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**FUTURE EVENTS -**

**AGM**

Thursday 10th November, starts at 8pm at Bullen Hall (note new venue). Latest date for nominations for new Committee members is 27th October. HURRY!

For details see page 2

**CHRISTMAS CAFE**

Sunday 18th December

11am - 1pm

Never mind if it snows! There will be lots of warming drinks and a wonderful choice of seasonal delights to eat.

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**REBUILDING OF PARK WALL**

Work is well advanced on repairs to the stretch of park wall between the fire-damaged stable building and the cricket club. At first it was thought that only the top few courses of bricks would need to be repaired, but a later inspection found that the grade II-listed wall was leaning dangerously and the Bushy Park authorities decided that the wall should be taken down to its foundations and rebuilt. This meant the fire-damaged walls on the southern end of the stable building were no longer supported by the park wall, and they were taken down to ensure the safety of the workmen.

However, the contractors have salvaged as many bricks as possible and have also removed all the debris from the site.

At the AGM we will give details of proposals for you to consider concerning renovation of the part of the stable block still standing after the fire.

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**Contributions for the next newsletter?** - to jenbourne@btinternet.com

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**THE PLOTHOLDER**

**www.paddocks-allotments.org.uk**

Grand turn-out at the Autumn Social and Produce Show!

This year’s big annual get-together took place on Sunday 11 September and was a resounding success. The pumpkins were bigger, the scarecrows scary, the fruit and veg more impressive, and the food and drink more delicious than ever before. A couple of light showers made everyone appreciate the shelter provided by our brand new gazebos and drove so many people into the drinks tent that the beer ran out …

More pictures of the day and full details of prizewinners on page 3

Left: measuring the tallest sunflower
Recipes

**Sausage, Pumpkin and Sage Casserole**

- 50g/1 3/4oz butter
- 6 good-quality sausages, pricked several times
- 1 onion, peeled, thinly sliced
- 3 banana shallots, peeled, finely chopped
- 1 tsp chopped fresh sage
- 1 small pumpkin, peeled, seeds removed, cut into equal-sized pieces
- 1 tbsp white wine vinegar
- 1 tsp caster sugar
- 200g/7oz canned chopped tomatoes
- 400g/14oz canned cannellini beans, drained, rinsed
- 500ml/1 1/4pt chicken stock
- Salt and freshly ground black pepper
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh flatleaf parsley, to serve

**Roasted Garlic and Apple Chutney**

- 1 whole bulb of garlic
- 3 large onions, peeled and chopped into small chunks
- 1.5kg apples, cored and roughly chopped into small chunks
- A couple of large handfuls of raisins
- 1 tsp ground coriander
- 1 tsp paprika
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 1 tsp salt
- 1 mug of brown sugar (white will also do)
- 2 mugs of cider vinegar

**Method**

1. Slice the very top off the garlic bulb so that you can just see the flesh of the garlic cloves through the skin. Pop this onto a baking tray, top side up, and into the oven 190°C/375°F/gas 5 for 45 mins.
2. Put all the other ingredients into a large saucepan and bring to the boil. Give them a stir now and then and bring back to a simmer. When your garlic is roasted (it will be soft and squishy), squeeze the garlic from the root end out of the bulb and into the pot. Let the chutney simmer uncovered for about 1 1/2 – 2 hrs, stirring from time to time.
3. The chutney should be ready when it becomes a thick porridge-like consistency. Spoon this into sterilised jars, close, cool and store in the cupboard for approx 3 months to mature.

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**News from your Committee**

**WELCOME TO NEW TENANTS**

Richard and Tessa Pain (plot 3), Marie Jones and Philip Alexander (plot 18), Allan and Vanessa Hyde (plot 48f), Wenjyun Sun and Qingan Huang (plot 107), Marc-Alexander Small (plot 121), Matthew Dodd-Noble and Lucy Thwaites (plot 183), Alan Fraser (plot 184), Claire Boutsavdas (plot 191b), Zoe and Edward Millington-Jones (plot 37f).

**THE OFFICE** Open every Sunday, 11am – 12 noon.

**THE PLOTHOLDERS’ COMMITTEE**

Marguerite Pocock (Secretary), Gavin Collins (Treasurer), Chris Pocock and Scott Hillman have recently resigned from the committee. Our thanks go out to them for all the hard work they’ve put in.

Over many years Marguerite has made a significant contribution to the RPA and in her role as Secretary she has worked tirelessly for the benefit of the plotholders. Chris’s work may sometimes have gone unnoticed but his practical contribution to site maintenance and facilities, eg the compost toilet, has been invaluable.

Gavin has contributed a great deal to the fund-raising and financial well-being of the Association. And Scott has brought his skills to the ongoing negotiations over the possible renovation of the burnt-out Seed Store.

