

The FHS Grapevine

Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society

Spring 2014

News

4th Annual Sunflower Competition

For the last three years Judy Woollett (who also manages our website) has organised a Sunflower competition for children. The growing of sunflowers is not only fun but is of extreme benefit to wildlife especially pollinating insects once when the flowers emerge but also as a great source of food for birds when the seeds develop. It is very entertaining to watch seed eaters hanging upside down on the large seed discs. This year is special too as it is the RHS Britain in Bloom's 50th or Golden Anniversary and they are celebrating by distributing thousands



of free Sunflower seeds to Societies and Schools, so that Britain will have a Golden Summer. We have grown over 100 sunflowers both for competition and for sale at our plant sale. Children under 16 may enter the competition by filling in a form and purchasing a sunflower seedling at the plant sale. The prizes will be awarded, this year, at the NGS Open Allotments at Gordon Road on Sunday 7th September.

SUNFLOWER COMPETITION

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE UP TO 16 YEARS

**GET YOUR SUNFLOWER SEEDLING
AND ENTRY FORM AT THE PLANT SALE**

AT

GORDON ROAD ALLOTMENTS

FINCHLEY N3

25TH AND 26TH MAY

FROM 10AM TO 1PM

**PRIZES AWARDED IN SEPTEMBER FOR
TALLEST AND LARGEST SUNFLOWERS**

News

Plant Sale

The number of man hours involved in sowing seeds and potting up seedlings, dividing perennial and watering the growing plants is incalculable. The greenhouses are overflowing with mini plants and everything is competing for space. For many of us involved in doing this work it



means that our plots get neglected at the very time when everyone else is getting theirs in order for the new growing season. All this so that we can open our doors to plot holders and the public for our annual Grand Plant Sale, which is a major event in the Allotment calendar.

Grand Annual Plant Sale

Sunday 25 and Monday 26 May

From 10am to 1pm

at

Gordon Road Allotments

Finchley N3

buy your

Annual Bedding Plants

Vegetables

Perennials

and

Refreshments

Security

Notes from the Security Officer

As some may be aware we suffered two break-ins at Gordon Road in the last year. A bit of damage but nothing taken in the first incident but the second one saw the stealing of almost every water tap on the allotment site. These have now been replaced to enable the water to be switched back on again

Site security is a very important aspect of running all the allotment sites and relies primarily on the vigilance and sensible behaviour of everyone; committee members, designated officers and plot holders alike. If we all follow certain simple guidelines we can at least minimize some of the potential risks and reduce the inconvenience caused:

- Please be vigilant and if you see someone on site you don't recognize ask others if they know them to try and ascertain whether they should or shouldn't be there
- Except for the regular opening times make sure the main gate is locked after you've entered or left the site
- Don't lend your key to anyone. If someone has lost or misplaced theirs they should report it immediately to June Brookes. It's essential that we keep proper control over keys and only those authorized to hold one (individual plot holders) should be in possession of one. No-one should have more than one key
- If you do bring visitors onto any of the sites make sure they are accompanied at all times and make sure others are aware of who they are
- If you see anything you think looks suspicious please report it as soon as you can to a committee member

Security Officer – Tony Ingram
07967 274 739
0208 349 1265
tonygram@aqp.co.uk

Announcements

Newsletter Editor

Vacant – volunteer urgently needed!
Contact Claudine if interested

Compost

The next recycled compost delivery at Gordon Road is still to be arranged but will only be after the plant sale

Forthcoming Outing

Hyde Hall and Beth Chatto

The FHS is organising an outing to visit the gardens of Beth Chatto and Hyde Hall on Saturday July 5th. A coach will be taking us from the Library, Hendon Lane leaving at 9am and we will hope to return by 6pm.



Beth Chatto's Garden

We will visit Hyde Hall where, at this time of year the dry garden should be at its peak, featuring a huge range of drought tolerant plants. The gardens are situated

on a hilltop with sweeping views across the Essex countryside. There is an intensely cultivated heart of the gardens with roses and herbaceous borders. Towards the periphery the design is more naturalistic, seeming to blend into the surrounding countryside. Lunch can be eaten here, either at one of the two restaurants or at a picnic table in the grounds. We will then go on to Beth Chatto's garden, probably most famous for the Gravel Garden which, in July may have the weeping branches of the Mount Etna broom (*Genista aetnensis*) covered in yellow, sweetly scented, pea-like flowers, and the white, tissue paper like flowers of *Romneya coulteri* (Tree Poppy). The Water Garden has *Gunnera* and *Hosta*, *Darmera* and *Miscanthus* for contrasting texture and form of foliage and *astilbe*, *geranium*, *filipendula* and *hemerocallis* for flower colour. The Reservoir Garden should have a selection including, purple *Cotinus* (Smoke bush), silvery *Eryngium giganteum* (Miss Willmott's ghost), blue *Echinops ritro* (Globe thistle) and the giant fennel, *Ferula communis*. If this was not enough, there is also The Scree Garden with Beth Chatto's collection of succulents and The Woodland Garden too.

