



Julia Waters  
tidying her plot

### Emergency Contacts

**Water**  
 Polsted Rd supply: William Macphee  
 29 Armour Road 0118 9414873  
 Armour Hill supply: Rod Mills  
 5 Wendover Way 0778 9765652  
 Chapel Hill supply: Michael Geater  
 0776 8902634 or 0118 9420767

**Bees** Martin Moore 0772 9620286

**Vandalism**  
 POLICE for EVERY incident: call 101  
**Call 999 for trouble in progress**

**The landlord's agent,**  
 Stephanie Keighley,  
 can be contacted on 0789 979 8335

### Help Needed

- 1.** A backup emergency contact for water problems. This job requires common-sense. Basic home plumbing skills would be good.
  - 2.** A local plumber to be first contact for the Trustees.
- C**ontact Jenny or a committee member if you, or someone you know can help.

**A**utumn / winter is a good time for a general tidy up on your plot. If you must burn any dry debris then please be considerate of nearby houses. Recycle or compost as much as you can. Dig in compost now if you can. Our usual compost contacts are available, and local stables such as Halls Farm usually have horse manure/straw available for collection.

**A**s we hunker down and hibernate, it's the right time to look at the seed catalogues, but remember to check 'seed tins' buried in your sheds before you order yet more of things you've already got! We are adding a link for a seed company to our website who do free p&p for orders over £10.

**F**inally may I wish you and yours all the best for the festive season.

Richard Buckingham

### Chairman's Chat



**W**ell with all the rain I guess the drought is finally over! Our usual winter shutdown of water will occur soon. If you see any problems with allotment taps please let us know, whatever the

season. Also keep an eye for anti-social behaviour as we still get the occasional bouts of vandalism, which should be reported to Thames Valley Police on 101, or 999 for emergencies.

**I**t's been a fairly awful year for growing fruit and veg, with mixed results - some having great potatoes while others were affected by blight for example. At such times it's easy to neglect or give up on plots, but a bit of tidying / strimming wouldn't go amiss, thus avoiding a "weedy letter". We have a fairly low waiting list for plots at present. A Keep On Gardening (KOG) plot is vacant, so if you know anyone who needs a small, manageable plot, contact us.

### Plot Holders Committee 2012/2013

Chair	Richard Buckingham	PD13	07738 003057			
Secretary	Jenny Cottee	AA8	9425169			
Treasurer	Karen Fidler	PB12				
Committee	William Macphee	PC2	Kate Jones	AB9a	Mick Geater	CH
	Colin Robinson	AA20	David Griffiths	PB10	Ken Phillips	AB14

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## Committee Notes

Our AGM saw the election of two new officers; Richard Buckingham, Chair and Karen Fidler, Treasurer. We are delighted and grateful to both for making space in busy lives to help others enjoy our healthy and rewarding hobby. Thank you for stepping forward. Also, thanks are due to Colin Richardson for chairing the meeting.

The Trustees will decide the rent levels due from 1 October 2013 in early February. The details will be in the next edition of Dig It.

In these tricky times many have difficulty in paying the rent; if this is you, (i) contact Stephanie and tell her what is going on (ii) plan carefully so you get the best out of the land.

Committee objectives are:

- Trying to find ways of making the site tidier and safer.
- Looking out for money saving ideas to share with plot holders.
- Encouraging people to use our website.

## Thank you Ken

When Richard Scott, our Treasurer died suddenly in the summer of 2006 we really needed a safe pair of hands to watch our money. Ken Phillips quietly took on the task, was reliable, and calmly saw us safely through tricky times of dramatically falling interest rates. He has done an excellent stint. Thank you.

## Site News

There should be a clear path all round every full size plot. In the last twelve months there have been some splendid efforts restoring overgrown paths and tackling brambles. Thank you, you have made the site much better.

The Water supply to the main site will be turned off from 1<sup>st</sup> December until 1<sup>st</sup> March. Please do not tinker with the stopcocks. If you have plumbing skills see Jenny.

All gates (pedestrian and vehicle) will be locked from sundown on Christmas Eve, until sundown on Christmas Day.



Nick Hatchett



Stephanie collecting rent at our AGM

## Manure

Improves heavy and fast-draining soils. We have both types on the main site. There are two regular suppliers of well rotted farmyard manure: Mrs Dayton (9572379) and Tim Metcalfe (9428001) Check the price when you phone.

You can collect mixed straw and horse manure from many stables or use pigeon litter available on site to speed up your compost heap. Don't forget to use your precious compost. Dig it in to improve soil texture and raise soil levels.

## Seasonal reminders

RBC will collect Christmas trees from the car-park and return the chippings for us to use. Help yourself.

Be considerate and choose a good time for autumn bonfires. Don't burn wet stuff, let it dry. Only burn material unsuitable for cold composting.

Keep on digging, clearing up and doing construction jobs. Do a little and often, rather than rushing in the New Year.

Think and plan. What was good last year, how to grow so you have what you want to eat when you want it. Aim to avoid gluts, have early and late crops.

Number your plot!



Cabbages and canes

## New Lettings

It is taking quite a time to meet up with potential tenants and arrange for new lettings, but we expect the waiting list to be in single figures soon. There is one vacant accessible plot (chair height) for someone who needs this easily managed compact growing space.

Welcome to new tenants. We all hope you will enjoy the great hobby of growing what you want on your own patch of soil in nice friendly surroundings. Please don't try to do too much, a little at a time is a good idea.

## Seeds

Our website has a link to VegetableSeeds.net they offer seeds at keen prices and give a 10% reduction to allotment holders. Quote code AD486

White Tower Nursery at Aldermaston, and Collins in Pangbourne both give discounts and sell loose seed potatoes, onion sets.

## The Edible Garden Show

Will take place, for its third year, at Stoneleigh near Warwick on 15, 16 and 17 March 2013. It lives up to its name; lots of exhibitors, seed sales, compost, gadgets, advice etc. The website is [www.theediblegardenshow.co.uk](http://www.theediblegardenshow.co.uk).

Advance tickets cost: adult £12; 6-16 £10; >60 £10; <6 free with adult; with group discounts. The Macphees intend to go, and may have a couple of spare seats; if there is sufficient demand we could consider renting a minibus. If anyone is interested, please contact the Macphees on 9414873

## Pound Plots

PD8a is available to anyone on the waiting list for £1 rent in the first year in return for satisfactory drainage work.

PD9b is a too small to be a half plot, it is available to an existing plot holder for £1 rent for one or two years in return for satisfactory progress with the drainage.

Interested? Contact Jenny or Stephanie.

## For Sale

William Macphee has bird netting, ground cover mesh, wire netting (6" square or 2" hexagonal holes) and firewood and kindling for sale.

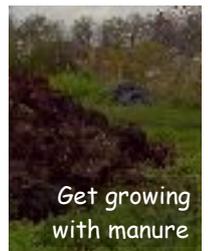
Telephone: 0118 9414873 for details.

## Found

A bone-handled penknife in the carpark at Armour Hill entrance. If its yours, contact DigIt.

## Movember Muck

Your editor is growing a moustache to raise awareness of men's health. He would like your money to support this charity, but is prepared to sweat a little for it. He is offering a wheel barrow load of farmyard manure in exchange for a £10 donation. For an extra £5 he will wheel it to any Polsted Road/Armour Hill plot. Go to [mobro.co/davegriffiths1](http://mobro.co/davegriffiths1) or contact the editor.



Get growing with manure