It with great sadness and regret that we have to pass on the news that committee member Angus Carswell recently died after a short illness. We will all miss him.

At next month’s AGM, on Thursday 10 November, the members of the Plotholders’ Committee for the coming year are elected. We are always looking for new people to join the team that helps keep our site running smoothly. We meet about once a month and deal with issues such as the waiting list, new lets, rent collections, plot inspections, the pumps, general site maintenance, the bee and wildlife areas, and social events like the Seedling Sale and the Autumn Produce Show.

**Why not join us?**

If you’d like to volunteer, you must be proposed and seconded by two tenants/plotholders. Collect a form from the Seed Store Café or from the shed by the pedestrian gate, and submit it by 27 October.

**THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE**

**Council appointees:** Tania Mathias (Chair), Jonathan Cardy, Gareth Evans, Jerry Elloy

**Tenants:** Bob Trevillion (Deputy Chair), Susan Saunders (Secretary), Gavin Collins, David Harnden, Chris Pocock

**WAITING LIST**

On Sunday 4 September we re-opened our waiting list to residents of Hampton Wick and South Teddington who want to put their name down for a plot. Applicants apply in person on a first-come, first-served basis. So, unsurprisingly, there was a long queue outside the gate to the site well before 11 o’clock on the first morning. Over 40 people applied for a plot within a single hour – and the list has continued to grow steadily every Sunday since. It’s a testament to how amazingly popular allotments have become and how keen families are to grow their own.

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The views expressed elsewhere in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the committee.
Competition Prizewinners

**GIANT PUMPKINS**

Largest pumpkin
M Artin Scotton (plot 59)

Heaviest pumpkin
62.1kg Laura and Abigail Avery (plot 65)
57.3kg M Artin Scotton (plot 59)
35.08kg Popy and Lily Wood (plot 102)
26.87kg Steve Todd and Philip Smith (plot 80)
23.76kg Bethan and Robert Griffiths (plots 84 & 85)

**SCARECROWS**

Age 6 or under
1st Patrick Neilan (plot 190)

Age 7–10
1st equal Sophie Eddington (age 10) (plot 10f)
1st Bethan Griffiths (age 10) (plots 84 & 85)
2nd Robert Griffiths (age 10) (plots 84 & 85)

Age 11–16
1st Alice Newbould (plot 88f)
2nd equal Ella Geraty
2nd equal Emily Coates (age 13) (plot 142)

**TALLEST SUNFLOWERS**

284cm Thea, Tom and Sylvie Royce (ages 10, 8 and 14 months) (plot 4)
261cm Eva Wlcock (age 8) (plot 129)
245cm Orla Bell (age 8) (plot 42f)
228cm M ax Buckingham (age 14) (plot 185)
200cm Jack and Tom Croft (ages 7 and 10) (plot 73)
182cm Sylvia and M ema Nesbitt (ages 11 and 7) (plot 153f)

**VEG CROPS**

Three examples of the same veg - roots
1st Hilary, Bethan and Robert Griffiths (plots 84 & 85)
2nd Liz and Gray Rigge (plot 83)
3rd Laura and Rob Newbould (plot 84 & 85)

Three examples of the same veg - alliums
1st Laura and Rob Newbould (plot 88f)
2nd Steve Todd and Philip Smith (plot 80)
3rd Denise Warren (plot 142)

Three examples of the same veg - squash
1st Steve Todd and Philip Smith (plot 80)
2nd Boula Rice (plot G)
3rd Denise Warren (plot 142)

Three examples of the same veg - other
1st Denise Warren (plot 142)
2nd Gill Hiley (plot 50)

Five examples of different veg
1st David and Julia Lainchbury (plots 131f and 132b)
2nd Philip Smith (plot 80)
3rd Nick and Janet Baylis (plot 110f)

**FRUIT CROPS**

Three examples of apples or pears
1st Nicholas M arteland (plot 99)
2nd David and Julia Lainchbury (plots 131f and 132b)
3rd Eve Blackwood (plot 151f)

Five examples of stone fruit
1st Denise Warren (plot 142)

Small plate of soft fruit
1st Helen Turner and Caroline Pritchett (plot 63)
2nd Eve Blackwood (plot 151f)
3rd Hilary Griffiths (plots 84 & 85)

**FLOWERS**

Mixed floral arrangement
1st Julia Lainchbury (plots 131f and 132b)
2nd Liz Rigge (plot 83)
3rd Emily Coates (age 13) (plot 142)

Three stems from a single plant
1st Denise Warren (plot 142)
2nd Christine Knight (plot 82)
3rd Liz and Gray Rigge (plot 83)

Mixed herbs in a jam jar
1st Julia Lainchbury (plots 131f and 132b)
2nd Jenny Bourne (plot 27f)
3rd Hilary Griffiths (plots 84 & 85)

**YOUNG PLOTHOLDERS**

Funny faces or ugly bugs
Age 6 or under
1st Freya Read (age 6) (plot 154)
2nd Robert Griffiths (age 8) (plots 84 & 85)
3rd Bethan Griffiths (age 10) (plots 84 & 85)

Age 7–9
1st Robert Griffiths (age 8) (plots 84 & 85)

Age 10–11
1st Jack Croft (age 10) (plot 73)
2nd Sophie Eddington (age 10) (plot 10f)
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Sue Croft - Channel Swimmer...