We hope that as many people as possible will be able to come with us as this should be a memorable outing. A booking form is being sent out shortly by email, for those of you who have registered your email with the society or by post if you have not. Also booking forms will be available in the Trading Hut at Gordon Road during opening times on Sunday mornings or directly from June Brookes on request.

Newsletter

If you received a paper copy of this newsletter and are now able to receive it by e-mail, please inform Christine Williams, chrysw@hotmail.co.uk This saves us time and money.

Summer Gardening

Planting Out

This is the time we are all busy planting out our tender bedding plants and vegetables. We are fairly confident that all danger of frost is over and it will be safe to do so. Late frosts are always possible in our unpredictable climate; however, there comes a time that we have to take the risk. Some people have been caught out and the tops of the potatoes may have been damaged by a late frost, Just cover them with some more soil and they will recover. But more risky are the French beans these need a relatively higher temperature to thrive, as do the courgettes and cucumbers. Some things need to have even higher temperatures and cannot be grown with complete confidence outdoors. Aubergines and melons fall into this category. It is probable that they will need to be kept in the green house for successful cropping. Peppers seem to be one of the crops that have been relatively successful outdoors for the last couple of years, at least they have on my plot. To obtain larger size peppers it is advisable to grow the plants indoors but I have been

Peppers growing outdoors in grow bags



amazed at the quantity I have obtained from plants grown outdoors in a good season.

Growing certain flowers encourages germination by attracting bees and also may deter insect pests from attacking your crops. Tagetes, nasturtiums and sweet peas are all beneficial in different ways. Also planting onions and carrots together may deter carrot fly.

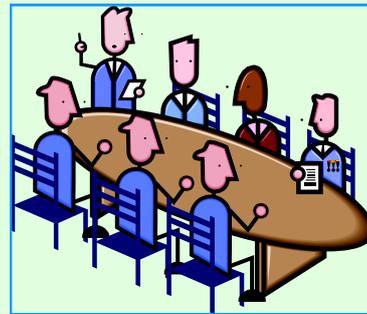
It is a lottery every year with the weather, but we always seem to get huge quantities off our plots, usually much more than we can consume ourselves and we can all afford to be generous with our surplus and give to family, friends and neighbours. The rest will go onto our compost heaps to provide the nutrients for next years crops.

FHS AGM

The FHS AGM

The Annual General Meeting was held at the Tennis Club, Club House in Brent Way, where the Brent Way Allotments are situated. Elaine Wright, the Allotment Secretary of Brent Way, very generously arranged for the use of the Club House this year. However, there was a very disappointing turnout for the AGM. There seems to be a great lack of interest in the Society at present.

I thought it might be a good idea to explain the importance of the General Committee especially now that we are self-managing. It is in fact a requirement of our leasehold that we have a Committee and the Committee



Members have certain responsibilities. The Committee comprises the Chairman, Treasurer, Allotment Secretaries for the three sites, Security Officer, Membership Secretary, Newsletter Editor, Website Manager. Two other members may be seconded onto the Committee at any time. We may have more than one job as there are frequently insufficient members of the Committee. We Currently do not have a separate Allotment Committee at Gordon Road but this situation may be reversed in the near future.

Probably the single most important function is the management of the Societies' funds. The next is the management of the allotments and then any events organised for the Members either as outings or social events throughout the year. There is a constitution which must be upheld and rules for members who hold an allotment plot that must be adhered to. Any breaches of security need to be investigated. For the first time this year we had two break-ins at Gordon Road. The police and insurance needed to be dealt with, as well as the repair and replacement of lost and damaged items. All of this is done by the Committee members, who are all Volunteers and receive absolutely no financial or other form of remuneration.

The FHS General Committee meets approximately six time per year at a Committee Member's home. There is an Agenda for every meeting and topics for discussion include all aspects of running the Society and the Allotments. Please speak to a Committee member if you would like to volunteer.

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

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Next Newsletter

Summer Issue - August 2014

Member of the
Barnet Federation of
Allotment and
Horticultural Societies



Remember FHS Members can get a 10% discount
off seeds and plants at Finchley Nurseries Garden
Centre

Events

Grand Plant Sale

Gordon Road Allotments,
Sunday 25th Monday 26th May,
10am–1pm

RHS Wisley

24th May–1st June

Children's Half term Fun

Insects and animals check daily on

www.rhs.org.uk/wisley



31st May– 1st June

Viola and Pansy society Centenary Celebrations

Glasshouse Gallery

Booking not required

The British Iris Society Summer Show

11am–4.40pm, Sat 10am–4pm Sun

Booking not required

4th June

Allium Day

10am–4pm

Study day in the Hillside Event Centre

BBC Gardener's World Live

12th–15th June

NEC Birmingham

Tickets from £22.50

<http://www.bbcgardenersworldlive.com/index.cfm>



London Open Garden Squares Weekend

14th –15th June

200 gardens to explore see website for details
and ticket purchase £10

<http://www.opensquares.org/>

Hampton Court Flower Show

8th–13th July

(Tues Wed Members only)

Tickets from £15

<http://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-hampton-court-palace-flower-show>

