

The FHS Grapevine

Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society

Winter 2016

Committee News

As you will be aware there have been thefts from many sheds on the allotment sites recently. The committee recommends that ploholders remove valuable tools from their sheds for the winter season. Hopefully, the new fence on the Gordon Road site will improve security there as it had become easy to access this site from the road. Chris Ouseley will be taking over responsibility for the refurbishment of the new tea hut from Phil Cuttell at the end of January. The allotment secretaries want to remind all ploholders that hoses for water must have pistols on the end of them to help conserve water. The trading hut will reopen at the end of March.

We welcome Davood Fardad and Jimmy Chan to our allotments and to the FHS.

Awards for all three FHS sites

Mrs Fung Wan earned a certificate of commendation from Barnet Allotment Federation for her plot on the Gordon Road site. The Gordon Road site won first prize in the large allotment category. Nethercourt Avenue won second prize and Brent Way third prize in the small allotment category.

President of the Finchley Horticultural Society, Catherine Schmitt, received the Ted Green Memorial Award for community involvement for the NGS Open Day from Paolo Arrigo, Managing Director of *Seeds of Italy* at the Barnet Allotment Federation Annual Site and Plot Competition Prize-giving and Harvest Buffet Social Evening on 19th October 2015. This Award has only been running for three years and the FHS has won it twice

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 5th April 2016

7.30

Finchley Tennis Club

Brent Way

entrance between 45 and 47

Everyone welcome

wine and cheese



Butterflies of London Project

President Catherine Schmitt asks all FHS members to note and record butterflies they see

The London Natural History Society is starting a three year survey of butterflies in our capital. The season can begin as early as February with Brimstones. There will be a notebook in the Green Room to record any butterflies we see on Gordon Road allotments.

And if you see butterflies elsewhere in Finchley and surrounding areas, write it down, noting the date, the species, where you saw it, how many, and any other interesting observations.

For further advice, speak to me, Catherine Schmitt, 020 8346 4359 or visit www.lnhs.org.uk.

The London Natural History Society is looking to update its knowledge of the distribution of butterflies in London. The previous atlas was made in the 1980s and much has changed since then - species distribution, recording systems and London itself.

The Brimstone butterfly is known as a harbinger of spring and warm sunny days in early February or March brings the Brimstone out from hibernation. The male Brimstone butterfly cannot be confused with any other UK butterfly as it is a bright rich yellow. The female however is a very pale yellow and can be confused at a distance for a Large White.



The Brimstone is also one of the longest living of British butterflies and hibernates as an adult butterfly, which is highly unusual.

New Tea Hut

Our thanks go to Paul and Levi, who have built the concrete base for the new tea hut, and who came to help move the old tea hut on Sunday 15th November. Also to John, Chris, Julian, Edo and Phil who volunteered their muscle to shift the hut to its current position where it will take up a new life as a potting shed. It needed all seven people.



The new tea hut has been reassembled on the concrete base. The Allotment Committee now has plans to fit a kitchen, which will be more suited to the needs of the FHS when we host open days and the plant sale and provide tea for so many visitors. The water and electricity supplies will be reconnected shortly. If anyone has any kitchen units that might be suitable please contact Phil or June.

The Allotment Committee also plans to make access to the hut suitable for wheelchair users and is looking for funding for this part of the project.



Southover School Has Green Fingers!

by Heather Ellis, Deputy Headteacher

At the Southover School we are proud to be the occasional tenders of two of the raised beds at the side of the allotment. I say occasional as you may have seen our staff and students visit no more than once a week but during the time they are on site there is a lot of productive activity. So much so that we have enjoyed cooking and eating quite a range of vegetables. Back at school we have eaten potatoes mashed or baked, runner beans, marrows, pumpkins, onions and of course fresh raspberries.

Our students have been involved in planting the seeds, tending the seedlings, transplanting to the raised beds, watering, weeding, feeding and harvesting. We have linked the use of the allotment to Science lessons, food technology, life skills, horticulture, art, design and photography. You may have noticed the occasional young person walking around the site camera in hand, recording the allotment through the seasons. These will have

been our talented GCSE students who have been looking for an interesting composition.

Carving pumpkins that we have grown at the allotment has become a bit of a tradition every October and our students have also made delicious soups and pumpkin pie.

One of our students completed a science research project on encouraging wild-life into urban gardens.



Our work at the allotment has even inspired staff and students from our Southgate site to set up their own small garden.

For those of you who are wondering about us, the Southover Partnership School is a Special Needs Secondary School for young people between the ages of 11 and 19. Many of our young people



have not succeeded educationally speaking in mainstream education but find their feet in our small scale setting with a high ratio of adults to support their needs. Our students come from all over north London and many live in high density urban areas. Travelling to the allotment and walking along the brook is as close as it gets

to being in the countryside.

We are fortunate that our plot is positioned very close to the bee hives and we have planted some bee friendly flowering plants such as penstemons and sunflowers. We have also placed netting over our water tanks so that the bees can drink safely and fly off without becoming waterlogged and drowning. We have bought some of the allotment honey to eat with our toast back at school.

The allotment is an important part of our therapeutic approach to education and our young people look forward to their Wednesday visits, getting out of the stuffy classrooms and getting down to some digging and dirty work with soil.

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.

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

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The Finchley Horticultural Society

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www.finchleyhorticulturalsociety.org.uk

For all Finchley gardeners and for plot holders at
Gordon Road, Nethercourt Avenue and Brent Way

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Member of the
Barnet Federation of Allotment
and Horticultural Societies

Events Diary

16 - 17 February 2016

RHS Early Spring Plant Fair
RHS Lawrence Hall, SW1P 2QD
Plants and bulbs for sale
Advice from growers



26 - 27 February 2016

RHS London Botanical Art Show
RHS Lindsey Hall, SW1P 2QD
Meet the artists. Art products for sale



1 - 2 April 2016

RHS London Spring Plant
Extravaganza
This will be held in both RHS Lawrence Hall
and RHS Lindsey Hall, SW1P 2QD.
There will be a programme of talks, advice
and inspiration from nurseries.
The Extravaganza includes the RHS London
Orchids Show with displays and advice for
growing orchids at home.



**To book tickets to RHS shows, visit
rhs.org.uk/shows or call 0844 338 7539**

5 April 2016 FHS AGM 7.30

Finchley Tennis Club, Brent Way

22nd and 29th May 2016

FHS Plant Sale

Sunday 22nd May from 10.00 am to 1.00pm
Sunday 29th May from 10.30 am to 1.00pm

1st January - 31st December 2016

Introduction to Kew Gardens
Get an insight into Kew's history, plants,
science and seasonal highlights.
Daily tours at 11.00am and 1.30pm - tours last
one hour and are free with entry to the
Gardens.

6th February - 6th March 2016

Orchids at Kew Gardens Tickets £15

Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre

Finchley Nurseries Garden Centre offers a 10%
discount on plants to all Finchley Horticultural
Society members. It now has a new tea room
which is open from 9.00 to 5.30 on Mondays to
Saturdays and 10.30 to 4.30 on Sundays.

Next Grapevine May 2016