



Deborah Dadd is already cropping sweet corn

Emergency Contacts

Water
 Polsted Rd supply: Mark Digweed
 52 Armour Hill 0791 9166700
 Armour Hill supply: Rod Mills
 5 Wendover Way 0778 9765652
 Chapel Hill supply: Mike Geater
 0776 8902634

Vandalism
 POLICE for EVERY incident:
 0845 8 505 505

Call 999 for trouble in progress
 The landlord's agent, Oliver Jenks,
 can be contacted On 9428186

AGM

7:30pm Thurs 29 Sept
 Tilehurst Village Hall,
 Victoria Road.

All plot-holders from both sites and all on the waiting list are very welcome at our AGM.

It is Digit

Chairman's report

Congratulations to everyone who has supported our society in what has been an unusual and sometimes difficult year. No one could have predicted the weather which went from snow and frozen ground to drought following the driest April for many years. However plants and plot-holders do not give up easily, they consider it a challenge to overcome the odds and achieve the impossible.

Your committee has met at regular intervals and kept a watching brief on any possible development of the reserved land designated by the trustees for future alternative use. Our positive views are well known by the LDF planning team at the Civic Centre in Reading and we thank our secretary for her research and diligence.

Our overall financial position remains sound. However while expenditure exceeds income and interest rates

remain low we cannot afford to be complacent. We also miss the income generated by raffles and the summer BBQ, but nevertheless our thanks go to Ken Phillips (Treasurer) and Julia Cottee (Honorary Auditor) and all those contributors who give so generously when asked.

We still suffer from a few uncultivated plots which is regretted, but the policy of only allocating half plots to new tenants has proved the right one. If you have any difficulties in cultivating your existing plot(s) please consider sharing the work and maybe the produce. Vandalism still occurs, coupled with deliberate theft, so be alert for unwanted visitors.

Finally, we always welcome new committee members with fresh ideas to improve the site, so let your voice be heard at the AGM or write to Digit.

15 August 2011

Outgoing Plot Holders Committee 2010/2011

Note: All the committee positions are up for election every year. We need nominations, there will be a chance to step forward during the interval.

Chair	John Butt	AA1a	9416944			
Secretary	Jenny Cottee	AA8	9425169			
Treasurer	Ken Phillips	AB14				
Committee	William Macphee	PC2	Kate Jones	AB9a		
	Richard		David Griffiths	PB10	Karen Fidler	PB12
	Buckingham	PD13	Colin Robinson	AA20	Mick Geater	CH

AGM

As well as paying your rent it is a chance to say what you think. We sit in a circle so everyone can join in. There is an interval with refreshments, an opportunity to catch up and compare notes with friends about what did well in this very difficult growing year.

During the meeting we will talk about how the site is going and plan for next year. The AGM is your chance to say what you want and help sort out tricky matters. Nuisance weedy plots, and reducing criminal damage are regular topics. Some new issues to debate include:

- Are there communal plum trees?
- How to ensure people who pay rent for plots get the full benefit of their site and not suffer crop damage from visitors.
- Bees? - how can we accommodate bees and gardeners on our crowded site.

We need your opinions on such topical issues.



Apples

TILEHURST ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY Annual General Meeting

Thursday, 29 September 2011 7.30-9.00pm
Tilehurst Village Hall, Victoria Road

Agenda

1. **Welcome and Introduction** John Butt
 2. **Acceptance of Minutes of AGM (30 September 2010)**
 3. **Report from the Chair** John Butt
 4. **Treasurer's Report** Ken Phillips
Discussion about financial issues and accounts for year ending 30th June 2011.
 5. **Reports from the Charity** Oliver Jenks
- Interval** (Tea and a chance to chat or pay your rent)
6. **Reading Town Meal**, Saturday 1st October
 7. **Discussion** of Site Issues and priorities for the next year, including security, locking gates, fund raising, etc.
 8. **Elections** for Chairperson, Treasurer, Secretary and up to 9 members of the executive committee. Appointment of auditor.
 9. **Raffle**

Treasurer's Report

Ken reports that for the first year ever we spent more than came in. The problem of obtaining a reasonable rate of interest remains. Our income was a bit less than previously and our expenditure was up, due to:

- (i) Rising printing costs.
- (ii) Buying the banner to use at shows.
- (iii) Repairing the KOG shed roof after vandalism.

