

The Grapevine



Newsletter of the Finchley Horticultural Society

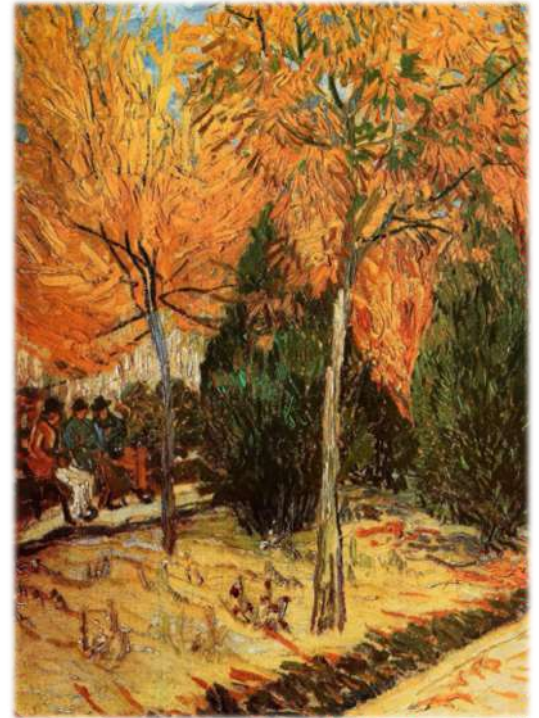
Autumn 2025

Alexander Pushkin

extracts from the poem 'Autumn'

The latter days of fall are often cursed,
But as for me, kind reader, she is precious
In all her quiet beauty, mellow glow.
Thus might a child, disfavoured in the family,
Draw my regard. To tell you honestly,
Of all the times of year, I cherish her alone.
She's full of worth; and I, a humble lover,
Have found in her peculiar charms.

A melancholy time! So charming to the eye!
Your beauty in its parting pleases me -
I love the lavish withering of nature,
The gold and scarlet raiment of the woods,
The crisp wind rustling o'er their threshold,
The sky engulfed by tides of rippled gloom,
The sun's scarce rays, approaching frosts,
And grey-haired winter threatening from afar.



Autumn is particularly striking this year – after the hot and dry summer we are enjoying a stunning display of colours, with leaves turning all shades of yellow, orange, red and purple, lit up by the soft autumnal sun. There are still plenty of late flowers and the blossoming ivy is providing a veritable feast for buzzing insects. Apple, pear and quince trees are laden with heavy fruit, and it is a good year for mushrooms, too, with record numbers of edible fungi to be found in our woods.

This issue of the Grapevine revisits old topics that never go out of fashion, such as composting, contains updates about ongoing maintenance work on the FHS sites and offers an interesting feature on some 'archaeological discoveries' at Gordon Road. Enjoy your reading!

August volunteer day On Gordon Road Allotments, forthcoming volunteer morning and pumpkin soup

We have a well-established tradition of volunteer days when plot-holders come together to help with communal tasks, share a chat and a delicious meal.

Here are some pictures of our 9 August volunteer morning.





The last volunteer morning of this year will be on Saturday 8 November. There will be a general tidying of the site and loading a skip. There should be room for non compostable green waste such as woody branches and brambles from members' plots.

Please note that metal waste should be taken to Summers Lane for recycling.

The work will be followed by lunch at 1pm. Tony will be making his legendary pumpkin soup and everyone can bring other food to share. This lunch will replace the usual pumpkin soup night.

We look forward to seeing you at Gordon Road and hope the weather is going to be kind to us.

New Roof And Asbestos Removal Apace

By Philip Cuttell

The work involving removal of the old asbestos roofs and putting new roofs at Nethercourt and Gordon Road sites - 3 separate buildings in total - was done by Pier Contractors.

They brought in a specialist team to remove the asbestos and put it in a sealed skip. They then replaced the roofs with steel that has a pvc coating which should last a very long time.



