

# ROYAL PADDOCKS ALLOTMENTS



HAMPTON  
WICK

ROYAL PADDOCKS ALLOTMENTS NEWSLETTER

No 39 November 2012

## THE PLOTHHOLDER

www.paddocks-allotments.org.uk

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### FUTURE EVENT –

Sunday 9th  
December

11am – 1pm

Christmas  
Café

Enjoy festive fare, with hot drinks and mulled wine in the welcoming atmosphere of the Seed Store Christmas Café!

## Come and vote at this year's AGM on 13 November

Our Annual General Meeting takes place this year at **8pm on Tuesday 13th November**. It will be held at Hampton Wick Royal Cricket Club, which is adjacent to our allotments site. The entrance is on Park Road/Sandy Lane next to the pedestrian gate into Bushy Park. Car parking is available.

### What's on the agenda, and why should you attend?

As well as the usual reports on the year's activities, prize-giving for best plots, and election of committee members, there will also be a discussion and vote on the future of the fire-damaged Seed Store building.

### Three options are being presented for what we do with it:

- 1 Restore three-room brick building c. £33,000
- 2 Restore two-room brick building *plus* construct new wooden cabin c. £33,000
- 3 Demolish brick building and replace with new wooden cabin c. £23,000



1

Details about each of the options have been emailed to you and can also be found on our website and posted on the shed inside the main gate.

Funds are available from existing resources for all these options, meaning **there is no need to increase rents**.



2

At this year's AGM, you can vote for the option you prefer. Each registered tenant will be entitled to one vote. Votes will only be accepted from tenants who attend the AGM. The option with the



3

highest number of votes will be the one chosen.

**It's an important decision, so come and have your say!**

### Autumn Social highlights... see pages 3 & 4

A fantastic turn-out on 16th September for the Autumn Social and Produce show! George Loosemore, right, displays his First and Second Prize rosettes for his winning veg. Full list of prizewinners and many more images from all the categories in the show on pages 3 and 4.



Send contributions for the next newsletter to [jenbourne@btinternet.com](mailto:jenbourne@btinternet.com)

# News from your Committee

## WELCOME TO NEW TENANTS

Amy Sims (plot 51); Martin Pluck & Nicole July (plot 177f); Sarah Ward (plot 187f); Karen Saywell & John Hourigan (plot 81f); Nick & Suzanne Poaros (plot 172f); Tom McLaughlin & Rebecca Sampson (plot 98b); Antoinette King (plot 129b); Neil & Vera Kenyon (plot 2); Tracy Caird (plot 121); David Gaffney (plot 68); Caroline Helm & David Peregrine-Jones (plot 185f); Susie Whalley (Plot 177b).

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

## THE PLOTHOLDERS' COMMITTEE

Bob Trevillion, Chair (plots 136b, 137)  
David Harnden, Deputy Chair (plot 152)  
Chris Nix, Secretary (plot 12f, 146f)  
Carol Dukes, Treasurer (plot 77)  
Jenny Bourne, Social Secretary (plots 27f, 28b)  
Alan Buckingham, Website (plot 185f)  
Ashley Catto, Sheds (plots A,H)  
Kay Gillespie (plot 86f)  
Gill Hiley (plot 50)  
Barry Houlston (plot 133b)  
Tricia McLellan (plot 105)  
Martin Scotton (plot 59)

## THE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Council appointees:** Tania Mathias (Chair), Jonathan Cardy, Jerry Elloy, Gareth Evans  
**Tenants:** David Harnden (Deputy Chair), Susan Saunders (Secretary), Bob Trevillion, Carol Dukes, Barry Houlston

## Café News

The Jubilee Picnic was a bit of a wash-out, but the rain didn't stop our café volunteers from dressing for the occasion – with elegant wellies to complement the tiaras!

And for Hallowe'en the ghosts, ghouls and bats were out – with spiders making the



café a creepy place! Of course, the cakes were excellent!



## Bees move into the des-res corner of the site

The beehive area is now up and functioning with honey already in at least one hive. The deadhedge was constructed at the same time as the area was cleared, to act as a visual and physical barrier between the hives and the park walk way. Watch this space for fascinating bee facts from beekeepers, Tina and Tony, in the next edition!



## Sue's Big Swim by Sue Croft

At 8pm on Friday 14 September, I started my attempt to swim across the Channel from Samphire Hoe beach close to Dover. It was a bit odd to be starting from a beach in the pitch black of night but sometimes tide and weather conditions mean you have to start a swim in the dark hours. For the first few hours the sea was lovely and calm and a remarkably warm (for the Channel!) 19 degrees. But by midnight the wind had picked up to a strong Force 5 which made trying to receive feeds from my support crew on the boat rather tricky as each time the wind and waves made the boat lurch over me and fill my feed cups with sea water. I haven't swum for more than 1 hour in the past in the dark so was surprised that it was quite pleasant.



