

The FHS Grapevine

Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society Summer 2013

Leases at Last

At long last, the new leases for Gordon Road and Nethercourt Avenue Allotments have been agreed, signed and sealed between The Finchley Horticultural Society and London Borough of Barnet. The documents are dated from 1st October 2012 for a period of 38 years - renewal will be up in 2050!

Disappointingly we have not yet received the lease for Brent Way Allotments. We very much hope to receive this in September and so complete the transfer of our leased land to self-management.

A new Tenants Agreement for ploholders, based on the new lease, has been drawn up and incorporated within a revised Handbook for Ploholders.

This is a great opportunity for the Society to forge a positive and progressive future, managing our allotments to the best of our abilities. However, this will not be possible without the full co-operation and help of every ploholder. We will be expecting you all to put in an extra bit of work for our sites - not just your plot. Please respond positively to the challenges which lie ahead. There are many jobs to be done - Barnet Council are no longer there to do any work on our behalf.

Finchley Horticultural Society GRAND AUTUMN FETE

Sunday 8th September, 1-4pm

Plants for sale

Vegetable & fruit market

Cakes & homemade produce

Gordon Road Honey

Delicious refreshments

Sunflower competition prizes

Gordon Road Allotments

Gordon Road, Finchley, London N3

FHS Events

Autumn Fete: Gordon Road Allotments Sunday 8th September, 1pm-4pm

This is our second big event of the year. We will need lots of produce to sell and display. Please help to make it a great success. Prizes will be awarded for 2013 Sunflower Competition.

Trading Hut

The Trading Hut at Gordon Road will re-open on Sunday 1st September: 10.30am-12.30pm.

Bonfire Party: Gordon Road Allotments Sunday 3rd November, from 4pm

There will be a bonfire, Tony's wonderful pumpkin soup. An event not to be missed.



Gordon Road Annual August
Barbecue enjoyed by all



Watch Out for Blight

Blight is a serious disease which can destroy a tomato or potato crop very quickly, in as little as 10 days. The fungus which causes blight goes under the name *Phytophthora*. It is spread by either wind or rain in temperatures above 10°C (50°F). It is especially problematic in late summer during wet weather in the UK and may occur as early as June in the south. Experts say that more and more outbreaks of blight are originating from allotments and gardens.

We are being asked to be on the look-out for blight this summer to control its widespread infection. The first signs are dark brown markings on the edges of leaves. Brown lesions may develop on the stems. Leaves then curl and the plant wilts. If allowed to spread unchecked, it will reach potato tubers. They will be reddish-brown decay below the skin, firm at first but soon developing into a soft rot. Infected tubers will rot in store. Symptoms on tomato leaves and stems are similar to those on potatoes. Brown patches may appear on green fruit and mature fruit will, heartbreakingly, decay rapidly.

Fight the Blight

- If blight strikes, cut out affected leaves and stems immediately. If more than 10% is affected cut off and remove all foliage. Wait 2-3 weeks before digging up the potato crop. Blight affected *foliage* can be composted - well buried in an active heap. Never compost blight infected *tubers* - put these in your personal green wheelie bin.
- Early-harvested potatoes are more likely to escape infection.
- Plant blight resistant varieties -

Potatoes: Losetto and Izzario are recommended by Gardening Which?) - and those having 'Sarpò' at the beginning of their name.

Tomatoes: Ferline, Legend and Fantasio show some resistance, but don't rely on it!

- Check if the weather favours infection and if outbreaks have occurred on the Blightline 02890 382372, or on www.blightwatch.co.uk
- There is no cure for blight, but you can apply copper based fungicides (eg Bordeaux Mixture) before blight is present - this deters but cannot cure and will need to be reapplied.

Raised Beds Project Completed

Although our 16 raised beds are now well into their successful second year of cultivation, works have continued to develop additional improvements largely thanks to a £10K grant from Awards for All (Big Lottery). These include installing an irrigation system, miscellaneous items such as a barrow and brooms, indoor and outdoor furniture, and most significantly a splendid shelter for our disabled gardeners and school parties. The shelter now contains the donated Sylvia Elkington Library of gardening books in memory of Sylvia who was such an enthusiastic plotholder and worker for our Society. Many thanks are due to Eric Hess for his expert advice and work on the irrigation system, to Louis Ingram and Roy Firth for their help painting the cabin inside and out, and particularly to Andrew Brown who has worked tirelessly for over four years to bring this Project to completion.

On 4 August, June Brookes cut the ribbon to officially open our log cabin intended as a shelter for raised bed users at Gordon Road Allotments.



