

# The FHS Grapevine

Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society Summer 2012

## Mayor Opens Raised Beds

The Mayor of Barnet visited our allotment site at Gordon Road on 27th June to officially open our Garden Raised Beds. Creation of the 16 beds for the physically disabled and schoolchildren is probably the largest project ever undertaken by an allotment society in Barnet. We raised £87,678 to pay for it, restored abandoned allotment land, created an area for keeping bees, established an all weather track on the main access path, acquired a fine new fence and now have a facility for those not able to manage a standard plot to enjoy gardening. The Mayor handed over a cheque (£9,978) from Awards for All (part of Big Lottery) which will enable us to install a large log cabin and irrigation equipment. This will complete the work. A big thank you to Andrew Brown, Ray Clarke and Tony Ingram for the huge effort in managing the Project from beginning to end (see photo page 3).

## Finchley Horticultural Society AUTUMN FETE

**Sunday 9th September**

Plants for sale

Vegetable and fruit market

Cakes and homemade produce

Allotment tours

Delicious refreshments

Sunflower competition prizes

**Gordon Road Allotments,  
Gordon Road Finchley, London N3**

## FHS Events

### Barbeque at Gordon Road

**Sunday 22 July, 1pm. Don't miss it!**

Book now for our annual summer barbeque – super food, lovely place, excellent company! Fill in the booking form and return to June Brookes as soon as possible. Entrance is by numbered ticket: FHS members £5, guests £7.

### Autumn Fete

**Sunday 9th September. 2pm – 5pm**

Our second big event of the year. We will need lots of produce to sell and display. Please help make it a great success.

### Trading Hut

**Sunday 26th August 10.30am – 12.30pm**

The Hut at Gordon Road will close for the summer on 8th July, re-opening on the August Bank Holiday weekend.

### 2012 Allotments Competition

Gordon Road and Nethercourt Avenue have been entered in the Barnet Allotments Competition, run by the Barnet Federation of Allotments. Judging will take place on Saturday 7 July when all plots and sites need to be looking their best. Ray Clarke and Jenny Douglas have been entered in the best plot competition - good luck!

### Friern Barnet Summer Show

**17 - 19 August 2012. Friary Park, Friern  
Barnet Lane, North Finchley, London N12**

Members are encouraged to enter and exhibit at this local show with classes for vegetables, fruit, cut flowers, potted plants and domestic. Contact the All Saints' Arts Centre on 0208 445 8388, e-mail arts@allsaints.uk.com or visits the website at [www.fbsummershow.co.uk](http://www.fbsummershow.co.uk) for further information. Free Show entry to exhibitors.

## About the Drought

Veolia Water, our water supplier, continues to ban the use of hose pipes on allotments despite other water companies lifting the ban. With deluges of rain since the drought was declared, there must be reduced need to water plants outdoors. Greenhouses are another matter requiring regular watering to keep plants alive. And for those who find lifting a heavy can difficult, it seems particularly mean. Richard King of the Allotments Federation 'fears that older residents on large allotment sites would be worst hit. Carrying a large number of watering cans 30 yards is heavy going'.

The Royal Horticultural Society has the following tips for allotments holders to cope with the drought:

- It's a bit late now but note that there are some relatively drought resistant potatoes: Desiree, Marfona, and Robinta.
- Carrots, sweetcorn and pumpkins/squash make good use of water and retain moisture.
- Mulch fruit with organic matter (eg our free Council compost) to retain more moisture.
- Avoid digging to stop soil moisture loss and just scratch the surface to sow seeds.
- Fertiliser will help plants grow good roots to search out moisture.
- Keep an eye on the weather forecast – delay watering in case nature provides.
- Water early in the morning or at dusk.

Aim to soak the roots where the water is less likely to evaporate.

And these are a few crazy ideas from elsewhere:

- Grow cacti – Charlie Dimmock recommends a drought garden.
- Consider installing a bore hole.
- Have a watering party – invite your friends to help with a bucket relay – restrictions are not about the volume of water but the means of conveying it.