Philip and Jo Cuttell used the free offcuts from the roof work to put on the piggery kitchen roof which was leaking.

Erol Mandirali was also contracted to put in a new screed concrete floor over a new damp proof membrane, and a drain along the front of the building at Gordon Road shop and Green Room.

A team of volunteers including Philip, Marcus, Christian and Tomoko and Stephen also dug a french drain and soak away around the back and side of the building. We hope these measures will produce a drier building.

Once the screed has dried we will lay some vinyl flooring and then fit a kitchen kindly donated by Rebecca Cuttell.

Allan Rose then volunteered and fitted a new gutter and repainted the building.

We are aiming to have it completed by the end of the year.

Thanks to all those who have helped on the project so far.

FABULOUS VOLUNTEERS

by Julie Datta

As you all know the success of Finchley Horticultural Society is driven by volunteers who come in and generously donate their time. The Trading Hut has been relocated to the Tin Shed opposite the polytunnel for this season due to the leaks and subsequent refurbishment. The Tin Hut is not salubrious; lacks covering and has no space for our volunteers to sit inside. Thank goodness that 2025 has seen the sunniest summer in many years – but it was also the hottest since the late 1800s. This has required a certain type of resilient volunteer. Sheila and Jasmine have been stalwart supporters of the Trading Hub helping Erika whilst Julie, her erstwhile partner, has been struggling with a slipped disc for this season.

Volunteering in the Trading Hut is fun and easy. The majority of the tasks include decanting products for onward selling, promoting and selling our FHS honey and offering simple gardening advice to passers-by interested in what we do. As part of our commitment to moving towards being cash-free John, our Treasurer, is encouraging us to move on to an online payment system which is really simple to use. We also demonstrate our commitment and support for the Society and encourage people to join our community. The tasks our volunteers are asked to do contribute to the sales we make.

We are asking for a minimum of 2 hours on a Sunday between March and September. People can volunteer as little or as often as they are able to. For example, one allotmenteer is volunteering one Sunday every 6 weeks next year. So, we are very flexible in how the Hut is staffed. If we could get at least 8 people on our rota that would share the fun and responsibility out.

Erika and Julie will provide training for all new volunteers and ensure that no one feels unsupported.

Please come and join us and be part of the fabulous Finchley Horticultural Society! For more details, please contact either Erika or Julie through the FHS website.



Sheila is seen here painstakingly measuring out kilos of vermiculite in preparation for autumn and spring seed planting.



Jasmine ensures that convivial relationships are maintained across the various workstreams of the FHS.

Treasure in the Community Orchard

By Jo Cuttell

In the winter of 2021, we started work on clearing the orchard area of all the rubbish that had accumulated there over many years, possibly decades. The area had been covered with black plastic to stop the weeds and nettles growing and we began to remove all the plastic, rubbish, carpets, bricks and iron bars that had been dumped. Here you can see June having a look at what we are doing.



In the process of doing that I found a small, beautiful and rather unusual object. I didn't know what it was when I found it a

nd it was only when I got it home and washed it that its true identity revealed itself. It was the bowl of a clay pipe. It is decorated on both sides of the bowl with the faces of a military man. The 'heel' is also decorated with a face.



Clay pipes were made in England from about the 16th century when tobacco began to be imported into the country. The earliest pipes were plain and smooth with no decoration but by the 19th century decoration was becoming common. So, I think this pipe must have been made at some time roughly between 1860 and 1910.

In London the vast majority of these pipe bowls are found in the mud of the River Thames at low tide. The river was used until relatively recently as a rubbish dump. The mud has preserved the clay pipe bowls and many of them are on display in the Museum of London. The pipes are commonly found by

'mudlarks', individuals who search the riverbanks for historical artifacts at low tide. It is believed that these pipes were made to be disposable given the large number found in the mud and were often pre-filled with tobacco and discarded after a single use, rather like a cigarette butt. The pipe would have had a long, thin stem which was easily broken.