Change in Society Officers

Margot Boss was appointed the new Treasurer of the Finchley Horticultural Society in April 2013. Please get in touch with Margot on any financial matters at margotboss@homechoice.co.uk

Ann Brown will shortly be moving from Finchley to Leicestershire and is resigning as the Society's Chairman, a post she has held since April 2011. She will also be giving up editing this newsletter and managing the wildlife plot at Gordon Road. Volunteers for these roles are being urgently sought! Ann and Andrew will be cultivating their plot at Gordon Road until the end of the year.

News

Plant Sale 2013

The 2013 Sale took place later than usual on 26th May due to an exceptionally cold spring holding back the growth of many seedlings and plants. Fortunately, this did not deter customers in the least and it turned out to be one of our best-selling events ever. Many stalls sold out! The impressive sum of £2,879 was raised for Society funds. This was a huge team effort – a big thank you everyone who helped make it such a success, and particularly to the team who grew, tended and watered the plants (Terry Burling, Christine Williams, Catherine Schmitt, Tuuli Taylor, Margot Boss, June Brookes, Judy Woollett and many others) and to Claudine Fear who masterminded the whole thing.



Notices

FHS Website

The Finchley Horticultural Society now has its own website: www.finchleyhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

Here you can find information and news about the Society, its allotments, activities and even Members' recipes. If you wish to suggest items for the website please contact Judy Woollett (see back page). FHS is very grateful to Yasemin Allsop for setting up its website.

Barnet 2013 Allotments Competition

The judging was delayed until the second week of August. Ray Clarke was entered for the best plot competition, and Gordon Road and Nethercourt Avenue in the site competition. We have also entered the Raised Beds Project for the Ted Green Memorial Award. Gordon Road came second in the Site Competition, with Nethercourt first in the small sites category.

Friern Barnet Summer Show

Sad to report that the horticultural section of the Show has been discontinued and will not take place in 2013. The Federation of Barnet Allotments are considering how a Barnet-wide horticultural show might be organised in future years.

National Gardens Scheme

Known to gardeners as 'The Yellow Book', Gordon Road Allotments have been accepted as an Open Garden venue. The event is being planned to take place on Sunday 7th September 2014 our Autumn Fete day.

Compost

The next recycled compost delivery at Gordon Road will be on Friday 20th September.

Members

A big welcome to new members:
Simon Allsop, Magdalena Bajak, Gianfranco Colliva,
Saira Gregory, Anna Norrington.

Please inform Christine Williams, 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.

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

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The Finchley Horticultural Society

1 Princes Avenue, Finchley, London N3 2DA
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For all Finchley gardeners and for
plottolders at Gordon Road, Nethercourt
Avenue and Brent Way.

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Newsletter Editor

Vacant - volunteer urgently needed!
Contact Claudine if interested.

**Next Newsletter:
Autumn Issue - September 2013**

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

- Long Lane Pasture: Blackberry Pick -

Off Long Lane, Finchley, N3 2RN

From 10 August, every day 10am - 6pm

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

Mill Hill Garden & Allotment Society

- Annual Show -

St Michael's Church, Flower Lane, NW7 2JA.

Saturday 24 August, 2.30 - 5pm

For one day rural England visits Mill Hill!
Prize winning displays, teas, produce, sales.
Details from www.mhgas.btck.co.uk

Avenue House

- Bothy Gardens Open Day -

Sunday 1st September, 3-5pm. £5 admn

East End Road, Finchley, London N3 3QE

A last chance in 2013 to visit this delightful
'secret garden' in the grounds of Avenue House.

- Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre -

Burton Hole Lane, Mill Hill, London NW7 1AS

1st September

Brass band concert. www.finchleynurseries.co.uk

- NGS Open Gardens -

Golf Course Allotments,

Winton Avenue, London N11 2AS.

1 September, 1-4pm

www.gcaa.pwp.blueyonder.co.uk

58 & 64 Summerlee Avenue

East Finchley, London N2 9QH.

8 September, 2-7pm. Adm: £3 children free.

Two small gardens with beautiful planting.

Beale Arboretum.

West Lodge Park, Cockfosters Road,

Hadley Wood, Barnet EN4 0PY.

On A111, 2m S of Potters Bar

Sunday, 20 October, 1-4pm. Adm: £4, children free.

A wonderful place to visit in the autumn with a
collection of over 800 trees and shrubs.

- RHS London Harvest Festival -

RHS Horticultural Halls,

Westminster,

London SW1 2PE.

8-9 October, Adm: £5.

Free to RHS members.



Sharing the best in Gardening