

January 2012

Important notices

We now have an email address specifically for members to contact the committee on:
kg.allotments@virginmedia.com

Most of you will have now noticed that the secondary gate into the site has been locked. This has been done to protect the roadways through the winter months from excessive wear.

Can any plot holder who has not yet paid their rent please note that they are now overdue and if not paid by the end of January you risk losing your plot so please pop along to the shop as soon as possible

The Christmas raffle made over £100.00 so a big thank you to all those of you who took part and all who donated prizes

The next committee meeting will be on Sunday 12th February in the green shed from 11:00

Your Committee**Chairman**

Paul Shaw

Vice Chair

Annie Pillans

Treasurer

Sue Freebrey

Secretary

Robin James

Plot Letting Officer

Ian Dickerson

Project Manager

John Lucket

Officers

Sandra Sankey

Lee Bardon

Pete Vickers

Karen Dickerson

Lynne York

Rachel McHugh

Open Day 2012

The date for the 2012 open day has been set for Sunday 8th of July.

Bringing the date forward from August to July should mean there will be more produce growing on the plots than in August and hopefully we will attract more visitors by avoiding the holiday period and the London Olympics.

We have set ourselves a target of raising £2000 this year but to

do so we will need to come up with some fresh ideas to draw people in. We will be running some of the same stalls as last year but if you have any ideas that you think would be a money spinner please contact one of the committee or alternatively email to:
kg.allotments@virginmedia.com

Nearer to the open day we will be asking members if they can donate any spare produce for us to sell on the day so if you can

grow a little extra of everything it would help us out.

We will be running competitions for best fruit and veg in various categories again. These will be advertised over the coming months on the notice board and in the news letters. We would urge as many members to get involved to make the event as successful as last year.

Chickens on plots

There has been a request that we consider allowing the keeping of chickens on our site.

While the county council does not sanction the keeping of livestock on its sites, as a self managed site we do have this right as granted by the allotment act.

If we are to agree with this request we would look to put in place the following conditions.

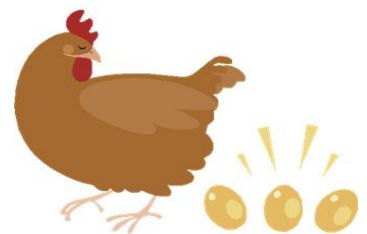
- 1) An officer would be appointed to inspect all plots with chickens on them and to which all applications to keep chickens would have to be made and their decision would be final.
- 2) All chickens would have to be kept in a secure fox proof cage.
- 3) Chicken runs would have to be kept clean and not attract vermin such as rats
- 4) Any plot holder wishing to keep chickens will need to demonstrate that they have the time to devote to their livestock and have the knowledge required to keep them healthy.
- 5) The plot holder will allow the designated officer to inspect their chickens and chicken runs at any reasonable time and to report immediately any health issues that may appear within their birds.
- 6) No plot holder will be allowed to keep more than six birds irrespective of how many plots they hold.

and mice.

- 7) No plot holder will be allowed to keep a cockerel as this is liable to cause nuisance to local residents.

If you have any comments or issues you wish to raise on this issue please contact a committee member or email kg.allotments@virginmedia.com or drop a note in the suggestion box at the shop.

All comments both for and against will be considered before any decision is made. Please respond by Sat 11th Feb

**Contact us**

We understand that it is not always easy to get in contact with us to report your concerns so we have therefore added two more ways to get hold of us. Firstly we have installed a suggestion box which can be found next to the notice board at the shop. Secondly we have set up an email address for you to contact us on. This is monitored by the chairman so any issues can quickly be raised with the rest of the committee. The address is:-

kg.allotments@virginmedia.com

Notices

We will be looking into the possibility of rainwater harvesting in an attempt to reduce the amount we pay for water rates. We will be looking at large scale projects such as rainwater cisterns and smaller scale projects such as guttering and rainwater butts for every shed.

We have a long term plan to have a community hut where plotholders can take a break and get a cup of tea or coffee. We have already contacted several building firms to see if they would like to donate an old site hut, so far without success. If anyone has any contacts that may be able to help us, please get in touch.

Site Shop

Now in stock:

- Canes
- Broad beans
- Winter peas
- Japanese Onions
- Growmore
- Poultry Manure
- Compost

Shop Opening Hours

Saturday and Sunday
11:00 - 12:00

We will be holding plant sales throughout the year at the shop for members and the general public. All plants will be raised in our greenhouses from seed or plug plants. Any member who wants to get involved is more than welcome.

Two of our members will be starting a beekeeping course in January to ensure we can maintain our hives in the proper manner. We are hoping to get a honey harvest this year and to increase the number of hives which will benefit our crops and our bank balance.

Recipe of the month

Parsnip, Chilli and Parmesan Soup

Serves 6

Preparation 10 minutes

Cooking time 40 minutes

Ingredients 3-4 tbsp Olive oil, 6 large parsnips peeled and chopped into 1cm chunks, 1 large onion peeled and chopped into 1 cm chunks, 2 garlic cloves peeled and crushed, 1.25 litres vegetable stock made from 2 stock cubes, 1 red chilli, seeds removed, finely chopped, 50g parmesan broken into pieces, 50ml single cream

To serve Crusty rolls

1) Heat some of the oil in a large pan, then add the parsnips and onion. Cook for about 5 minutes then add the garlic and stock and bring to the boil.

2) Turn down the heat to simmer then add the chilli and parmesan. Simmer for about 30 minutes or until the parsnips are soft to the touch,

3) Turn off the heat then use a hand blender to blitz until smooth. Add the cream and season to taste. Gently reheat and serve with crusty bread rolls

This recipe was supplied by Karen Dickerson.

If you wish to supply a recipe for the next newsletter please drop it into the suggestion box or email kg.allotments@virginmedia.com



Hire of Equipment

At the last committee meeting it was decided that plot holders would be allowed to make use of the equipment that the site owns for a fee of £10.00 per day. This fee will include a full tank of fuel.

Any person wishing to use the equipment must be over 18 years of age and will be required to sign a disclaimer stating that Kingsthorpe Grove Allotment Association or its officers are not responsible or liable for any injuries sustained while using the equipment howsoever caused.

Instructions will be given on the use of the equipment prior to hire. Any damage caused to the equipment by misuse will be the responsibility of the hirer.

We will be limiting the equipment we hire out at present to lawnmowers and the rotovator.

If you wish to make use of this equipment please leave your details including phone number at the shop and we will arrange a date that is convenient.

We will be announcing a date in March when we will be having a shredding day. Plot holders who have bulky woody material will have the opportunity to use the associations petrol shredder to dispose of it. We will also be having a skip delivered at the same time to get rid of any rubbish that has accumulated.



Fencing Update

We are now in a position to start purchasing new perimeter fencing. We have decided on the type of fencing we will be buying and will be visiting suppliers over the next couple of weeks to try to get the best deal. Once that is decided we will be sending in the planning application which should take six weeks, so hopefully we should be able to start work by the end of March. The fencing will be replaced in sections starting from the bottom corner by the golf course entrance and working up towards Eastern Avenue. The first stretch should be about 50 metres. As we will be erecting the fence ourselves we will be asking for volunteers to help with the work. Remember this work is being carried out for your benefit so it is in your interest to help carry this project forward. Dates when work will be carried out will be advertised in advance via the usual channels. Members whose plots run down to the bottom wall may experience some disruption during the construction process so please bear this in mind before planting right up to the wall.