The longest clay pipes ever produced were 18-36 inches long and are often referred to as 'churchwarden' clay pipes. In the 18th century, church buildings were open all night, and churchwardens were responsible for watching the church premises. To pass the long hours, they would smoke their clay pipes. The exceptionally long stems of the 'churchwarden' clay pipes would keep the heat and smoke away from the face so the line of sight was not obstructed as they kept watch.

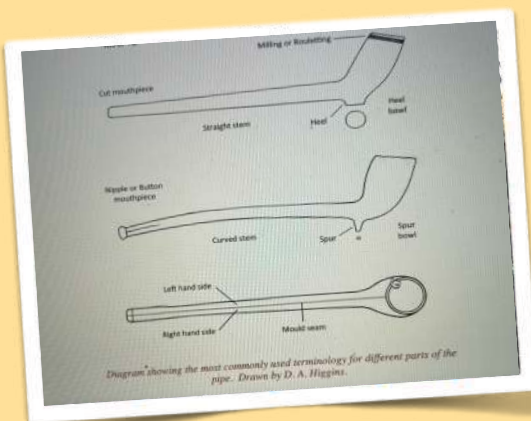
Tobacco smoking took off despite its initial high cost and the efforts of King James I, who became king in 1603, to suppress the habit by imposing exorbitant taxes and publishing anti-smoking literature. But the habit grew and over the next 300 years became more and more popular.

Companies making clay pipes started to put a mark on the heel of the pipe - the part which enables it to stand up, to identify their products. Sometimes pipes were made and sold by pubs and there are pipes with a fox and grapes image identifying it as coming from a pub called The Fox and Grapes, a traditional pub name. Pipes from the Netherlands have been found with a windmill or milkmaid on the heel but most pipes in London seem to have been made locally. French-made pipes were considered to be the best and were known as 'French fancies'.

Clay pipe designs have been used for good causes. The tobacco for the pipes came from America and enslaved people often worked on tobacco plantations. Some pipes carry a design used to campaign against the slave trade, but others have been found to depict the head of an African man.

The pipe bowl that I found on our site appears to display the bust of a military man. Apparently, Field Marshal Wolseley was often depicted on pipe bowls. He was an Anglo-Irish officer in the British Army and was feted after a series of victories in Canada, West Africa and Egypt.

If you are interested in this topic the London Museum Docklands has an exhibition running on 'Secrets of the Thames' from 27/09/2025 until 01/03/2026.



ONE YEAR (and a bit) ON

By Rosa Turmo

In March 2024 I learnt that there was a vacancy for the Secretary at Gordon Road Allotment Site and I volunteered for the job. Oh boy, did I know what I was doing! No, not really. A thoroughly enjoyable job.

I was welcomed with open arms by everyone. The previous Secretary, Sylvia, gave me copies of all relevant documents. I inherited a very well organised e-system which included access to the spreadsheet the invoices are sent from. There was still quite a lot of work to do.

In liaison with Marcos, our IT guru, we created a dedicated email addresses for all three sites. So, as and when the present Secretaries decide to give up their post everything will be ready for the next one!

Earlier this year we had all plots rented. Some worked out and others, unfortunately, did not but we are persevering. The warning letters to non-cultivators have been updated and will be sent out to all tenants who do not cultivate for a whole season without a legitimate reason. To pre-empt this, we have introduced a regular walkabout to check all plots are cultivated according to the season. See below a guide to seasonal activities.

Slowly we have succeeded in shortening the waiting list from 40+ to under 20 last year. To do this we sent out an email to those waiting for plots asking for confirmation that they were still interested in getting one. Those who did not reply, were removed from the list. The waiting list is now up again, with over 50 applicants. New confirmation e-mails will be sent out shortly.

The 2026 invoices will include an updated Tenancy Agreement which all tenants will need to sign. We'll send detailed information re how to do this and will be available to help where needed.

