

The Forge Farm Bugle

Volume 1 Number 2, Autumn 2011

Welcome to the second edition of The Bugle.

Thanks to all those who attended the AGM. Many voices were heard and ideas aired. The committee that you elected has already met twice and have discussed a wide range of issues raised. Also, four members have attended training sessions, run by the council, to educate them upon the committee's responsibilities and to enhance your allotment gardening pleasure. The minutes of the AGM are on the Green Shed notice board if you missed the AGM. You can still have your say by contacting any committee member or leaving a note in the white box by the toilet block.

The show was deemed a success with a good turn out and some excellent entries. Thanks again to all those who helped prepare for the event and to those who helped on the day.

Congratulations to everyone who won a category during the show. Special congratulations to the winner of the Best Plot Alison and Amar Plot 24 and the Best Newcomer The Smiths on plot 44b. I hope all who attended had a good time. Next year's show will be slightly different with added categories for quality vegetables whilst still retaining some monster veg sections. So start preparing your ground now as the secret's in the soil.

The jams were a particularly hotly contested category. Also notable were the animal or monster vegetables which were quite imaginative. Let's see what you think up next year.

We have already seen a few new improvements to the site. You may have noticed the road has had some repairs. Thanks to Frank Mulraney for organising and helping on the day of the tarmac repairs. This only cost us £100 which is very good considering the materials alone could have cost us twice that.

Ron has fixed a troublesome tap near the tip end of the site and he and I also replaced the flimsy polythene of the gate noticeboard with some rigid perspex. Furthermore, some hedgeline trees have received a new woodchip mulch and Wendy has been watering them through dry spells. Barbed wire has been erected on the fence beside the main gate.

We shall hopefully be receiving another gift of trees from the Woodland Trust next February to augment our own homegrown trees. These are destined for the hedgeline inside our perimeter fence to boost our security. Plotters are reminded that this hedgeline is not part of their plots and belongs to the entire site as per the council's rules, so if you've planted anything there you have until November to remove and replant on your plot.

If you wish to take part in the planting of the trees you can! There will be work parties from November onwards to prepare the area and plant the prickly hawthorns, the pretty cherries and the tasty hazels (should the wildlife allow us some nuts).

The committee are working towards obtaining a grant from the National Lottery. We have many ideas of how to spend it but if you have more please let us know.

Wildlife. We have a resident hedgehog so please be sparing with your non-organic slug pellets. Monty Don says you only need throw on about half a dozen a time, no need to carpet your brassica patch with them.

We are to erect a kestrel box in the hope our friend the kestrel nests here and sees to our

vermin problem. Six out of the eight nestboxes put up around the site last year were nested in. Place your nestboxes in a quiet corner of your plot and don't disturb them. If you have a birdfeeder on your plot make sure it's full this winter. Also, remember to clean it with a mild bleach solution otherwise you'll just spread diseases.

Show Results

Children's categories .

Animal Monster They scurried away before I could register the winners!

Best Posy in a jam jar: 1st: 57a, 2nd 29,

5 small cakes on a plate: 1st 54a, 2nd 57a, 3rd 29.

Heaviest Vegetables

Cabbage 1st 29 2nd Unregistered as it was whipped away before I could record it. 3rd plot 49

Leek 1st 29. 1.5kg No other entries!

Marrow: Joint 1st Wendy 23, Bill 21 both 3.9kg

Potato 1st 57a, 2nd 44b, 3rd 46

Onion 1st plot 29 (846g), 2nd 49, 3rd 55 243g

Beetroot 1st 29 3.6kg, 2nd 49, 3rd 41a 972 g

Pumpkin 1st Ron plot 33. 2nd 29, 3rd Frank Seedhouse.

Longest Carrot 1st 49, 2nd 29, 3rd 47

Longest Runner Bean: 1st 44b 36.5cm, 2nd 60a, 36cm 3rd 41a 35.5cm.

Small plate fruit 1st 36 Linda, 2nd 60a, 3rd unknown

Ugly Vegetable Hid themselves before I could take the winners' numbers.

Flowers

Vase of Flower: 1st 36, 2nd 49, 3rd 19

Posy in jam jar 1st 60a, 2nd 29, 3rd Unknown

Home made Jam 1st 23, 2nd 36, 3rd 17

Chutney or Pickle 1st 29, 2nd 49, 3rd 55

Lock up

If you have a machine or some tools in the lock up can you make sure that your name and plot number are clearly on them and, in the case of the rotovators, that they work. We have very little space left in there so we would like to get rid of any broken machines. Thanks.

Accident Book

There will be a new accident book on-site soon and it must be filled in if you have an accident that requires professional medical attention.

Complaints procedure

If you have an issue please contact the committee. The council have devolved a lot of responsibility to the allotment sites and as such we are your first point of contact. They also want us to solve our own problems with the arbitration of the BDAC.

Rotovator Hire

The allotment has it's own rotovator which you are allowed to use for a fee of £5 plus a £1 contribution to petrol.

Website

<http://forgefarmallotments.weebly.com>

If you have any digital photographs you'd like to submit to the website please email them to [upert@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:upert@hotmail.co.uk)

#### Unworked and Poorly Maintained Plots

Each year we have a number of instances where tenants pay their rent and then carry out little or no work on their plot during the course of the year – often we have no idea of the reason for this happening and attempts to contact individuals can prove to be very difficult, hence the need to have accurate and up to date contact details. We are then faced with a situation where a plot becomes overgrown and neglected and requires a great deal of work to put it back into working order, discouraging a new tenant. In the meantime, the weeds go to seed and this affects neighbouring plots to an unfair degree.

We have now agreed to follow a more rigorous procedure to avoid these occurrences, so please keep your plot cultivated.