



Grass Cuttings

Newsletter of Sale Horticultural & Allotment Society

September 2012

Chairman's Report

How do I start to review 2012 so far, having had the worst combination of weather we have ever experienced for gardening?

Severe frosts, then a warm spell, then cold, resulted in many setbacks. The bees and insects became active prematurely in the early warmth, but could not find any nourishment and died prior to the arrival of blossoms, hence poor orchard crops particularly plums and apples. Most plot holders' first and sometimes second vegetable seed sowings failed, waterlogged plots have caused crop losses! Several plots and Carlton Road gardens have been permanently waterlogged and as a result I have continually pestered Trafford to help, who in turn have been pushing the Environment Agency (United Utilities) to clear blocked ditches towards the River Mersey and our main drain running parallel with Carlton Road is silted up through minimum flow. Carlton Road residents have complained to Trafford and involved Councillor Brian Rigby about their waterlogged gardens! We still await action from the Environment Agency and Trafford.

Other allotment sites in Trafford and throughout the country have equally suffered with poor germination and miserly fruit crops, particular losers being summer bedding plants, hardy annuals apples, plums, sweet peas, large fruiting tomatoes, courgettes, sweet corn and pumpkins, although mine have flourished, perhaps you have had the same? However winners include hardy bedding plants, early spring bulbs, moisture loving shrubs like azaleas/rhododendrons, currants and strawberries, lawns and most weeds plus slug and snails.

We will be having our Pumpkin Party as usual on 27th October, our team of organisers has thankfully volunteered again, and further details are included overleaf.

Regretfully Alf Edwards has decided to give up his plot and his duties as our Trading Secretary to pursue other interests and enjoy caravan holidays.

In closing we pass our condolences to the families who have recently lost their loved ones.

Regards, Don

Committee contacts

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 Plot 27

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SHAS Website www.shas.org

A creative approach to the growing of
 herbs and edible plants

A talk by

Jacqui Brocklehurst

at

St Mary's Church



Monday 15th October
7pm - 9pm

Audience limited to 15
 Tickets available from the Trading Hut
 Free for members / friends £1

News from the Trading Hut

Autumn Onion Sets

We will be stocking two varieties of onion set for over winter planting, price only £1.00 for 200grams:

Senshyu – is an extremely popular Japanese onion that produces a heavy crop of semi-globe shaped straw coloured onions of excellent quality.

Winter Red – A new variety of red onions that has achieved very good results in trials.

Lawn Care

The heavy rain of summer will have leached out most of the nutrients in your lawn so it is more important than usual to give your lawn an Autumn/Winter feed.

Opening Times

The Trading Hut will be open each Sunday at 10.30am until 12 noon every Sunday in September plus 14th and 28th October.

Condolences

Sadly we regret to announce that Nigel Biss (Plot 30) and Graham Hanmer (Plot 44) recently passed away. Our thoughts are with their families

Bee-keeping Update

It's been a challenging year for bees and beekeepers! We've had early flowers flowering late, late flowers flowering early, rain, wind, sun, heat, cold and everything in between but we still have bees. Whilst other beekeepers have had to feed and nurture their bees, our bees have benefitted from their semi-sheltered location surrounded by nectar and pollen rich plants. Following an early burst of activity, bee numbers dwindled but recovered sufficiently during the recent spell of good weather for them to build up an impressive honey supply to ensure they are well stocked up for the winter. In preparation for overwintering, the queen is now laying fewer eggs, drones are being ejected from the hive and worker bee activity is reducing. For our part, we will ensure the hive structure is in good condition, reduce the size of the entrance to discourage mice and robbing (by other bees and wasps) and look forward to seeing them in the spring!

Visitors to the Allotment

We would like to remind everyone that while we welcome visitors, guests and children to the allotments we request that they respect the area and refrain from trespassing on others' plots.

New Plot Holders

SHAS gives a warm welcome to new plot holder Ian Currah (Plot 37)

Pumpkin Party

The Hoe Down
Saturday 27th October 6pm

Homemade soup, hot dogs, baked potato, cake and soft drinks (bring your own wine/beer)

Prizes

Heaviest homegrown pumpkin
Jack o-lanterns
Guess the name of the pumpkin
Races
Plot Awards

Entry is strictly by ticket only. We must restrict the entry to 80 so get your tickets early.

Adult £2, child £1.50

Family (2 adults + 2 children) £6

Tickets available from the Trading Hut
Sunday mornings



Community Fruit Plot

Following discussions during various Committee meetings, plot 30, which consists extensively of mature fruit stock, has been accorded the status of a Community Plot. This project has a trial period of two years and is being managed by a team of volunteers who have been maintaining the plot, strimming undergrowth and pruning/tying-in fruit trees and bushes. Fruit can be harvested from the plot by SHAS members in return for a donation handed in to the 'honesty box' at the Trading Hut. Anyone wishing to help the above team, or offer advice or comments, may write to Brian Eyden on brian.p.eyden@hotmail.co.uk, or 3 Cherry Lane, Sale, Cheshire M33 4NF.

The Big Clean Up

Your committee decided to hire a skip to tidy up as much rubbish throughout the site, this was necessary, as several plot holders regrettably were not prepared to take their rubbish to the tip, and such actions are now being monitored. Please take anything you do not wish to have on your plot home to your own bin. Prunings of woody material should be cut small and removed in bags to your green bins. Many thanks to all those who volunteered in the big cleanup.