I look forward to working with all of you for another year and, hopefully, more to come.

GUIDE TO SEASONAL CULTIVATION

Spring – Plots cleared of rubbish, part dug over; final preparation of seed beds and growing areas. Final opportunity to plant fruit bushes, prune fruit trees and established bushes. Clean lines grassed pathways mown/neatly strimmed. Overhanging branches, bushes cut back from pathways, etc.

Summer – Fully cultivated plots. Unused areas excess growth cut back or covered, grassed areas and fruit bushes tended. Harvesting. No excess of weeds.

Autumn – Plot crops fully growing, harvesting continues. Ground cleared and prepared for winter crops. No excess of seeding weeds.

Winter – Winter crops planted, growing areas cleared and dug over for next season. Fruit trees pruned. Fruit bushes pruned. Planting of new fruit trees, fruit bushes. Repairs undertaken to sheds, buildings, raised beds, etc.

Composting & Guttering – All plots should have a composting bin (4x pallets), ideally two. Smaller plots - a compost bin. Sheds and greenhouses should have guttering fitted to harvest rainwater to be stored in covered containers.

Boundary Plots – Plots backing the boundary fences are to maintain the fence and clear rubbish from the rear of their plots. This area must not be a dumping ground! Care is to be taken of trees forming the boundary. E.g. excessive ivy and brambles to be cut back and any problems reported to the Committee.

Communal Main Paths – These should be maintained at 60cms width and mowed.



Nethercourt Allotments

by Janine Limberg

Three allotment sites form part of the Finchley Horticultural Society: Gordon Road, Brent Way and Nethercourt Avenue. Last year we published an interview with the Brent Way site Secretary Elaine Wright. Here is a piece about the Nethercourt Avenue allotments written by its Secretary Janine Limberg.

Nestled in a quiet corner of north Finchley, Nethercourt Allotment is a cherished open-air site that's been part of the local landscape since the 1940s.



With 13 individual plots, it's a thriving mix of colour and cultivation — rows of vegetables, flowers and tomatoes, alongside apple, greengage and pear trees.

There are a couple of small ponds which attract frogs and other wildlife, while overhead red kites have been seen and also a pair of blue feather jays. Even foxes drop by now and then, adding to the allotment's natural charm. For those who tend the plots, Nethercourt is more than a place to grow food — it's a community. "I love growing and picking my own food," says an allotment owner. "There's such a satisfaction in watching things grow and everyone looks out for each other here." In a city always on the move, Nethercourt offers a slower rhythm: a pocket of peace where soil, wildlife and friendship grow side by side.

Composting

It Is Never Too Late To Learn How To

By Eric Hess

Suppose we have a pile of greens, cardboard and used chippings. How can we help ourselves and the planet?

“The answer lies in the soil” and in composting.

How can we make good use of the greens, cardboard and used chippings?

We can easily acquire wooden frames or even pallets (thanks to our plot holder Alan). There are also plot bins on the site. Some are shaped like daleks. They can be used although I have reservations about using them due to lack of airflow.



You can also purchase the so-called ‘hot bins’, but they are expensive.

Then there is the traditional 'dig for victory' method. Green layers, brown layers and packing into a solid block.

You can even add weeds as long as they haven't flowered and set seed. A bit of manure and old chippings will also help.

Don't add blighted tomatoes or potatoes. Please bag them up and remove them from the allotment.

In my garden I put food waste, cardboard, and grass cuttings in a trench and turn them regularly. Some plot holders put their compost in a trench and plant on it.

You can leave your compost to gradually break down or turn it regularly to speed up the process. It's such good exercise that you can even cancel your gym membership!

It's recommended to keep the compost pile covered but moist.

What a great way to enrich the soil with the home-made compost when it is dark and full of worms! You are improving the soil structure and breaking down the clay. You are also introducing micro-organisms. You are helping the environment. Commercial fertilizers, on the other hand, enter the groundwater and destroy micro-organisms.

