



# HARLOW HILL ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION

## AUTUMN 2021 NEWSLETTER

### for all Plot Holders and Associate Members



*A good crop of onions to finish the season*



*Late summer*

**WELCOME to the autumn edition.** Hope you have all had a good summer, and your crops have done well. My impression is that it has been quite a good summer for vegetables, no late frosts, plenty of warm days, and a reasonable amount of rain. I only had two failures, both the result of carelessness on my part. It was a very good year for weeds too. The annual ones, chickweed, speedwell, sow thistles, redshank (the one with the flowers like a pink liquorice allsort), shepherd's purse, have kept germinating and germinating, growing and growing and I found it hard to keep up, though I think I've got there in the end. Now's a good time to start clearing up the plot after the growing season, and preparing for next year: despite some wet weather over the last week or so, the ground is still quite workable, and October usually brings some pleasant days. For those who dig, it's not a bad time to do it before winter sets in. If you are struggling with mare's tail (also called horse tail), the worst weed of all, dig as deep as possible to get out all the roots, and do the same as soon as new shoots appear.

*Keith Wadd*

#### **HHA COMMITTEE**

Steph Byrnes, plot 44B, has kindly agreed to join the HHA Committee and attended her first committee meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September. Steph has been co-opted to the Committee at present, and there will be a formal vote at the next AGM in March 2022.

If anyone else is interested in being a committee member, please contact Angela for more information.

Ian Clarke resigned as a Trustee when he stepped down from the committee. Sian Gamble has agreed to replace him in that role. Our three Trustees are Richard Wriglesworth, Phil Massey and Sian Gamble.

*Angela Dicken*

## WATER RESTORED AFTER LEAK SCARE

"We may have an enormous bill due to a water leakage situation" Chris Dicken, the Harlow Hill Allotments Association treasurer, told the association's committee meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> September. Chris said that Yorkshire Water was billing us for approximately £2400 though payment was currently suspended. A bill of £300 was what we might expect in a normal year and £600 if there was a hot summer. Chris told



the committee meeting that our current insurance does not cover us for the leak, but if it was Yorkshire Water's fault they would look at previous bills and charge us accordingly.

As soon as we became aware of the problem, Paul Knight, our site manager, turned off the water and checked around the whole allotments site for any wet areas. There was no sign of a leak anywhere and the drainage channel at the bottom of the main site was dry. Paul had also dug out the new connection we installed last year and there was no problem there. It began to appear that Yorkshire Water was the prime suspect as they had carried out work on Beckwith Avenue in early spring when the allotment's water was still turned off.

Chris Dicken had several phone conversations with both Yorkshire Water and Business Stream, the billing company. Yorkshire Water checked the meter and that appeared to be working correctly so they agreed to send out engineers to see if they could locate the cause of the leak. One of the plot holders used divining rods to help identify where the water pipes crossed Beckwith Avenue, and plot holders of 46B and 48B were informed that it might be necessary to dig up some of their plot to locate the pipes.



It soon became clear that the leak was on Beckwith Avenue. On 23<sup>rd</sup> September the contractor that had dug the trench on Beckwith Avenue returned to repair the leak, and later in the day the allotment water was back on. A few plants, particularly runner beans, had got a bit thirsty during a warm dry spell of September weather but they probably survived.

Many thanks to Paul Knight and Chris Dicken for the considerable work they have done to resolve the crisis.

## LEEK PRIZE (*The other sort*)

The Harry Newport Trophy for best leeks is going to be judged in early November – before they start to get eaten! So let Angela know by the end of this month if you would like to enter. There seem to be lots of good leek crops on the site, so why not give it a go and enter?



## SEED ORDER

The catalogues for the King's Seed Order are available in the shed next to the Allotment Shop and in the new shed on the small site. For those of you who are new to this, through our membership of the National Allotment Society, we have the opportunity to order from Kings at reduced prices. If we send in a group order, we also make some additional funds for our allotment association.

All you have to do is to choose from the catalogue what you would like, complete the green form that's inside the catalogue and then return the form to me (at 74 Otley Road) You can pay into the Harlow Hill Allotment Association bank account (this is our preferred method if you can do this), or you can pay by cheque with your order. All the details are on the front of the catalogue. Please read the instructions carefully. You need to add £1.30 to your order for individual packing.