Plotholder Sue Croft is aiming to swim the Channel next year. I asked her about this daunting challenge, on Sunday 8 October on her plot.

What are you going to do?
I’m going to attempt a solo swim uninterrupted, from Samphire Ho Beach, Dover to Wissant Beach, near Calais, 21 miles as the crow flies but 30 miles to swim. It will take place in September, when the temperature will be up to 18°C and a lot more bearable.

Why?
A very good question. It’s something I and other Dover swimmers always want to do. We’re British, an island nation and the Channel is an iconic stretch of water.

How are you preparing for it?
Most weekends I go to Dover harbour, where there’s a training camp run by an amazing, 76 year old woman, Freda Streeter, known as ‘the General’. She bosses us all about. Her daughter’s swum the Channel 44 times. The camp takes place every weekend from May to September, in all weathers – we sit on the beach as there’s no shelter. We swim for an hour, come to the water’s edge for a quick cup of Maxim, a sugar drink, then back in to the water. This routine goes on for 6 – 8 hours. At home I swim for 4 hours most weeks at Hampton Pool, or at Tooting Bec, a cold water pool – it’s glorious, full of mad people! The cold helps with the cold water acclimatisation and I do long swims, but not as good as the sea. I swim 4 times a week in various pools when the Dover camp is closed.

Tell me about the relay Channel swim last weekend
It was a huge team effort, with poor water visibility – no pool end, endless and very aware of big ships around, you’re utterly dependent on the 3 team members in the boat being your eyes... you’re literally putting your life in their hands. When you come out of the water (after an hour’s swimming) it’s like being a child, they get your swimsuit off, dry you, wrap you up in warm blankets and feed you. You feed every hour in the water, from a drinking bottle, either with a rope round and thrown to you or passed in a fishing net.

The rules are that you cannot touch the boat or another person, you can only wear a swimsuit, goggles and one swim hat. You can’t come out of the water and have to tread water when feeding. Salt burn in the mouth is a danger, you learn to breathe out through the mouth as there’s a danger of salt in the system blowing your kidneys. Local, unpasteurised honey is the best thing for salt burn, a natural treatment for burns.

What are you not looking forward to?
Jellyfish. They’re actually quite small in the Dover straits, tennis ball size and purple. Water visibility is so poor and they move very slowly. It’s like stinging nettle stings; an antidote to stings is tomatoes, we found out in France, the acid neutralises the sting. The people in the boat have a whistle, they’re constantly looking out for obstacles. Cold is another thing I don’t like. Practice, practice, practice – I’m much better now. A year ago in Tooting pool the hypothermia made my shiver uncontrollably – it takes a long time to get back to normal and you mustn’t take a shower – Channel swimmers vets get dry, put on loads of warm layers, then go for a walk, looks mad in a woolly hat and a fleece on a July day! You must eat food slowly, bit by bit. The cold worries me the most, I’m too skinny – my winter project is to bulk up, with fat and muscle.

W hat are you most looking forward to?
Not having to drive down to Dover every weekend; not spending 6 – 8 hours in cold water every week!

How are you training now?
Winter training in the gym, working on speed and power. There’s six months to get ready, then the Master Swimmer Club to get me swimming at Easter. I’m a little pit pony next to the race horses, but you need to be a plodder for Channel swimming.

I asked her boys, Jack, 10 and Tom, 7, what they thought of their mum swimming the Channel -

JACK said, "She’s become a little crazy - Come on, we need to go for a swim! when we don’t want to, we have to sit out in the cold for hours. She’s not very good in the cold. The last time (the Channel relay swim) was really annoying. I was kept up ‘til 11.30 waiting for her.”

TOM said, "I think she’s going to do very good. The worst thing is she may get eaten by a shark. I’m a little bit worried. She swam to France, she started at 7 o’clock. We went to a fish and chip shop, I had sausage and chips. She said, ‘It was a very tiring swim’. After I asked her what she saw and she didn’t say anything because she was asleep!”

I think we’re all in awe and will be supporting Sue all the way until next September. Way to go, Sue!

How to contact us:
You can leave mail for the Committee in the postbox in the shed by the gate.

www.paddocks-allotments.org.uk

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