Enjoy the result and the satisfaction of creating fertile soil and helping planet.

GREEN MANURE

Autumn is the time to improve the soil on our plots. In his article about composting Eric Hess has us given plenty of tips on how to turn cardboard, wood chippings and green waste into a rich and delicious home-made **compost**.

There is also **cow manure** being delivered to Gordon Road at the end of October – a traditional way to enrich the soil.



But if you are worried about possible traces of antibiotics and herbicides that can sometimes be found in cow and horse manure as they are absorbed by the animals from their feed or environment and could pose potential risks to soil ecosystems and the development of antibiotic resistance in humans, **green manure** provides a very good alternative.

Growing green manure is an ancient agricultural practice and it is an environmentally friendly and cost-effective way to improve the soil. Green manure is very easy to grow and is time saving, if you consider the weeding time it saves you.

THE BENEFITS OF GROWING GREEN MANURE

Growing green manure offers many benefits:

- **enhanced soil fertility** by adding [nitrogen and organic matter](#) as the plants decompose;
- **improved soil structure** for better aeration and water infiltration
- **weed suppression**: fast-growing green manure crops can effectively smother and outcompete weed seedlings, reducing their growth and competition for resources;

- **protection against soil erosion:** by covering bare soil green manures act as a protective cover crop, shielding it from the impact of heavy rainfall and wind, thereby reducing soil erosion;
- **attracting beneficial insects** like pollinators: flowering green manures, such as [buckwheat](#) or [lupins](#), can provide nectar and pollen, attracting bees and butterflies and increasing biodiversity in the garden;
- some species like [marigolds](#) or [Eruca Sativa](#) (a type of rocket), can have [biocidal properties](#) that **suppress soil nematode populations**;
- **water retention:** the chopped up organic matter improves the soil structure and microorganism activity and thus reduces the need for irrigation.

HOW IT WORKS

Typically sown in early autumn, plants such as common or Italian rye grass, peas, red clover, vetches, winter tares and winter field beans cover the bare ground through the winter, suppressing weeds, capturing nutrients that could be washed away by winter rains and binding soil with their roots to prevent erosion. Leguminous green manures such as clover, vetch and pea also add fertility to soil via nitrogen-fixing roots. This is particularly useful on our vegetable beds as they are left bare for the winter.

Once the plants are mature in spring, you should cut them down using a strimmer or shears and dig them in, as you would with any manure. You can also tread them down or smother them with weighted down cardboard and leave in place for about six weeks. Aim to dig everything in by the end of April before stems become too fibrous.




FUNGI – A GARDENER'S BEST FRIEND

Inspired by the Garden magazine

As we potter around our allotments this autumn, we are likely to come across a mushroom or two. Or sometimes, a lot of mushrooms. They can be white or brown, or take a shape of fungal growth on a piece of discarded wood or a pile of woodchips.


Many gardeners would react with suspicion, as we have been conditioned to be wary of fungi in general, and especially the ones that grow wild. We think of the recent case in Australia where a woman poisoned several members of her family with toxic mushrooms, or psychedelic mushrooms that send your head spinning, or disease causing fungi such as honey fungus that can cause a potentially lethal root rot in a large range of woody plants. Although these are valid concerns, and honey fungus, in particular, can easily kill a healthy plant by fungal tissue forming under the bark of the roots and preventing them from absorbing water, most fungi in our gardens and on our plots perform are perfectly harmless and perform a lot of very useful tasks. Saprotrophs, i.e. fungi that recycle dead material, help to break down dead matter and release nutritional resources within it into the soil. They use some of that to feed on but leave plenty behind for our plants, microbes and animals.






