You should report any incident of theft, criminal damage or illegal activity to the Police, Council and Site committee. Photographs of the incident can be helpful (if they can be obtained safely). However it is not the responsibility of the Council or Site Committee to investigate such issues.

1.9 - Any assault, threats or aggressive behaviour on site should be reported to the Police. You should email details to the Council and Site Committee so they are aware of the issue. Please also send the details of any Police report.

1.10 - If the Council have clear evidence (such as a Police report which determines culpability) to support an allegation of crime committed by a tenant on any allotment site the Council will start the termination of tenancy process.

1.11 - If you are involved in a dispute with another plot holder both you and they should contact the Council for mediation. The Council will not be able to act on disputes between you unless appropriate evidence is provided such as a written summary and – if they can be safely obtained – photographs. The decision of the authorised Council Officer (supported with local knowledge from the Site Committee) is final.

1.12 - Access to individual plots should be unrestricted, for example, your plot should not have a locked gate. Any officer of the Council or any person appointed by the Council (that can include a member of the Site Committee) must be permitted to enter any allotment plot for inspection purposes or to investigate complaints.

1.13 - The Council is not liable for any loss (including by accident, fire, theft, flooding or damage of any tools or contents of sheds and greenhouses). The Council must show due care and attention in the management of the allotment site in this regard.

1.14 - If your site has First Aid provision you should make sure you know the location of First Aid equipment and site procedures that allow emergency services immediate access. The Council Out of Hours Emergency Number is 020 8744 2442.

Both you, as a plot holder, and the Council have liability under the Occupiers Liability Act.

Health and safety on allotments is everyone's responsibility. You need to make sure your plot is as safe as possible for everyone. You have a duty of care for anyone on your plot regardless of whether they have permission to be there. What this means is that you must minimize hazards and risks (for example always use tools safely, beware of sharp edges on materials etc).

An injury to yourself, or authorised people accompanying you to the site must be sent as a written report, if relevant, to the Council. The Council must show due care and attention in the management of the allotment site in this regard.

The Site Committee can assist the Council by providing signage for First Aid equipment (if provided on your site) and appropriate contacts. Where a Site Committee has provided such First Aid equipment it should ensure that it is regularly re-stocked where necessary and the materials remain in-date.

1.15 - Any special condition which the Council consider necessary to preserve the allotment from deterioration must be observed and carried out.

1.16 - The Council Allotment Officer (or Site Committees on their behalf) will carry out regular site inspections usually in the Spring and Autumn to assess the plot against the Allotment Terms and Conditions. If any plot is found to be in breach of the Terms and Conditions, then the termination procedure will be activated.

1.17 - New plotholders are encouraged to seek mentors from existing plot holders to get guidance and advice in the annual cycle of an allotment. Existing plot holders are also encouraged to volunteer as mentors for new plot holders.

1.18 - The first 6 months of your tenancy are a probationary period. We may terminate your tenancy during this period if you do not cultivate your plot or if you breach the Allotment Terms and Conditions. We will always issue a warning letter setting out our concerns and give you a calendar month to make improvements. If improvements are unsatisfactory after this time then we will issue a Termination of Tenancy notice. During the probationary period there is no right of appeal. Site Committees will be informed when any probationary tenancies are issued.

1.19 - Improved biodiversity is a key aim of the Council, and allotments already are a haven for wildlife. We encourage any wildlife friendly practices as long as these do not disadvantage surrounding plot holders. Any proven threat to protected species will result in immediate termination of your tenancy.

1.20 - It is your responsibility to tell both the Council and Site Committee of any change in your contact details.

## **FOOD WASTE**

An article in the news had some shocking waste statistics. **Every day** the following vegetables are thrown into the waste by UK homes: -

- 4.4 million potatoes
- 2.7 million carrots
- 1.2 million tomatoes
- 1 million onions

One third of all food is wasted in the UK. Reducing this waste would help in solving the issues of food and financial poverty. If you throw food away, you are throwing away money!