*Sue Croft all set to swim, at Dover – with the cross-channel ferry in the background to prove it!*

Because I was at sea and there were no buildings near by, you had the most amazing night sky to look at, and being clear the stars were truly amazing. Also so the boat and my friends on the boat could see me I had large green LED lights attached to me, this had the effect of giving me a green halo in the water and as my arms passed through the water they left a trail of bright glowing bubbles. A bit like a sparkler in the water, lovely and a bit distracting at times but very welcome.

As the hours passed I was very aware that I wasn't making much progress. I could see the Dover lighthouse to my left and the harbour lights of Folkestone to my right. We had started the swim against an incoming spring tide which my pilot thought would give me an advantage on the other side of the Channel. But the tide was proving too strong for me; I'm not a fast swimmer more a plodder although I can plod for a long time. At 3am I said stop, I wasn't tired, injured or even cold, I just knew I wasn't going anywhere and it would be another 3 hours before the sun came up and another 10 hours swimming after that. This was not the day I was going to succeed. So somewhat shell shocked I climbed into the boat. At that point I found out my poor support team had been horribly sea sick and I think were relieved to be going home.

That weekend was the Autumn Social which at first I nearly bottled out at going to, but am so glad I went. It was a lovely sense of normality to be helping on the BBQ amongst friends.

I'd like to say thank you to everyone who sponsored me; we've raised over £2,000 for Me Too & Co charity who has asked me to pass on their thanks.

And the one question people are asking now is, will I do it again and the answer is yes, I'm booked to try again in July next year, more daylight hours then!



# The Autumn Social 2012

This year's annual get-together took place on Sunday 16th September. It wasn't the warmest or sunniest of days, yet scores of ploholders came to show off their best fruit, veg, flowers, cakes, jams and chutneys. The pumpkins and scarecrows were as scary as ever. And the cakes, BBQ, beer and wine were delicious!

Many of the images you see on these two pages were taken by professional photographer Stephanie Rushton. Thanks, too, to Jem Negus and to Jenny Bourne for all the others.

Take a look at the RPA website for plenty more photographs.



Are you in any of them?

## Competition prizewinners

### PUMPKINS

**Heaviest pumpkin**  
1st Freya Read (plot 155): 40.86kg  
2nd Steve Todd (plot 80): 30.12kg

**The people's pumpkin**  
Bethan Griffiths (plots 84/85): 0.06kg



### SCARECROW COMPETITION

Judges: Sarah and Stanley Colclough (comments below)



**Age: up to 6**  
1st Horrid Henry (A1)  
*Lovely use of papier mache! Particularly attractive hairstyle. Clever use of strings on hands to scare the birds*  
2nd Dingle Dangle (A2)  
*Great farmyard style. Nice use of old straw hat. Good name, too!*

**Age: 7-11 years**  
1st The Ork (B3)  
*This scary Ork really stands out. Fantastic styling. Wellies work really well! Lots of hard work gone into this scarecrow.*  
2nd B2 (Robert Griffiths)  
*Clever topical theme with the Olympic swimmer, even has its own medal.*  
Highly commended: B1



**Age: 12-16 years**  
1st C1  
*This scary pumpkin will really scare the birds. Fantastic face with a pointed nose. Fingernails a very unusual touch!*



### VEG CROPS

**Three examples of the same veg – roots**  
1st George Loosemore (plot 75)  
2nd George Loosemore (plot 75)  
3rd Steve Todd (plot 80)

**Three examples of the same veg – brassicas**  
1st Sue Croft (plot 78)

**Three examples of the same veg – other**  
1st Barbara Hulm (plot 93)  
2nd Steve Todd (plot 80)  
3rd Denise Warren (plot 142)

**Five potatoes or beans**  
1st Dan Redd (plot 155)  
2nd Gill Hiley (plot 50)  
3rd Isobel King (plot 57)

**Five best on a plate**  
1st Boula Rice (plot 44)  
2nd Dave and Jenny Gilbert (plot 30)



### FRUIT CROPS

**Three apples**  
1st Hilary Griffiths (plots 84/85)  
2nd Paul Alexander (plot 18)  
3rd Joe Sells (plot 66)

**Seven stone fruit**  
1st Denise Warren (plot 142)  
2nd Dave and Jenny Gilbert (plot 30)

**Small plate of soft fruit**  
1st Paul Alexander (plot 18)  
2nd James Greville (plot 26)  
3rd Denise Warren (plot 142)



### FLOWERS

**Mixed floral arrangement**  
1st Ruth Lewis (plot 22)  
2nd Boula Rice (plot 44)  
3rd Tom and Jack Croft (plots 73/74)