It is important to remember that the mushrooms we find on our allotments or in our parks and gardens are only a very small part of the actual fungus. They are the fruiting body of the fungus and their role is to produce spores that could germinate into a new fungus thus completing their life cycle. The rest of the fungus exists as a network of microscopic strands, i.e. hyphae that branch and rejoin underground, called mycelium, is the main body of the fungus that could be considered gardener's best friend.

As climate change threatens gardeners with more frequent droughts and torrential rains, beneficial fungi can help mitigate the damage. A fungi-rich soil retains water better in dry spells and absorbs more water during rainfall, while maintaining soil structure and resisting erosion. Wood, that has been rotted by fungi, becomes spongy and porous and turns into protective mulch that shields the soil from temperature extremes. Each hypha is filled with water and fungi can distribute it through their mycelia, helping microbial life in the soil. Moreover, most fungi and plants have evolved to live alongside each other in symbiosis. In the distant past fungi acted as plants' roots until they evolved their own, dissolving rocks and providing minerals, and later simply continued living within roots as mycorrhizae. Mycorrhizae's hyphae are woven around plant cells and feed on the sugar made by plants through photosynthesis. In return they send water and nutrients they find in the soil back to their plant partners. Not surprising mycorrhizae fungi products are all the rage in garden centres where we buy them to improve the chance of our new planted shrubs, bushes and flowers to establish.



There are also endophytic fungi which live in every part of a plant – leaves, stems, buds, seeds... They work like microbes on our skin or in our guts. They take up excess sugar they find in plants and use the plant as shelter, and in return help the plant tolerate stress better, or defend themselves against herbivores or disease-causing microbes.



If all fungi were to disappear and die this would have dire consequences for plants and, further down the chain, all life that depends on them.

So how can we help our fungi to thrive? Most of us are already doing things that encourage beneficial fungi: grow diverse plant species, grow plants that create shade, mulch the soil. We can also help by digging less or using no-dig cultivation methods, going easy on fertilisers, not using fungicides. We can collect dead plant material and create log piles and dead hedges. As for tackling fungal pathogens that can affect some of our plants, we need to understand that diseases usually strike plants that are already vulnerable and there needs to be a conducive environment for pathogens to succeed. Pathogens arrive on the wind, are spread by the rain, are carried by wildlife so we have little control over them. The key in fighting them is to create good growing conditions for our plants, keep them stress free through a careful balance of drainage and humidity and a good airflow etc. and monitoring for symptoms. The last thing we should do is reach out for fungicides, that would destroy not only the offending fungus but the beneficial ones along with it.

We now have a UK Fungus Day on 4 October, when public events take place to celebrate the wonderful world of fungi. Autumn is the best season to forage for fungi and study the many shapes, colours and sizes of our mushrooms. So let us embrace our fungi and welcome them on our plots and in our gardens.



Tits

by Guy Cook

Tits are among the commonest birds on our allotments. We have four species: blue, great, coal, and long-tailed. Their constant activity makes them easy to spot, and their distinctive plumages make them easy to identify. This is especially true now, in autumn. With the breeding season over, they find safety in large foraging groups, sometimes with other species such as chiffchaffs and nuthatches in among them.



The populations of all four species are still relatively robust for these bird-unfriendly times - helped by their adaptability, their extraordinary energy, their varied diet (insects in summer, seeds in winter), and their large clutches of up to 13 eggs.

Blue Tits have blue heads and tails, white cheeks and lemon breasts. They are found all over Europe, and everywhere in the UK mainland—winter surveys record them in 98% of UK gardens. They also have extraordinary intelligence, adaptability and communication skills. In the 1950s, when birds in one location learned how to peck through the foil lids of doorstep milk bottles to reach the cream inside, this skill rapidly spread through the whole country. So, they too have their grapevine!

Great Tits are also easy to identify, with glossy black heads, white cheeks and a bold black central stripe down the middle of their lemony breasts. They are the biggest of our four species, though less numerous and frenetically active than the blue tits. They are found all over Europe and right across Asia, as far as China.