We are not worried. The last two factors were one-off costs, so we just need to be reasonably careful and keep on with the regular fund raising.

TILEHURST ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

ACCOUNTS FOR YEAR ENDING 30 JUNE 2011

Income		Expenditure	
Poor's Trust	£60.00	Site Improvements	£10.99
Friends of Berks Hosp Show 2011	£236.30	Site Maintenance	£308.45
Tilehurst Village Show 2010	£108.00	Admin AGM	£16.52
Other	£1.67	Stall hire	£38.00
Raffles	£93.88	Dig It copying	£156.28
Bank Interest	£39.60	Room Hire	£17.00
Donations and Co-op dividend	£58.04	Website Costs	£35.11
		Banner and Supports	£83.18
		Folder Inserts	£14.81
Total	£597.49	Total	£680.34
Net Income/Expenditure 30 th June 2011	£9,544.67		

Balance as at 30 June 2011 is made up as follows

Bank accounts	£1,116.80
Petty cash	£20.20
Investments	£8,501.00
Accrued Income	£14.67
Accrued expenses	£(108.00)
Total 30 th June 2010	<u>£9,544.67</u>

Ken Phillips Treasurer **Julia Cottee** Auditor.

Paying your rent

The Charity sent this Dig It enclosed with your rent letter. Your rent should be paid at the beginning of October. You can pay in three ways:

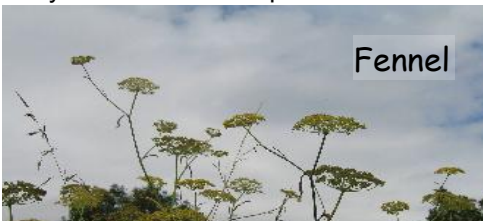
- by post,
- in person at AGM (29th September)
- on the main allotment site between 9-10am on Saturday 1st October (near notice board at the track cross roads.)

Your letter gives details of the charges for the coming year and advance notice of charges the following year. Here is a summary:

	Due 30 Sep 2011	Due 30 Sep 2012
Full plot	£47	£55
Full plot - reduced	£35	£40
Half plot	£29	£35
Half plot - reduced	£23	£28
KOG bed	£10	£10

Reduced rates only apply to people living in Reading Borough (RG30) or the Parishes of Holybrook, Theale or Tilehurst. Eligible tenants are those whose main income is from State Benefits or Pension. The reduced rate is for one plot, any more will be charged at the full rate.

Please pay promptly, or let Oliver know if you will be stopping. Don't leave him guessing. We want all plots fully used as soon as possible.



Fennel

Landlord's Reminders

Your committee support the Trustees in wanting to keep the site as safe clean and tidy as possible.

Please do your bit by checking out your plot regularly and getting the tiresome maintenance and tidying up tasks under control. Paths, pointed objects and water containers all need your regular attention.

Questions?

Questions for the Trustees to answer at the AGM must be handed in a few days before the meeting. Please give them to Jenny to pass on, or hand directly to Oliver Jenks.



William Macphee at the hospital fete

Committee news

Your Committee have:

- Kept an eye on finances.
- Worked on simplifying record-keeping and administration arrangements.
- Organised fund raising stalls at two regular shows on the Victoria Recreation Ground.

Join the committee?

The whole committee stands down at the AGM. New ideas and new people are welcome. The committee meet about once every two months and there are other occasional jobs. Being a committee member need not be too burdensome. Please consider helping your society stay fresh and alive.

Tilehurst Show

This show was on 13th August, right in the middle of the holidays! However, lots of donations of produce from plot-holders and many volunteers produced the magnificent total of £250.30 including £40 for the raffle of Carolyn's lovely basket of produce. Many thanks to everyone.

