



# grass CUTTINGS

JUL:2020

## CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Well, what odd times we are experiencing. Lockdown has restricted how we meet family and friends, the most amazing fact is how Covid19 has spread throughout the world in a manner that the 'so called experts' cannot explain and they do not know how long it will last!

Throughout lockdown I have only been to my allotment once and what a mess it is in! I gave up half last December due to reduced energy and age, I am retiring as Chairman this year.

We have not had a committee meeting since Spring because of Covid19 restrictions, however, we continue to function without any calamities, to my knowledge. Elaine has adapted very well in our Trading Hut, again obeying the necessary rules, many thanks to all our helpers! Roger continues to keep all our main paths in pristine condition, many thanks again. Louise keeps allocating plots to new members in her organised manner. Tony has been watching membership and

we have 17 on our waiting list, which is always a good sign. Special welcome to all our new members. Ken has replaced David, who has moved to Wilmslow, as our equipment Guru. Peter B is checking our insurance covers and watching that our accounts remain under control, and Janet and Jane are doing a great job keeping us all up to date with newsletters and email bulletins.

We are having some boundary queries which thankfully Trafford are checking into. We still await feedback from Trafford regarding our lease.

Our exceptional warm spring has resulted with bumper fruit crops particularly apples and I expect our Autumn Bliss raspberries should also be good.

Please take great care of yourselves and family during these difficult times and let us all look forward to normal times returning.

**Best regards, Don Jackson**

## // PLOT INSPECTIONS //

Taking into account the current easing of lockdown restrictions, it is planned that plot inspections will take place on 5th August.



## SURPLUS FOOD DONATIONS

**The Hideaway** is a large soft play area in Partington. Closed during lockdown, it's been repurposed to provide much needed meals for local children missing out on school meals in an area of high deprivation. Hot meals have been provided to more than fifty children in recent months, as well as food parcels for families. Being aware of the situation having been asked for a financial donation to enable them to keep providing meals during summer holidays, I asked whether donations of fruit and vegetables would be of value, and Ruth from The Hideaway said:

*'If there's surplus fruit or veg from anywhere like an allotment we would definitely be interested! We give out so much food from here that fresh stuff is really needed and really welcome. If there's anything that's a bit ropey we have a few boxes of food that we leave in the corridor every morning and people who need it help themselves each day. It's usually gone incredibly quickly, even if it's out of date or on its last legs. If this is something people are interested in helping with we would love to take any spare bits and pieces.'*

If you are able to help, please leave your surplus outside the Trading Hut on Sunday afternoons during August. Each Monday morning I'll collect it and take to Partington. They would be grateful for anything, even the items you might otherwise consign to compost. If you have produce available at other times please email me and I will collect it.

// Peter Jackson (Plot 15A) JcksPA@aol.com



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### // POISONOUS COURGETTES ALERT //

Members might have seen reports in the paper and on the internet recently about an issue with bitter tasting courgettes which can be poisonous and lead to gastrointestinal symptoms lasting for several days.

Mr Fothergill's has issued a product recall for **Courgette Zucchini BATCH I** and below is an extract from their product recall notice:

*'This applies to any packet of this variety with BATCH CODE I on the back of packet. It has come to our attention that a batch of our Courgette Zucchini could contain a small number of seeds that could produce bitter tasting fruits. This could be due to unusually high levels of cucurbitacins, a naturally occurring compound that is present in all courgettes, cucumbers and squash.'*

*'The incidence of this problem is extremely rare, but not unknown. It is not an issue listed by the Horticultural Trades Association, whose caution labelling guidelines we voluntarily and rigorously follow. It can come from issues with cross-pollination in the seed production cycle and is untraceable before growing out again for harvest. We have tracked the potential problem to one particular batch of seed which comes from a grower with the most meticulous growing and husbandry routines.'*

For further details of the recall please visit their website:

<https://www.mr-fothergills.co.uk/Product-Recall-MRF/#.XXMM25USNMY>

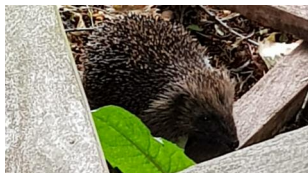
If you've planted Mr Fothergill's courgette seeds please check the code on the back of the packet. They will replace, free of charge, packets bearing the Batch Code I. Return details are on the link above.

As there have been reports of courgette seeds from other companies which might have a similar problem, and Unwin's have withdrawn the sale of their courgette seeds, we would suggest that you taste-test your courgettes before using them. This can be done very easily by cutting the courgette and licking the cut surface. It will have a bitter taste if it's been affected, in which case, don't eat it, throw it away!

The Brighton and Hove Allotment Society [bhaf.org.uk](http://bhaf.org.uk) have an article on their website about it if you want to take a look for more information.

### HEDGEHOG

A welcome visitor was spotted last month on Plot 44.



### COMMITTEE CONTACTS

**Don Jackson** Chairman, Plot 50  
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**Peter Baggaley** Treasurer, Plot 7  
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**Louise Black** Plots, Plot 36  
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**Elaine Watson** Trading Hut, Plot 43a  
T 962 9684

**Janet Cripps** Newsletter, Plot 44  
T 962 3277

**Kenneth Bostock** Equipment, Plot 46  
T 07982 622481

**SHAS Website** [www.shas.org.uk](http://www.shas.org.uk)

### NEW PLOT HOLDERS

Welcome to our new plot holders, we wish them a rewarding and productive allotment experience.  
**Plot 37c** Sarah Ashton // **Plot 50a** Michael Roche  
**Plot 54b** Bob Philips

### TRADING HUT NEWS

The pre-order/payment system which Elaine has been operating to enable us to keep our trading hut running during lockdown, has been a huge success. Big thanks to Elaine, Peter Jackson and Tony Turnbull for all their hard work in making this work and to members for adhering to the rules when collecting orders.

The Trading Hut will continue to open for the collection of pre-orders each week at present, any changes will be advised by email. Elaine will be at the Hut each Sunday at 10.30am if members wish to get any advice. Over wintering onion sets and garlic should be available at the beginning of September. Further details will be sent out by email.