Coal Tits are smaller. They too have white cheeks and black heads, with a distinctive white patch on the back. They are particularly fond of feeding in conifers. They are hoarders, finding food and storing it away for later. They are even more widespread in the world than the great tits, found throughout Europe and Asia, including the Caucasus, the Himalayas, and Japan.

Lastly, **Long-tailed Tits** have delicate fluffy black, white and pink plumage and, of course, a long tail, which accounts for just over half of their length! They are highly sociable and supportive, roosting in groups, and even helping, when others die prematurely, with orphan broods. Their nests are closed balls of moss, lichen, hairs and spider web, each lined with around 1,500 feathers. These nests explain lost dialectal names for them such as "bumbarrel", "mumruffin" and "jack-in-a-bottle". They too are found across Europe and Asia.



Great, blue and coal tits are all members of the same family Paridae. The long-tailed tit, though also called a tit, is from a very different family, the Aegithalidae, of which it is the only representative outside the New World, and though commonly grouped with the others because of the name, is in fact not a close relative.

One last interesting fact. These four tit species, like many other birds, have tetrachromatic vision enabling them to perceive ultra-violet light, and thus see colours which we can't. This added dimension of perception is believed to help with mate selection, egg identification, and finding food. And it makes them even brighter and more distinctive to each other than they are to us!

(Illustrations by the author from #birds_by_guy)

Our Allotment On Instagram

By Sarah Chachamu

Finchley Horticultural Society has a new Instagram page! This has several important purposes: to share all the wonderful photos, updates and stories we have and celebrate the seasonal changes we see every year through the plants we grow and nurture. Gardening and allotmenting are becoming increasingly popular and individuals are searching social media for tips and tricks to help their gardens flourish. Videos and pictures of anything from repotting a house plant to explaining how composting works are very welcome. FHS has lots of very experienced gardeners with a huge amount of knowledge and it is a lovely opportunity to connect with members of our local community and the wider world! The Instagram already has a number of followers, and it needs more content to grow.

Instagram is a social media application with a community presence. Members' photos, videos and stories are featured, and other members are free to comment, like these contributions and hopefully subscribe to the account the media came from. This means subscribers will continue to enjoy content (hopefully in increasing numbers!). A look over other allotment Instagram accounts shows lots of photos of plots, harvests, interesting flowers and visiting wildlife. Short videos and stories are a great way of communicating gardening tips. There are lots of ideas around content you could capture - the more creative the better! Please send any material to mail@finchleyhs.org and it will be uploaded to the Instagram account. The account handle is @finchleyhorticultural .

Please share, like and follow the account. It's free and easy to use, you can access it through an app or on a web browser from your phone or computer. This is an excellent way to showcase the amazing work happening on our plots throughout the year, to other members and to anyone looking to be inspired by gardening. It does not matter whether you are a keen photographer or just proud of your first radish, we would love to see it!



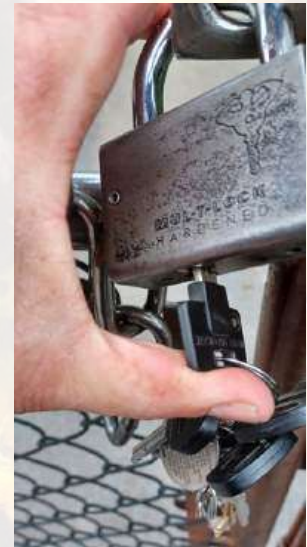
Notices

LOCK TROUBLE

Some plot holders at Gordon Road site are having difficulties with handling the lock. There is nothing wrong with the lock. It is a matter of pushing the key right in until it meets resistance. Eric has kindly taken a picture of himself using the lock.

Please follow Eric's fingers pressing the hasp / bar as he turns the key. He also recommends to take a deep breath and relax as you do it!

