

THE URBAN JUNGLE

The Newsletter of the Ruislip-Northwood Co-operative Small Holding and Allotment Society Limited

Issue 06 - May 2008

I wasn't intending to write this newsletter for another couple of weeks but there seems to be so much happening at the moment I thought you would all like an update.

Welcome To

Anyone who keeps abreast of the news will know that allotment gardening has become very popular in the last couple of years. Council owned plots in the north of our borough are now full and Trevor is getting a lot of enquiries from would be allotmenters. If anyone feels that they have taken on more land that they can cultivate and they wish to downsize or relinquish their plots, please let Trevor know. It would be preferable to do this now, rather than just leaving your plot to become overgrown. Meanwhile we have to welcome the following people who have taken on some of our more challenging plots – I take my hat off to them all. Next to the car park, Bernard and Armelle; along the northern path, Becky and Gareth, Tonya and Peter, Katie and her father Barrie, and Valentina: on the main path Joan and Dylan and, past the lockers, John.

And Farewell

It is with great regret that I have to tell you of the sudden death of Nick Wilson. Nick was a well known member of the society and, for the last couple of years, had given a lot of help and advice on equipment maintenance. Our heartfelt sympathy goes out to his wife, Pauline, and her family.

A Visit from our Landlord

I'll start this piece with a short history lesson! Our site used to be designated a "poors" field. This meant it was intended for the poorer people in the area to use for agricultural purposes – mainly growing foodstuffs and grazing livestock. For the last 98 years our society has leased this land. We therefore know that our land has never been used for anything other than agricultural purposes. Our current landlord is Ruislip Combined Charity and its chairman, Ken Guy, is visiting the site on Saturday 17th May from 10:30am for a "landlord's" visit. Let us hope that it is not pouring with rain! He has said that he would like to meet any members who are working on their plots on that day. Angela would like all members to make a special effort to make their plots look good for this visit.

Working Parties – A Message from Mike

As most of you will know, we are organising working parties for one hour on the second Sunday each month on a trial basis, with the purpose of trying to tackle some site maintenance and improvement jobs which need to be done. Depending on how these work out we might continue them through the summer.

Our first working party met on 9th April and we had an amazingly large turnout of 25 people. Between us we cleared a lot of rubbish from the inside of the hedge along Joel Street and began to plug holes in the hedge; cleared the spare plot by the car park, and had three huge bonfires with the resulting rubbish. Jacky, Rachel & Cherry kindly took carloads of rubbish to the tip. We also fixed gaps in the fence by Tesco's, which had regularly been used to break in to the site. Most people found it to be good fun, and also an opportunity for people to get to know each other.

It's becoming clear that in order to make good use of the time we need to have a list of jobs to be done in advance, and also some materials available. I'd appreciate it if anyone with a particular ability like carpentry or plumbing could let me know since some jobs need specialist skills.

In terms of materials, I'm proposing that we use the small plot south of the car park for accumulating materials that could be useful. We need pallets, fencing panels, wire, posts and similar useful things. So if you have anything along these lines that is surplus, or you know where to get hold of it, please let me know. In true allotment spirit, I'm sure we'll gladly accept anything useful. Please do not remove anything from this area; 4 metal poles have already gone missing!

Our next planned dates are 11th May and 8th June at 10.00. If you feel able to come to one or more of these, please come along – there's a good chance that we'll be able to find something useful for you to do, and if not, you can always have a chat!

The Swap (Surplus) Table

Many of you may remember the successful “swap” table organised by Cherry and Rachel last year. Well, they have agreed to do the same this year. If any of you have surplus seeds, spare seedlings or plants for which you want to find a good home, please leave them on the table next to the locker block on the main path. If anyone is looking for plants – have a look here first and help yourselves, but please return any pots or trays to the table, so that the owners can reclaim them.

Site Rubbish

Unfortunately we do not have an organised weekly rubbish collection from our site. Plot holders are therefore responsible for disposing of any rubbish on their plots, either by taking it home and putting it out for their weekly rubbish collection or by taking it to a waste disposal site – there are two locally that I know of, one in South Ruislip and one at Rickmansworth. Please do not leave rubbish by the car park gate.

Bonfires

Please remember that we like to be neighbourly so we do not allow bonfires from the 1st June to 31st August when our neighbours might well be out in their gardens enjoying the sunshine. If you have waste wood, paper or plant material on your plot which you need to burn, have your bonfire soon. Alternatively on 11th May take it to the plot by the car park where we had a large bonfire as part of our last working party. We will probably have another bonfire then.

T’s and C’s

Both the above topics, rubbish disposal and bonfires, are covered in our “Terms and Conditions of Rental of Land from the Society”. If you have not yet signed your copy of these T’s and C’s, please do so and return them to Trevor as soon as possible. If you haven’t yet received a copy, please contact Trevor who will give you two copies– one for you to sign and return and one for you to keep for your records.

Car Park - Update

The saga continues! The new gates have been fitted. We are still waiting for the final resurfacing to be completed.

Recipe – Cauliflower, Potato and Pea Curry

Raj has written to me telling me of his interest in the medicinal properties of food.. He has suggested that we might like to try the following recipe, if we have some suitable vegetables growing in our plots. Thanks for this recipe Raj – I will certainly be trying it out, provided that the mice don’t get all my peas.

Ingredients

1 cauliflower	1tsp salt
125g of peas	1tsp turmeric
3 medium potatoes	1tsp garam masala
1 medium onion	Green chilli
3 cloves of garlic (chopped)	Fresh coriander
1 piece of ginger (chopped)	

Method

Wash all the vegetables. Cut up the cauliflower and potatoes into bite sized pieces. Chop onions. Heat up some vegetable or sunflower oil in a wok or frying pan equivalent. When the oil is hot add the garlic. When the garlic is browning, add the ginger and onions. Fry until they change colour to a golden brown. Add the spices and chopped fresh green chilli, if required. Add the cauliflower and potatoes with a little water and cook for 20 minutes. Add the peas and cook until everything is tender. Garnish with fresh coriander. Serve with nan bread and dhal curry.

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It would save us a lot of time and effort if we could e-mail this newsletter to you. If you have an e-mail address, please let Trevor know at joelstreetallotments@tiscali.co.uk Thanks.

Jenny Jessup