Stolen Crops

Dig It has received several missives like this about lost or stolen crops...
"Due to ill health my plot is looking very wild and neglected. I have been popping down to pick flowers and plant a few bits, but nothing much to crop. My raspberries were looking very lush. Came with a pot the next day. Shock! Horror! Some very greedy person had nicked the lot! I could not believe it, this was not just a bit of a nibble, they were striped bare.

Yours, very miffed, Gill"

The AGM agenda has an item on security, please come along and offer your suggestions for dealing with this sort of nuisance. It is very aggravating for the victims.

Food4families

Many plot-holders voted to support the successful lottery bid to make allotments from unused land at Southcote. Well done and thanks.

Reading Town Meal

1st October at Forbury Gardens. Celebrating growing and eating good local food. This will not just be a big fun picnic. There will be stalls, cookery demonstrations and many attractions for all the family. Look out for details. Plot holders are invited to contribute any spare produce for the picnic. Please bring your contribution to our AGM. The meal will be prepared by catering students. See on-site posters for more details.

Reserved Land

Watch this (open?) space: An independent inspector has been appointed. He will consider Reading Council's documents and hold a public hearing about future use of land in Reading. He will decide on many matters including whether the proposal to allow houses to be built on some of the reserved land off Kentwood Hill should be allowed. The public hearing of evidence will probably happen in early December.

Waiting list

At the moment all plots are let and 25 people are waiting. We expect most will have a plot within 3 years. The queue moves quite fast; some people drop out if they get plots elsewhere or change their mind.



Pears



Seasonal Hints

Please be considerate and choose a good time with autumn bonfires. Only burn material that is no good for composting, like diseased stuff or evil weeds like bindweed. Plastic must never be burnt and don't burn wet stuff; let it dry thoroughly.

If you have piles of stuff to get rid of you should:

- a) take it home or
- b) keep it until RESCUE clean-up in March.

Only put small items in the bins. These are emptied by volunteers; bin-men do not visit our site. Remember: there are no dumping areas on site.

Keep sowing. Autumn is not just for clearing up, harvesting and preserving produce. Plant spinach, lettuce ('winter density' or 'valdor' are good), pak choi, salad onions and greens to eat in the spring.

For early broad beans sow Aqua Dulce in the October. Some people do well with early peas. Garlic needs a long growing season so should be planted in November. Plant autumn onion sets for an early crop.

For next year's fund-raising, could you do some propagating so that we have flowering plants to sell at the fête?

Pass on your tips about all this at the AGM. We all want to pick brains and try out other peoples ideas.

Manure

Farmyard manure works wonders to improve the soil. The humus helps to retain water in our fast-draining soil. Plot-holders have two suppliers: Mrs Dayton (9572379) and Tim Metcalfe (9428001) both deliver well rotted manure to the allotment site.

Site Security

Please be 'crime aware', look after your property and be sensible. You should keep your plot tidy. If you keep valuables like power tools on site you are inviting trouble. It is best to make everything difficult to sell by marking it, and keep tools chained up. Wheelbarrows that are left around not secured to a shed are sometimes stolen for fun or because they are useful.

Please stay alert and challenge anyone wandering around. It is very sad to record we have had some miserable thefts from plots, some skilled gardeners have 'helped themselves' (stolen) whole crops of produce. Please be aware of what is going on on adjacent plots, make sure you introduce yourself to your neighbours.

The police decide how much time to spend in different areas of their patch according to how many URN (crime) numbers they record. Please phone **0845 8505 505** and give the details of **EVERY incident** of theft or criminal damage on our site. The only way to get a URN number is to phone this number or call in to Castle Street. It is helpful if you also let Jenny know what has happened (preferably in writing).

Speeding Gardeners

There's always too much to do on our plots, but please delay starting for a minute or two by restricting your speed to 5 mph down Polsted Road.



Slugs

The only creatures on the planet that seem to like beer more than men are slugs. Like men, slugs will often head out under the cover of darkness to find beer, but whereas men have developed an incredible ability not to fall into their pints (although they have been known to fall into other things on the way home), slugs have yet to reach that crucial stage in their evolution. Unfortunately for them, but happily for the gardener, Slugs will die when they drop into the submerged glass of ale that you have generously left out for them.