If anyone is still having problems with the padlock at Gordon Road, please contact Rosa Turmo at gordonroad@finchleyhs.org



MANURE DELIVERY

Cow manure can now be ordered for delivery at Gordon Road the last week of October (27th-31st October). The price is £60 for a full load, £30 for half a load.

A full load is about 50 barrow loads, and the minimum order is for half a load. If half a load is too much for you, agree to split half a load with other plot holders near your plot.

To order, add your name, plot number and quantity to the notice at Gordon Road and email your order to Jennie Abelman -jennie.abelman@gmail.com to arrange a bank transfer to her account.

If you want to pay by cash, please drop it off at 19, Courthouse Road N12 7PH (phone 07932 057688). All payments need to be received in advance by Friday 24th October latest.

If there ends up being a shortage of manure, then you will be refunded, but otherwise there are no refunds once the manure has been delivered. It is a local farm product, and usually contains a bit of straw etc. This composts down.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH

Our Christmas Lunch will take place on 14 December. Let's bring some sunshine together to the darker months of the year!

SUTTONS AND KINGS CATALOGUE

The Kings seed catalogues and order forms are now available in the main polytunnel. Orders can be submitted only by post but their prices are highly competitive, so it is worth the trouble. Remember to enter 'Finchley Horticultural Society' where indicated and don't forget to include the cost of postage.

TOOL SHARPENING OPPORTUNITY AT THE VOLUNTEER DAY

As part of our **Volunteer Day and Pumpkin Soup event on Saturday 8 November**, we are delighted to offer members a tools and knife sharpening service. After a year on the allotment, digging, pruning etc. many plot holders will be thinking of sharpening their tools as the end of the season approaches. Inevitably cultivation tools get blunted and nicked by stones in the soil but keeping an eye on their condition will help maintain performance. Dave from *Renew Sharpening Services* has offered to set up on the Allotment that morning to sharpen any garden tools or Kitchen knives using his latest machine.

In order to make it worth his while we do need to know who is likely to use this service. His prices are as following:

<i>Secateurs</i>	<i>£6.00</i>
<i>Garden shears</i>	<i>£8.00</i>
<i>Loopers</i>	<i>£8.00</i>
<i>Spades:</i>	<i>£7.50</i>
<i>Kitchen knives:</i>	<i>£6.00</i>

Mower blades, chisels, planers etc. prices on request.

Please email: mail@finchleyhs.org (heading your message **KNIFE SHARPENING**) if you wish to take part and the number of items you need sharpening before **Friday 24th October** so that we can confirm the event. We hope we have sufficient takers for this splendid offer and the event goes ahead.

TOILET AT GORDON ROAD

Our toilet in Gordon Road is looking very dirty at the moment (see the picture). We urge all plot holders to put down the lid after use and keep the toilet clean.

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Member of the Barnet Federation of Allotment and
Horticultural Societies Affiliated to the
Royal Horticultural Society

Events Diary

RHS Autumn 2025 events
Celebrate the best of the season at the RHS
Gardens and shows

Wisley:
October Half Term:
The Secret Life of Pumpkins
25 October-2 November

A weekend of good Halloween fun, with
pumpkin carvings, creepy crawlies and a
pumpkin banquet to enjoy along a garden trail

RHS Glow
21 November 2025 – 4 January 2026
4pm-9pm

Embark on an enhanced route through **RHS**
Garden Wisley's most iconic sights, now
transformed by a brand-new light show and
mesmerising installations. Let your imagination
soar as you journey through a garden
reimagined in radiant colour and festive fantasy.

Hyde Hall:
October Half Term:
The Secret Life of Pumpkins
25 October-2 November

RHS Glow
21-29 November 2025; 3-27 December 2026
5pm-9pm

For more information visit rhs.org.uk/shows



Newsletter

If you received a paper copy of this newsletter and
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Christine Williams,

finchleyhorticulturalsociety@gmail.com
This saves us time and money.

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