## 2012 - Another Great Plant Sale

Despite a series of early horticultural disasters - mice ate seeds, germination failed, bad compost and difficult weather conditions and putting the sale date back, the 2012 Plant Sale was a great success. Lots of satisfied customers bought hundreds of plants. Profit for the Society is now over £2,000, with a few more plants to sell. This was a huge team effort with particular thanks due to Claudine Fear (mastermind) Terry Burling (watering his speciality) and June Brookes.



Perennials did particularly well



Someone's entering the Sunflower Competition



Tony helps a customer choose from 12 tomato varieties

## News



The Mayor of Barnet opens our new Raised Garden Beds

### Self Management Update

The Council has confirmed that it can now progress Gordon Road and Nethercourt Avenue allotment sites towards gaining self-management. So, on 5th April three Officers visited our sites to inspect their state and discuss any issues which may require special attention or a variation from the new 'standard' lease. It was agreed that the Council should undertake some tree work on the Dollis Road boundary, repair a number of broken fence posts on the Gordon Road boundary and repair areas of tarmac where they were causing a hazard. There has been no follow up. We were informed that the target date to complete handover had been set at early June 2012. However, since the site visit we have heard nothing. And more worryingly we know that no other site has been advanced since the first site at Brook Farm was handed over on 2 February. We will be writing to the new Environment Councillor, Dean Cohen, to press for progress.

Brent Way Allotments would like to become part of the Finchley Horticultural Society. We have agreed this in principle but due to 'issues with the deeds' lease discussions with the Council are likely to take even longer for this site.

## Notices

### Can You Help?

The Society still needs more people to help with some key jobs (not hugely time consuming but important). Ann Brown or June Brookes would love to hear from you if you can take on any of these roles:

#### Publicity:

Producing and distributing posters, notices and flyers, contacting the press.

#### Events:

Running events at Gordon Road (not Plant Sale) such as socials, autumn fete, Guy Fawkes

#### Outings:

Organising a few outings every year to places of gardening interest.

#### Woodchip:

Do you know anyone who could deliver woodchip to Gordon Road?

### Members

A big welcome to new members – Amanda Horton, Corinne Oppenheimer, Maria Nash, Mrs L Seifert, and Ken & Madeline Bledin, and welcome back to Tanvir Davis.

Please inform Christine Williams, [chrysw@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:chrysw@hotmail.co.uk) if you received a paper copy of this newsletter and are now able to receive it by e-mail. This saves us time and money.

Any members who have not yet paid their 2012 subscription, could you please renew as soon as possible.

## NSALG

The FHS is affiliated to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners – which has just changed its name to The National Allotment Society. The Society is urging us to celebrate National Allotments Week from 6 – 12 August.

**This issue of The Grapevine has been generously sponsored by Winkworth Estate Agents.**

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**Winkworth**

## The Finchley Horticultural Society

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For all Finchley gardeners and for ploholders at Gordon Road and Nethercourt Avenue.

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### Next Newsletter:

**Autumn Issue - September 2012**

Member of  
Barnet Federation  
of Allotment and  
Horticultural Societies



**Remember you can get a 10% discount off seeds and plants at Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre if you are an FHS Member**

## Coming Attractions

### - NGS Gardens, Golders Green -

**Open Sunday 5th July, 2-6pm:**

151 Northway, NW11

5 Heathgate, NW11

5 Wildwood Rise, NW11

Admission £3, child free.

**Open Sunday 22 July, 2-6pm:**

86 Willifield Way, NW11

Admission £3, child free.

### - Bothy Garden Open Days -

**Avenue House, East End Road, Finchley, N3 3QE**

**Sunday, 1st July, 2.30-4.30pm**

**Sunday, 5th August, 2.30-4.30pm**

A chance to visit this delightful 'secret garden' in the grounds of Avenue House.

### - Long Lane Pasture Blackberry Pick -

**Off Long Lane, Finchley, N3 2RN**

**From 1st August, every weekend, 10am-12noon**

There will be lots of blackberries to harvest. Bring your own container and make a donation for any picked.

### - Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre -

**Burton Hole Lane, Mill Hill, London NW7 1AS.**

**15th July, pm.**

Brass band concert

### - Big Butterfly Count -

**14th July - 5th August**

Record butterflies from one spot for 15 minutes. Send your results to, find out more, and view 2011 results on: [www.bigbutterflycount.org](http://www.bigbutterflycount.org).

**big butterfly count**  
14th July – 5th August