Allotment holders are well aware of the time, care and effort that is needed to produce food crops and this is an incentive to avoid waste. If you have spare produce, take time to harvest it and distribute it to family and acquaintances. Our neighbours at home get the inevitable surplus of French beans and even a box of gooseberries in a bumper year to make themselves a top-quality crumble.

Preserving is another way to avoid waste, jams, coulis and chutneys are easy to make and there is a satisfaction in having a preserves cupboard. Also good to recycle glass jars to contain these products for storage.

I also forage at the allotment. If plants aren't producing show bench specimens, they can still provide a few green leaves or a wonky root to be trimmed and sliced into a stir fry or a stew. Various herbs are allowed to propagate themselves to provide fennel, marjoram, lemon balm and sorrel with no input from me apart from collecting their growth for my cooking.

All Brassicas will produce flower shoots in their second year. My sprout plants were badly infested with aphids this year during the very hot weather. The sprouts are the size of a pea on several of the plants but they are still healthy and I am harvesting flower shoots that are like tender stem broccoli.

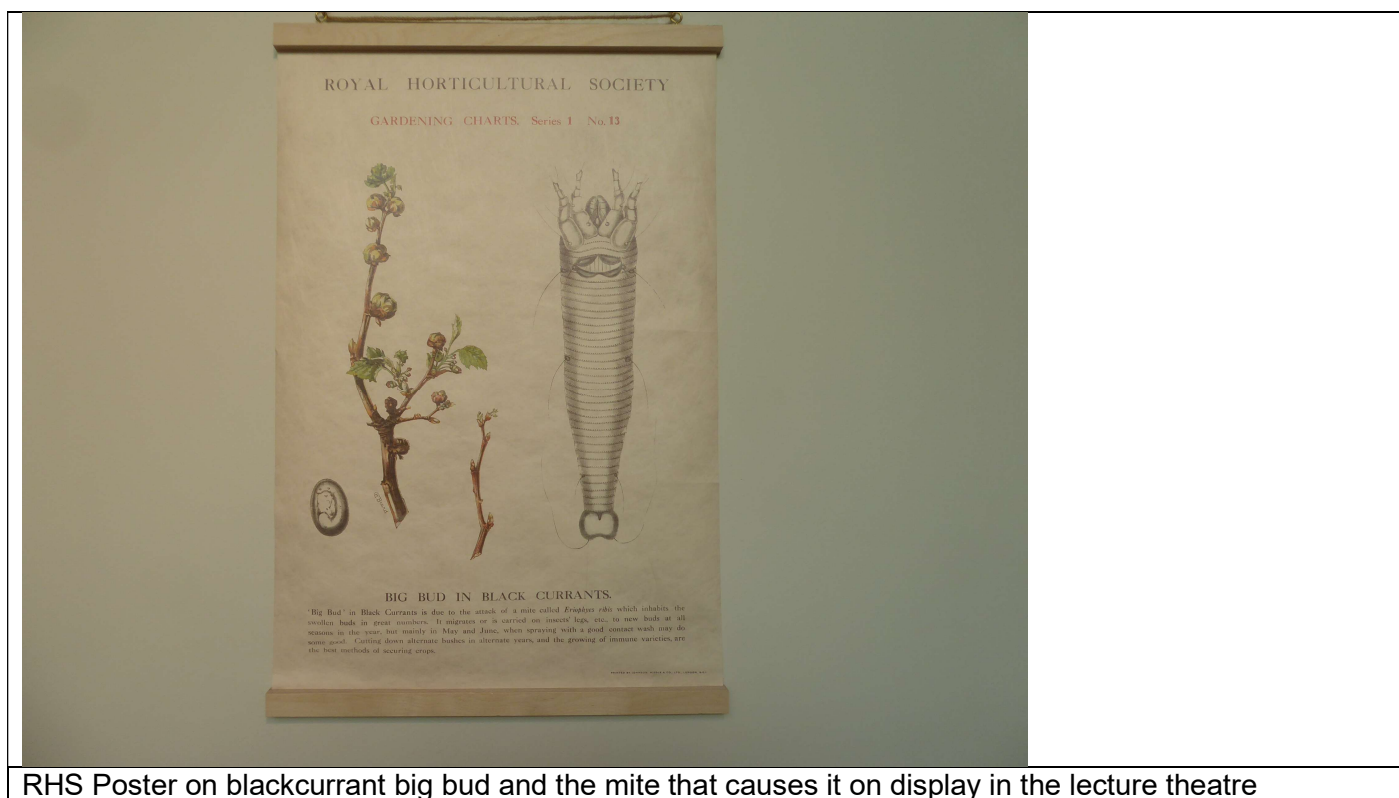
The carrot harvest started in July 2022 with the thinnings from the sowing and finished on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. The carrots kept well in the ground, despite this year's hard and long frosts. They had a minimum of protection, just the Enviromesh that kept out the carrot root fly. There is some slug damage but nothing serious and they still taste like carrots. Similarly the leeks are adapted to our cold weather and lasted until early March.

