



Carol and Ali

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
 Email tplc@talktalk.net

Please give Jenny the URN number
 for any site crime you report.

Inform Stephanie of any wind
 damage to trees on site.

Spring

We have had very heavy showers and
 gales in May, but hardly any frosts.
 Plants are a good 14 days early.

On the main site it is wonderful to see
 no plots held vacant and covered with
 cardboard. Thank you to all who
 helped reduce the weed nuisance. We
 trust the Trustees will never hold plots
 vacant to such an extent again.

Plot holders, both old and new, are
 making spectacular progress: clearing,
 digging, raking, marking out beds, and
 using old pallets to make uniquely
 designed sheds and compost bins.
 Crops are coming on and soon we will
 all share in the fun of the harvest be it
 first of the year, or of the start of an
 allotment career.

Waiting List

Your committee are keen to ensure no
 plots are left vacant for more than a couple
 of weeks and that re-letting happens
 promptly before weeds get a hold.

Currently there is one vacant plot and
 8 people are waiting for plots.

Friends of RBH Show

The Friends of the Royal Berkshire
 Hospital Show is on **Saturday 7th June**
 at the **Victoria Recreation Ground**.
We will have a stall at this popular all-
 day family event with lots to do for all
 ages. Please help our main fund-raising
 effort. We need customers (tell friends
 and family about it), stuff to sell and
 helpers.

You can drop off any **donations**
 (plants etc) at our stall on the
 Recreation ground any time from
10.00am on the day, or to Jenny's plot
 (**PD5**) before the event.

We will need helpers for an hour or
 two during the day to do different jobs.
 Tell Jenny what you can manage asap,
 many hands make light work.



Strawberries

Plot Holders Committee 2013/2014

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

It is Dis

Site Inspection

We have not received the report of the Trustees site inspection, but Richard (who accompanied the inspection team) reported they had found no major problems.

Chapel Hill

Chapel Hill tenants are sadly facing the near-certainty that they will not be allowed on their plots in four months time. One tenant has taken up the offer of a replacement plot on the main site so is working flat out on two plots on two different TPLC sites.

At least one tenant has taken on a well cultivated RBC plot. The situation for Chapel Hill tenants who live in West Berkshire is particularly difficult. There are no allotments within easy reach. All the Chapel Hill tenants dread the prospect of the land they cared for becoming an eye-sore and nuisance to neighbours without the prospect of any benefit to the Charity.

General Tenants Meeting

The tenants meeting at the beginning of April was attended by 5 committee members and 9 other tenants. Most discussion was about main-site issues in particular how to keep the land clean and clear of rubbish. Most difficult was the matter of tenants dumping from their plots, this includes both stuff that will eventually rot, and stuff that will not rot.

The dumped piles have grown. Many find this unacceptable and reminded the meeting that the tenancy agreement has always prohibited dumping anything anywhere on site; even the long-standing practice of small amounts of 'green' waste in identified places.

Some suggestions were:

1. The terms of the tenancy should be strictly enforced, perhaps fencing off the contentious area.
2. The problem has been the very large volume of waste, including plastic bags, dumped inconsiderately making an unsightly mountain. If this were cleared (by whom?) the previous pattern could be resumed.

The committee will consider the two views and wait to hear the views of the Trustees.

Please consider very carefully if you move anything from your plot to elsewhere on the site and, and certainly do not add to a waste-mountain. Perhaps if people are sensible and volunteers do some clearing up we may be able to avoid the more draconian option 1.

New Style Allotments

Allotment gardening is evolving. The standard size is now a half plot (5 rods, that's 150m²) rather than the old 10 rod size. Small beds (protecting the soil from compaction) filled with closely planted vegetables are no longer a novelty. People aim to grow just enough tasty young vegetables.

Committee Notes

Peter Andrews has another two-season contract with the Charity to cut the grass on the main paths. Please help by not throwing stones on the grass areas, (although keep on making good the deep ruts). Peter also has a contract to keep the boundary hedges under control.

Apart from the main path every plot-holder is responsible for keeping a path all round their plot reasonably trim and level. Sort this out with your neighbours.



Reminders

All households have domestic rubbish collections. Please take your rubbish home.

Please keep your speed 5mph or less on all tracks on site and in Polsted Rd. higher speeds can cause damage to the surfaces and accidents

The site is not a playground, children are welcome, but they must not stray onto other peoples plots, or take anything even if it looks like rubbish.

Please use the contact details on the front page. Ideally, if you email Stephanie to tell her of a leaking tap or other such problem please send the allotments society a copy- we keep a log of outstanding issues- eg the water trough in the car park, or broken locks and send periodic reminders.

Be crime aware, there have been thefts of valuable property and casual annoying incidents. Please look after your property, lock up tools or take them home, do not leave valuables unattended.

Pests Diseases and Weeds

Imitation is the best flattery, look and see what others are doing about these problems. Copy what works. If in doubt, at this time of year, hoe.

Mysteries

The Charity have decided not to update their web-site with a report of the number of people helped, names of Trustees, etc. Their latest report is 2011. The FAQ erroneously states that copies of their annual reports and accounts are available on their website and in the library.

Look out for your copy of the tenancy agreement. We are told that the charity will send all tenants a copy although you can find it on the Charity's website.

The rent levels due on 29th September will be announced by 29th June. In the belief that the landlord should communicate individually with the tenants, your committee have decided that what ever the new tenancy agreement states they do not give permission for the Charity to make use of our notice boards for such an important communication

Chairman's Chat

What a difference a year makes! For the 2013 RESCUE weekend it was freezing cold with 4 inches of snow on the ground. Rescue Weekend 2014 was warm enough for tee shirt and shorts with the occasional light zephyr of breeze. Thanks to all involved in making our RESCUE efforts worthwhile and thanks to all for keeping the waste bagged up for collection. Though I'm slightly puzzled, having last year seen all the waste put into one vehicle, how does the council then separate it?

Once the winter rain finally stopped we had almost two weeks of dry and occasionally warm weather. A return of the familiar clang of spades hitting soil and the buzz of strimmers were very welcome.

We have had some crime incidents; theft of cash from a vehicle and theft of a strimmer from a shed. Tilehurst PCSO's came to investigate, and PCSO Sam Briars provided me with some laminated crime prevention posters.

Days are getting longer, the ground's getting warmer, and the temperatures are rising, all the necessary requirements for happy allotmenting. New spuds are coming on and I picked my first strawberry on May 14th. Happy Days!

Richard