**Single stems**  
1st Denise Warren (plot 142)  
2nd Elaine Sturman (plot 186b)



### CAKES

1st Sarah Colclough (plot 39f)  
*Iced cake decorated with vegetables: Tastes as amazing as it looks! Good flavour and an even bake.*  
2nd Andrea and Max: Carrot cake  
*A fantastic example... Even texture with good balance of cake and frosting.*  
3rd joint Joanie Fulton and Freya Read



# More from The Autumn Social 2012...



## JAMS AND CHUTNEYS

### Jams

- 1st Sarah Colclough (plot 39f) (Port, lemon and fig, and Blackcurrant)
- 2nd Hilary Griffiths (plots 84/85) (Pear, ginger and summer berry)
- 3rd Ruth Walker (plot 21f) (Raspberry, rhubarb and ginger)

### Chutneys

- 1st Hilary Griffiths (plots 84/85) (Red tomato chutney)
- 2nd Ruth Walker (plot 21f) (Bengal chutney)
- 3rd Jackie Petherbridge (plot 190) (Pear chutney)



## YOUNG PLOTHOLDERS

### Funny veg

- Age 6 or under
- 1st Patrick Neilan (age 5) (plot 190)
- 2nd Isabella Read (age 2) (plot 155)
- Age 7-11
- 1st Ciara Newbould (age 9) (plot 88f)
- 2nd Ciara Newbould (age 9) (plot 88f)



### Mixed bunch

- 1st Robert Griffiths (age 9) (plots 84/85)
- 2nd Alice Newbould (age 9) (plot 88f)





# Tarragon of Virtue episode 3

A wry romantic look at allotment life by Helen Nix

*In our last episode, our heroine Tarragon's shed was broken into, and she turned to our hero Monty for comfort. But, on being taken to the cafe for a cheering cup of tea, she ran into her childhood sweetheart, Rowan. Monty was crushed.*

It was raining that morning, as Tarragon watered the tomato seeds which were growing quietly at the windowsill.

"It seems a shame to have to water them when it's raining outside," said Rowan, yawning and stretching expansively.

"You look like the cat who's got the cream. Do you want another coffee?" she asked, as she finished her watering. "You must be tired."

He smiled, and reached out his cup. "You know me. Never yet known to say no."

She smiled back, and made the coffee, before sitting down next to him on the chocolate brown sofa. She picked up her old box of seed packets and started flicking through them casually.

"What are you doing?" he asked.

"Seeing if there are any seeds I can swap at the seedy swap next week. I've got some of those pumpkin seeds you gave me left over. I don't have enough room and..."

"Give away my patented pumpkin seeds!" Rowan snapped, his eyes blazing. "I don't think so."

"Rowan? Are you alright?" Her eyes looked deep into his, brimming with concern.

"Of course I'm alright!" he bellowed. Then he stopped, his eyes locking with hers. He took a deep breath before continuing. "Thing is Taz, those are quite special seeds. I've won the biggest pumpkin competition five years running now, and... I know it's silly, but I really want to carry on with that. But every year I feel I've got more to lose..."

Tarragon shook her head gently, her brow furrowed in concern.

"But it's a pumpkin competition. It's just supposed to be a bit of fun. Even if I gave the seeds away, you don't even know that they'd come up."

"Oh they'd come up alright. That's a fast growing variety, almost like..." he stopped, looking off into the middle distance, an odd gleam in his eye.

"Rowan... I mean it, you're beginning to worry me now."

He jolted back, and grinned. "Nope, no need to worry. I'm fine. Just all those late nights catching up with me. You're right. I've been tired. Look, I gave those seeds to you. Grow them, swap them, put them on eBay if you like. Whatever makes you happy. I'll give a bit of a think to what I can swap with people too." And with that, he swigged down his coffee, kissed her on the forehead, and bounced out of the

room. Tarragon shook her head again, and turned back to her packets of seeds.

The morning of the seedy swap dawned bright and golden and there was a bustle around the tables underneath the little marquee as all the ploholders pored through the little envelopes of seeds looking for treasures. Monty was manning one of the tables where the plot holders could give their seeds for swapping.

"Hello Monty! I haven't seen you in ages," Tarragon said.

He looked up from his seed packets. "Tarragon! Yes, it's... It's been a long time." He glanced across at Rowan. "But you've been busy, I know. How are you?"

"I'm great, really good," she said quickly.

Monty eyed her carefully. "That's good to hear. Now really. How are you?"

She looked deep into his brown eyes, then looked away quickly. "I told you, I'm great. Weighed down by all these seeds. Who do I give them to? You?"

"Yes, it's me." And as she handed over her ten packets of precious seed, their fingers touched, she drew a sharp breath and pulled away. He held her gaze steady.

"This is a good crop. You've been very generous. Thank you."