The deadline for getting your order to me is Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> November so you still have plenty of time to choose. The seeds are usually delivered to me at the end of November and I'll let you know as soon as they are available.

We also put in an order for seed potatoes to Acorn Supplies. The deadline for this order was the end of September, so that order has already been sent off. The seed potatoes are delivered in early January.

*Angela Dicken*

## ALLOTMENT SHOP

We have continued to do the email shop orders with deliveries on 11<sup>th</sup> July and 19<sup>th</sup> September. We also had the shop open for an hour on 19<sup>th</sup> September.

We'll aim to do email orders with payment by bank transfer in October and November, and also to have the Shop open once in each month. The Shop will be closed in December and January and will re-open in February. We'll aim to have the Shop open on a more regular basis in the New Year, but will continue to do the email orders too as that has worked well. When the Shop is open, you can pay by bank transfer, cheque or cash.

Many thanks to everyone who has supported the Allotment Shop.

*Angela Dicken*

## PICNIC ON THE PLOT

14 people came to the Picnic on the Plot on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> September. The weather was a little cool and it started to rain towards the end, but we enjoyed some lovely cakes and it was nice to be able to catch up with people we hadn't seen for a while and get to know some new plot holders. The trophy for the Most Improved Plot was presented to Peter Stevenson during the picnic.

*Angela Dicken*



*Peter Stevenson receives the trophy  
for Most Improved plot from Angela.*



## THOSE YELLOW BOXES BY THE SHOP



I am delighted to say that we have had lots of excess fruit and vegetables donated into the yellow boxes over this year's season. For those who are not sure where it goes, rest assured it goes to good use. It has been going to the Resurrection Bites project – now a Community Interest Company - which has been active over the pandemic making up food parcels for those in need in the Harrogate and Knaresborough area. The “pay as you feel” cafes have now started up again ((feeding bellies not bins is our mantra) and the director has sent a message of thanks and a kind offer. We are passionate about good food not going to waste, and the allotment donations are there proudly next to donations from M&S, Betty's, the Coop to name but a few.

I am one of those volunteer cooks who turn those crazy giant courgettes etc. into something lovely. If anyone wants the Courgette

Pakora recipe, do ask me and we'll also put it on the website too.

I empty the yellow boxes every Monday tea time so please try to put any donations in timely – we don't want to create compost! Any surplus fresh veg you have spare is great. Sorry for health and safety we can't accept any homemade jam or chutney.

*Sian Gamble*

### MESSAGE FROM THE RESURRECTION BITES DIRECTOR, MICHELLE HAYES

Resurrection Bites would like to say a huge thank you to all of you who have donated your excess to our organisation. Our cooks have been making it into food dishes over the summer ready for us to serve in our pay as you feel community cafes. We would love to thank you for your donations so please pop into one of our cafes for breakfast, lunch or cake on us. There is never any pressure to give financially in our cafes, but just mention that you are one of the allotment donors and that I invited you to lunch on us.

Our cafes are at:

- West Park United Reformed Church (near the library) every Weds 10am - 2pm
- Gracious Street Methodist Church, Chapel Street, Knaresborough HG5 8AN every Tues and Fri 10am - 2pm

Both venues have a pay as you feel shop too, stacked full of good quality food surplus.

Going forward, any donations from the allotments will also be offered to members of our community groceries to ensure that people on a low income can afford fresh fruit and veg.

Thank you again for your hard work and generosity.

Best Wishes Michelle

## ALLOTMENT SHOW - A GREAT SUCCESS



Opened by the Mayor and Mayoress, the 60<sup>th</sup> Harrogate Annual Allotment Show on Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> August was a great success. There was a wonderful spread of vegetables, flowers, cakes and jam and everyone agreed it was good to meet and chat again. The Harrogate Advertiser gave it a terrific spread, headlined it as “Gem of a show at Valley Gardens”, and included several splendid pictures.

Some Covid-19 safety measures were in place. The doors of the Sun Pavilion were left open, visitors asked to wear masks and follow a one-way system, and it all worked very well.



12 people from Harlow Hill Allotments entered the Show this time (the most from any site). Beatrice Treetops won the Harlow Hill Junior Cup, Angela Dicken won the Margolis Trophy for most points from an exhibitor from Harlow Hill and also the Society Trophy for best exhibit in the cakes section; Sarah Stead won the BUPA Care Homes Trophy for the best exhibit in the novices section. Congratulations to them all.

