

Alison and Paul Cullum with Morgan, Lewis, Austin and Warren got their plot in the autumn. Dad has dug it, ready for planting.



*In this news letter*

**Clear-up Weekend**

Saturday and Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> March

**Tilehurst Village Show**

Support our stall

**Keep On Gardening Project**

It's happening! Nice one Jenny



Supported by

**The National Lottery**  
through Awards for All



**Committee Notes**

**W**e invested our capital (£8,000) in a high yield 6 month deposit bond in January. The interest from this gives us most of our income.

**A**fter agreeing general principles We set up a 'Keep On Gardening' sub-committee to run the accessible plot project. There will be one person liaising with the contractors and volunteer teams on site. If you have any ideas or concerns please pass them on to Jenny.

**Tilehurst**

**Clear-up Weekend**

**S**aturday and Sunday, 10<sup>th</sup> & 11<sup>th</sup> March is R.E.S.C.U.E weekend. RBC will supply three skips in return for general clear up duties. Two will be left on the main site and one for Chapel Hill. You can use them as soon as they arrive (probably Friday afternoon). Surplus junk left by the skips on Saturday and Sunday morning will be taken away by extra RBC dustcart visits.

**P**lease make sure the skips are not left over-full after Sunday lunch. No banned substances (see notices) may be placed in the bins, but sheet asbestos may be stacked in the car park for special collection.

**Swap Shop**

**N**ew this year. We like re-cycling. Why not use the swap areas for useful things that someone might want? Left-overs will go in the skip on Sunday afternoon.

**Tilehurst Village Show**

**T**his will be on Saturday **23rd June**. We aim to make about 1/3 of our income at this local event on the Recreation ground next to the allotments. We sell plants and produce at our stall. Please note the date, and try to grow some plants specially to sell to the general public. Popular items include herbs (Chives, Mint, Parsley, Basil), beans (any type), courgettes, tomatoes, etc. Please label them. We can also sell some vegetables, flowers, rhubarb, etc, but the main effort is plants.

**Grass cutting**

**T**he committee are looking for quotes to cut the major paths. Peter Andrews has done an excellent job over the years, but others too are welcome to apply. Peter would not feel offended. Please contact John Kirton or Jenny Cottee asap. You need to have a mower, possibly a strimmer .

**Plot Holders Committee 2006/2007**

Chair	David Griffiths	PB10	9421141			
Secretary	Jenny Cottee	AA8	9425169			
Treasurer	Ken Phillips	AB14				
Committee	William Macphee	AA20	John Kirton	PA3	Gill Mills	PC9
	Richard Buckingham	AB11	John Butt	AA1a	Wendy Levey	AB5a
			Colin Robinson	AA20	Mick Geater	CH

## Seasonal Reminders

**Topical Tip** Adding bonfire ash when you plant potatoes is said to reduce slug damage.

**W**ater will be turned on when frost danger is over.

## Potatoes and Plants

**C**ollins in Pangbourne or the White Tower Nursery at Aldermaston have been recommended by plot holders in the past. Both offer good quality at reasonable prices.

**W**hite Tower Nursery also sell vegetable seedlings at £1.95 per tray of 12 plants. The list depends on the time of year, all grown to be ready at the right time. You can phone (9712123) to check what is in before calling in.

## Keep On Gardening

**T**he subcommittee (John Butt, Ken Phillips, Colin Robinson, Jenny Cottee, and Richard Buckingham) considered five quotations and decided to award the contract to Mr M Hague.

**A** team of young volunteers start work on clearing the shed, sorting the useful stuff and rubbish and clearing the carpet from the plot on Monday 26 February. There will be piles of materials put aside for re-use. Some will be labelled 'available for plot-holders to help themselves'. Have a look, there may be something for you.

**T**he contractor, will work on the paths and beds in March. Jenny is the project manager and is the link with the contractor.

**H**ow you can help?

(1) **L**ook out for useful things like guttering, down pipes, water butts and storage racking for the new shed(s).

(2) **I**f you are good at making things, take on a project, like refurbishing the greenhouse (we can pay for materials), or making seats, a potting bench, compost bins, etc.

(3) **T**here will be a workparty or two to tackle the next stages when the contractor has finished.

(4) **P**ass on news about the beds to anyone who might be interested in renting one.

## Waiting list

**T**here are more than ten families on the list. We expect most on the list to get plots by the end of next winter. Any current or new plot holders who might be interested in one of the new **accessible beds** should put their name down on a special list, contact 9425169 or the web site. We hope these beds will be in use in May.

**S**pare Land? If you don't want all your plot please tell Oliver or Jenny asap. We could rent out your other half.



## Site security

**D**rive really slowly (5 mph) to avoid damage to tracks, plots and edges. Remember our neighbours in Polsted road too.

**P**lease persevere with the gate locks. The trick is to ensure the key is fully inserted.

**K**eepproperty safely locked out of sight. Put tools and sticks away. Avoid using glass for greenhouses.

**R**eading Borough Council have hired a contractor to put a 2m high fence along the boundary between the 'reserved land /allotment land and the Victoria recreation ground. The fence should be in place before the Easter holidays.

**P**eter Andrews is pleased with the way the police dealt with the nasty incidents that affected him. The youngsters who tormented his chickens and stole eggs, were seen (with their parents), reprimanded and have promised not to trespass again.

**P**C 3406 Wayde Bohne covers the allotments. Please report all crimes to **Police contact no: 0845 8505 505**



## Winning The Lottery

**T**hey say 'It Could Be You' and now it is! I was quite stunned to find out we'd been granted nearly £10,000 for our allotment project for the less able. The concept is great; get people who are struggling either through advancing age or disability to continue, or even just start, to enjoy the benefits of growing their own food. Among other things we went to THRIVE to get a handle on what such a project could mean.

**I**d listened to the proposal and was keen to support it, but had some doubts as to whether we would get the funding. Jenny Cottee has worked tirelessly chasing people, quotes, etc., linking strands of enquiry together and putting it all into spreadsheets and plans.

**N**ow we have to do it! The Trustees have given their blessing which is a great start. There will be opportunities for all plot holders to give a hand in what will be a joint venture for us all, together with some outside partnerships. Watch out in Dig It and on the Notice boards for updates on this project.

## Grow Your Own Veg

**I** have mostly enjoyed the programme fronted by Carol Klein. I could do without some of the wobbly veg shots and irritating music, but there were some sound tips in amongst it. I'd never heard of the Three Sisters co-planting of sweetcorn, beans and squash so that's one for me to try this year. If you missed the series, go to [www.bbc.co.uk/gardening](http://www.bbc.co.uk/gardening)

## Dogs On Site

**A**s a dog owner I'd like to thank the Trustees for their change of heart over the dog ban. None of the plot holders dogs I've seen have ever caused problems, but the same cannot be said for passing visitors who allow their dogs to foul our paths etc. I've certainly taken such visitors to task politely but firmly and they have been at least apologetic. Dogs are good company on site. Dog owners, don't forget to apply for your 'Allotment Dog Pass'. from the Trustees.

*Richard Buckingham*