Rowan came up behind her. "Hello Monty - here's mine, all labelled. My patented green manure. Secret to my pumpkin prowess."

"Green manure?" asked Tarragon.

"Yeah, you grow it for a short while then turn it back over. It fixes nitrogen back into the soil, increases water retention, and while it's growing helps reduce weeds. All of which turns your pumpkins into Mr Happy."

"Mr Happy?" asked Monty.

"Mr Happy," said Rowan firmly. "Especially if you use it alongside ordinary manure. That's what I've been using on my pumpkins all these years."

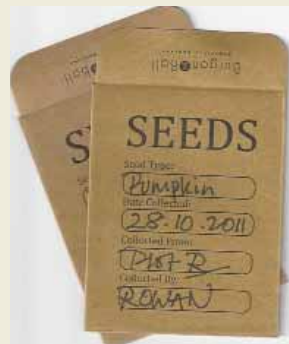
"But I thought your winning streak was really important to you Rowan. Why are you giving away your secrets?" asked Tarragon.

"You've made me reassess Taz. You made me realise that it's silly to get so competitive over the pumpkin competition. That there's more to life. This is my way of showing you how much I care. That you are the most important thing in my life."

"That's as may be. What have you put in it?" asked Monty.

Rowan turned to him rudely. "Sweet clover and some hairy vetch. It's a simple mix, but it seems to work." And as the rest of the plot holders looked on, and started grabbing at the packets of green manure, he turned back to Tarragon, and dropped on one knee.

"That's why I've got only one question left for you, Taz. Will you marry me?"



# Sarah's Winning Recipes

## Buried Treasure

It is not just vegetables that are dug out of the Royal Paddocks soil. Gill Hiley has been collecting various items which she has uncovered on her plot for some time as she explains 'every time I find something interesting I take it home and put it on my window sill'. She goes on to say 'I am constantly looking for something dropped by Henry VIII when



he was out hunting wild boar!' Her treasure is a mixture of some rather beautiful and unusual things.

Her hoard includes parts of a very old light bulb, shards of pottery, glass, flint and an old brass button. On the front of the button is a rather regal lion and on the back is the wording 'Firmin and Sons of the Strand'. A little research reveals that the company, still going today, was established in 1655 which makes it older than the Bank of England. Their buttons were even worn on uniforms at the Battles of Trafalgar, Waterloo and the American Civil War.

So if you find some buried treasure on your plot we would love to hear about it.

## Picture Competition

We're showing another interior of a shed belonging to someone on our site.

There is a **£5 garden token** for the plotholder who identifies the shed owner.

Please email your replies to [jenbourne@btinternet.com](mailto:jenbourne@btinternet.com) or put a note in a sealed envelope in the letterbox of the shed near the gate, with your name, plot number and a contact number or email address.

Who does this shed belong to?



Sarah Colclough, who was awarded first prize for both best cake and best jam at the Autumn Social, shares the recipes with which she won over this year's judges.

### TROPICAL FRUIT CAKE

- 100g crystallized pineapple or ginger, chopped
- 100g glace cherries, chopped
- 100g chopped almonds or brazils
- 350g sultanas or raisins
- 250g Self raising flour
- 175g butter
- 175g caster sugar
- 3 large eggs
- 1 tsp vanilla essence
- 3 tablespoons sherry or milk

The secret of this recipe is soaking all the fruit in brandy for 24 hours before using it!

Cream together the sugar and butter until very soft and light. Lightly mix in the eggs adding a little flour if the mix curdles. Fold in sifted flour and add sherry or milk. Add the brandy soaked fruit.

Turn into a greased lined 20cm metal cake tin. Place in a moderate oven 170 c, Gas mark 3. Bake for 1.30 mins or cooked. Brush cake with apricot glaze, cover in marzipan and ice.

The vegetable decorations are made in marzipan.



### BLACKCURRANT JAM

- 1kg blackcurrants
- 850ml water
- 3lb sugar (no need to use jam sugar)

Simmer fruit with water until soft add sugar bring to the boil until setting point has been reached. Test after 10 minutes.

### PORT, LEMON AND FIG JAM

Sadly the figs were not grown on the plot. One Saturday Kingston Market were selling fresh figs off very cheaply or this would be a very expensive jam!

- 500g fresh figs
- 500ml cheap port

- 2lbs jam sugar
- 1 lemon, finely chopped

Chop the figs and the lemon into small chunks.

Simmer for a little while in some of the port mainly to soften the lemon rind a little.

Add the sugar and then the rest of the port.

Boil until reaches setting point

Place in sterilised jars.

## How to contact us:

You can leave mail for the Committee in the letterbox in the shed by the gate.

[www.paddocks-allotments.org.uk](http://www.paddocks-allotments.org.uk)