*Bea receives the Harlow Hill Junior Cup from Martin Fish.*

Many thanks to all plot holders who were very generous with their donations for the tombola stall and to Sarah Stead, Jennie Parfitt, Ann Routledge and Steph Byrnes for looking after the stall. We raised £269.15, slightly down on previous years but still a substantial amount. The toiletries and toys left over at the end were given to the Women's Refuge and the bottles were given to Sarah Stead to use in a raffle at her Macmillan Coffee Morning. The fruit and vegetables from the exhibition tables were donated to Resurrected Bites, and £500 - the profits from the Show – will be donated to Ripon Museums Trust at a presentation on 15<sup>th</sup> October.



*Our tombola stall*

The Sun Pavilion will be booked for 21<sup>st</sup> August 2022 for the 61<sup>st</sup> Annual Show.

## SITE JUDGING – HARLOW HILL WINS GOLD AGAIN

The allotment sites across Harrogate were judged on 8<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> July by Rob Gooderidge from Ripon City Allotment Society and Marilyn Sarmiento from Knaresborough Allotments Self-Help Scheme. The criteria for judging were: First Impressions, Cultivation and Husbandry, Infrastructure (sheds, water butts, frames etc.) and Site Management.

The results were:

Gold Medal	Oatlands Northern Outfall Harlow Hill Pine Street
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Silver Gilt	Claro Road Stonefall
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Silver	St Andrews Unity Grove
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Best Site and winner of the Edgar Scholey Shield was Oatlands Allotments.

Best Plot in Harrogate and winner of the HBC Shield was Mick Nadin, plot 56B, on St Andrews Allotments.

Certificates were awarded to each site at the HDAF Allotment Show. Well done to everyone at Harlow Hill for your hard work in ensuring that we achieved Gold standard again this year. *Angela Dicken*

## HDAF DIAMOND JUBILEE CHALLENGE

These are the entries in the HDAF Jubilee Challenge displayed at the Show showing the Diamond Jubilee sweet peas, Jubilee Boy dahlias and Jubilee tomatoes. Ours is the arrangement in the trug basket – dahlias grown by Phyllida Barker, sweet peas by Angela Dicken and tomatoes by Andrea Stanley. The winning entry was from Ripon City Allotments, the one on the left in the picture.



## BEEES TO STAY



With Graeme and Fiona through personal commitments unable to look after the bees any more, it looked as if they would be moved from their present location at the back of the allotment shop to pastures new at a site at Wetherby, and we would say goodbye to them. However, Peter Gregory (plot 27A) said he would be more than willing to put a colony of bees in the existing location on the site next year, and to look after it. Many thanks, Peter.



## WEBSITE

Don't forget to keep taking a look at our website [www.harlowhillaa.org](http://www.harlowhillaa.org) . It has lots of useful information. I'll be doing another update shortly, so if you have any suggestions for improvements or additions, please let me know. In the Members' Area there's a recipe section which could do with a few more recipes, so if you have any good ones that involve allotment produce please send them to me; or if you've found a particular variety of vegetable or fruit that grows well on our site, let me know about that too. The password for the Members' Area is 'Beesmakehoney'.

*Angela Dicken*

## IN PRAISE OF RUNNER BEANS



The main reason I grow them is that they are our favourite vegetable, and that is a good enough reason in itself. However, they are also heavy croppers, right through from mid-August to early October. Actually, we started to eat them this year on 17<sup>th</sup> August, and I was still able to pick a few on 2<sup>nd</sup> October. They are also quite easy to grow. I plant the seeds in pots in mid-May, and make another sowing in early June. Once they've germinated and made a decent size (say, two or three leaves) I transplant them to where they are intended to go, then put the bean sticks in. I plant them out in a straight line – I know most people prefer them like to look like wigwams but a straight line works for me. Once they're planted out, the main thing runner beans need is plenty of water, at least every other day. The other thing to remember is pick them young and tender, don't let them get coarse and difficult to chew. Prizewinner are the sort I grow, they crop well and have beautiful deep scarlet flowers which brings me to my next point: runner beans are attractive flowers as well as veg, in fact I believe they used to be grown as flowers.

*Keith Wadd*

## IT'S YOUR NEWSLETTER

Don't forget, this is your newsletter, so if you've any ideas or information you would like to share with your fellow plot holders, please send it to Keith or Angela.

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