## **WISLEY LABORATORY**

RHS Wisley have opened their old Laboratory as a mini museum. There are interesting displays on the roles played by the laboratory on plant research and horticultural techniques, but be warned visiting Wisley at the moment is badly affected by road works! In the lecture theatre they have a copy of the May 28<sup>th</sup> 1921 RHS National Diploma in Horticulture Exam paper which has questions such as: -

- 1) *Describe as clearly as possible the treatment you would advise for a heavy soil to ensure a good tilth in the Spring. Also give details of the preparation of the soil for sowing Onions, Carrot, Beet etc.*
- 2) *Give a list of the kinds of varieties of fruit you would plant in a kitchen garden of 2 acres, without walls, presuming the owner desired variety, and not ignoring the necessity of extending the harvest period as long as possible.*

Six out of the eight questions to be answered in three hours. Lawn, rose and peach cultivation also featured. Nothing changes in the horticultural world except perhaps the size of the garden!



RHS Poster on blackcurrant big bud and the mite that causes it on display in the lecture theatre

## ***ALOO GHOBİ/GAJAR CURRY***

This is a recipe sourced from the Penguin Indian Cookery book by Dharamjit Singh, dating back to the late 70's. It was originally ***aloo ghobi***, has been plain *aloo* or *aloo gajar* on occasions and is a quick and easy recipe with a restricted palate of variable ingredients.

Peel and cut the *aloo*, potato into 2 centimetre sized pieces. Prepare *gajar*, carrots if these are your choice to a similar size and the *ghobi*, cauliflower can be a little larger. Allow 100 – 200 gm of veg per person. Any green leaves from the cauli can be shredded and added towards the end of the cook. Any green brassica or spinach/chard can be substituted.

Cover the bottom of a large pan with a thin layer of vegetable oil, heat and throw in 3 teaspoons of whole mustard seeds. Put on the lid as they will pop in the hot oil and keep on a low heat until the popping dies down. Put in the spuds and carrot but hold back the *ghobi* or greens if you are using them. Stir fry the veg regularly until it begins to crisp up and also soften in the case of new spuds such as Charlottes, about 10 minutes. Add in 2-3 teaspoons of turmeric powder, 2 tsp each of cumin and coriander and some chilli if you wish. Fry-in the spices and then add water to just cover the veg. Add the cauli or greens at this stage, give it a good shake to coat and put on the lid to steam and finish the cooking, about 10-20 minutes, with an occasional stir to bring it all together. This is a mild curry that you can 'chilli up' to your taste, it is quick to make and is also good cold.

This curry showcases the flavour of turmeric with a smoky element from the popped mustard seeds. Reviewing it for the newsletter has prompted me to think that it could be good beetroot, using the green tops as the second element, something to try this year.

**Phil Iddison**

[Plot 308/309]

On behalf of Bushy  
Park Allotments  
Association

Please contact the Council via their website

[https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/parks\\_and\\_open\\_spaces/allotments](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/services/parks_and_open_spaces/allotments)  
**for any matters relating to your tenancy or the T&Cs. Please also  
report thefts, gate issues & water leaks directly to the Council,  
quoting your plot number if this is relevant to the issue.**

Contact me - [phil.iddison@arcadis.com](mailto:phil.iddison@arcadis.com) about the newsletter.