



Krisztina  
takes a  
break

### Emergency Contacts

The landlord's agent,  
Stephanie Keighley,  
can be contacted on 0789 979 8335  
Email [tplc@talktalk.net](mailto:tplc@talktalk.net)

**Water and Trees:** Inform Stephanie of any water issues and wind damage to trees on site.

**Bees** Martin Moore 0772 9620286

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

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

### Come to the Village Hall

Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 7:00 to 9:00

### Site Inspection

The Trustees will be inspecting the site on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April looking at Health and Safety issues and checking the cultivation of plots.

### Fund Raising Priority

Every year your society has a stall at the Hospital Show on the Victoria Recreation ground. It is a popular fun occasion and our main fund-raising event. We aim to raise over £300 as we did the last two years. We try to appeal to all kinds of customers so need lots of stuff to sell: funky planters shrubs, veg plants, fresh produce. Flowers, herbs, etc.

This year we are raising money for site clearance expenses as well as routine things like Dig It and room hire for our get-togethers.

Please note the date, **Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June** (the last Saturday of half-term). Think of us when you sow seeds and pot things on. Every little helps. We also need help on the stall-please let us know if you can lend a hand.

### Clearing up the Site

For 20 years, every March, we had a free refuse collections which took junk from our site. Broken wheelbarrows, bits of carpet, etc. were removed. Even so it has been very distressing to find tremendous amounts of rubbish on vacated plots. This free clearance service is no more; now we must be self-reliant.

If you have access to a vehicle that is accepted at your council tip please use it to keep on top of problems. Do not collect stuff on your plot that you will never use. Rubbish is unsightly, encourages more stuff to arrive, and is ultimately a nuisance.

If you rely on public transport please tell your committee member about your problems. We are looking for ways to help.

**Check our website or Facebook for details of plothead discounts**

### Plot Holders Committee 2016/2017

Chair	David Griffiths	PB10	9421141	
Secretary	Jenny Cottee	AA9	9425169	
Treasurer	Karen Fidler	PB12		
Membership Secretary	Mary Bartlett	AB7a		
Committee	William Macphee	PC3	Colin Robinson	AA20
	David Elton	PC5b	Phil Smith	AB8b
	Deborah Dadd	AA17	Carine Guenand	PC4a
	Chandra Burathoki & Peter Beard			Gurka Assn.

# Dig It

## Spring Get-together

at  
**Village Hall, Victoria Road**  
on  
**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> May 7pm - 9pm**  
Wine and Nibbles  
Visual Gardening Quiz  
Chat  
Swap plants, seeds and sundries

Plot-holders and their families welcome  
The plan is to sit at six tables  
with some refreshments, bring  
your own if wine is not your thing.

## Police matters

We have agreed with the police to hold a meeting on site one Saturday morning. This will help our PCSO to get to know more about their patch and let plot-holders pass on news of problems. In the mean time if you suspect someone is using your shed or there are other troubles please report it to police using 101 and tell Jenny.

## Employee Volunteering Scheme

We are working with an Employee Volunteering company who bring businesses and communities together so both can benefit. We have registered with them and hope to welcome volunteers from the Prudential on to our site in the next few months.

We have highlighted 3 projects so far: tidying up of the car park area to make it more attractive and ready for the new bench; painting of the shed and brick work in the KOG area; and digging over/ clearing empty plots.

Can you think of other general projects we could advertise? Is there a particular job on your plot which you would be interested in registering? Please let your committee know and we'll be in touch to gather more details.

## Good Allotment Neighbours

### Show respect for each other...

Say hello to fellow plot-holders  
Know how to make contact when needed  
Talk through things that may affect others (for example deliveries)

### Show respect for their plots...

in the way we treat the plots and property of fellow gardeners

### Show respect for our site...

Take rubbish home  
Don't dump anywhere  
Care for paths  
Have visible plot numbers

... so we can all enjoy our plots

## Waiting List

It is sad that no plots have been let in 2017. There are now 7 vacant plots and 21 people on the waiting list. Stephanie says she will have held a letting event by 10<sup>th</sup> April so if you are on the waiting list please be sure to reply, these letting events seem to be few and far between.

## Mervyn's bench

Committee members Deborah and Colin have matters in hand. The base will be prepared near the car-park noticeboard before the bench is installed.



## Reading Plan - 2036

Do you remember the Wimpey planning battles? Now keep your eyes peeled for latest news. This involves the Draft RBC Local Plan. Once agreed, this plan will decide what can be built and where for the next 20 years. RBC planners invite comments on the draft (closing date 6 June.) If you are lucky you may find some consultation papers and a local display.

The planners propose protecting our allotment site and the Victoria Recreation Ground, but suggest that housing should go on the 'reserved land' off Armour Hill and Kentwood Hill. There is lots of 'small print' to study, but there are few chances to read all about it (except online). Look out for posters; see our website for information about how to find out more and have your say. Or hear RBC planner Mark Worringham explain at the Globe meeting on the Wednesday after Easter, that's 19<sup>th</sup> April, 7.30pm at Tilehurst Methodist Church.

## Nepalese

Our site reflects the multicultural nature of Reading. We have plot-holders from many countries, including quite a few from Nepal.

A handy Nepalese greeting is **NAMESTE** which means: Hello, Good morning, Good afternoon, Good evening and even Goodbye. The response is also **NAMESTE**

Nameste traditionally means I bow to the God within you and is usually spoken with slightly bow with both hands together. Try it next time you see one of the Gurkas. **Namaste.**

## Corner Chair

Who took your allotment? Looking round the site over the past few years, I've noticed that some allotments are disappearing! Some plots are level, or above the surrounding paths. Some are sunk below the path. Why? Where have they gone? Is it because some soil is fluffier?

My theory is that the the answer lies in the habit of barrowing weeds to the various 'secret' dumps scattered around the edge of the site. The roots of each weed or tussock of grass hold a little soil and over the past ten years these dumps of 'green waste' have become large heaps of soil. Your soil from your allotment!

Looking back into the misty past, when I got my plot, nearly 30 years ago, there was a huge heap, maybe 6 feet high in one corner. I did nothing except add my own tussocks of couch grass to it. The corner of the plot was a lot closer than the site boundary. A couple of years later I wanted the space and dug into the mountain. Under the outer skin of turf I discovered the most wonderful stone free loam which I spread around my plot, I used the turf and odd bindweed root to start a new heap.

Urge plot-holders, new and old to give the wheelbarrows a break. Start a heap in the corner of your plot. You don't need to get all scientific about compost making, just pile it up and give it time. If it gets overgrown with nettles, that's good. It's your own butterfly sanctuary. Nettles are an excellent addition to compost, the roots bring up nutrients from deep in the ground.

If a heap offends, four pallets tied together make a neat container. You can be more scientific about compost making, however, for the idle (like me), a heap and time work fine.

*Dave Griffiths*