

# THE URBAN JUNGLE

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

Issue 17 - May 2010

## Introduction

It's a really busy time of year for those of us who are trying to grow our own fruit and vegetables. As if that wasn't enough, our committee have been involved in all sorts of other activities which will benefit our Society and raise its profile within the local community. They can't take on all these things by themselves, so please help them where you can – every little helps!

## Lottery Funding (Angela)

Just in case anyone has missed the news: we have been given a grant from the Big Lottery Fund to install a Kazuba K2 composting toilet. This uses no water or electricity, needs no soak away and is completely odourless. It dehydrates all the waste matter and produces a small amount of dry fertiliser which can be used as a mulch on our hedge.

Part of the agreement with the Big Lottery Fund is a major opening event to generate publicity for the Lottery. This will be on Sunday July 18th, the date of The Big Lunch. The Big Lunch is a national event encouraging street parties, etc. This year one of the Lunch's sponsors is the National Lottery. The 18th July is a few days before the Society's centenary, so we are combining the Grand Opening with a Centenary BBQ. Put the date in your diary now! All members, families and guests are invited, but we will obviously need to know numbers in advance. Tickets will be on sale soon, so keep an eye on the notice boards and your email.

## Harlyn School Summer Fete – Volunteers Needed Please

The date of this has been confirmed as Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> June and our society has agreed to have a stall. Our committee is therefore looking both for volunteers to help on the day and for people to donate any spare plants they have (flowers / herbs / vegetables) so that they can be sold. The money raised will go to the Society. Please let a member of the committee know if you would be prepared to help with this.

## Blightwatch (Trevor)

We have again signed up to Blightwatch, which aims to provide advance warnings of weather conditions which might cause blight on potatoes and tomatoes. Members with internet access may like to log on to their website: [www.blightwatch.co.uk](http://www.blightwatch.co.uk). Our user-name is: joelstreetallotments and the password is: **blight**

(For those of you who are new to growing your own vegetables, blight is a fungus that can have a devastating effect on both potatoes and tomatoes in warm, wet weather. The first signs of blight are brown areas on the edges of leaves. Once it has taken hold there is no treatment for blight, so you have to stay vigilant.)

## Trench Working Parties Update (Angela)

Many thanks to the following people who turned up to help dig the central trench.

March 7th; Joe, Ted, Barbara, Richard & Penny, Clive, John, Allan, Kevin, Jimmy, Adam, Trevor

March 14th; Joe, Ted, Barbara, Clive, Allan, Jimmy, Vlad, Eddie, Trevor

March 21st; Joe, Robert & Jenny, John, Allan, Anthony, Vlad, Eddie, Gerry, Andre, Trevor

March 28th; Joe, Ted, Trevor, Robert, Clive, Allan, Eddie, Gerry, Kevin

Thanks also to Graham, Joe, Robert, Mike and Jenny, Gerry and Matthew for moving sheds and other heavy items lining the route of the centre trench. The central trench now flows from Michael's plot through the larger, newly-laid pipe under the cross path and down into the paddock to the stream. The trench will still need to be dug by hand across Michael's and Mike and Jenny's plot as there is not room enough to drive the digger through. Beyond these two plots, Clive has offered to clear a trench to the car park when he can find the time to do it. No decision has yet been made on how to manage some of the spoil which has been created by digging this trench.

## **Other Site News (Angela)**

### **SIGN BOARDS**

I am OVER THE MOON that our sign boards are finally in place at both gates! (Perhaps this will please the former Management!) Many, many thanks to the amazing people who made it happen - our octogenarian neighbour Don, who constructed the boards, Trevor, who painted them, Joe and Tim who erected them and our next door neighbours, Jody and Jamie who designed and created the signs with the help of their contacts. They still need a protective film spray applied against vandals; it has taken two years, but we have DONE IT! What a team!!!!!!!!!!!!

### **THE CROSS PATH**

Thanks go to Kevin for helping Joe to shore up the edges of the cross path which were beginning to crumble. Not a job to be tackled single-handedly!

### **THE SOCIETY'S PLOT**

Joe has procured a number of scaffold boards to shore up the sides of the trench. Some members have been fortunate enough to purchase some of the surplus boards, but those remaining are for the Society's use only. Joe hopes to order another supply later on. Please note that any equipment on the Society's plot must not be taken for Member's use, as it is needed for site improvement work.

### **FREE PALLETS AND BARK CHIPPINGS**

Pallets and bark chippings deposited by Tesco's wall are for member's use. The committee is concerned that a few members seem to be helping themselves to more pallets and bark than they need. Not only does this make for an untidy plot, but it deprives other users. Please show consideration to your fellow plot holders and only take what you can use. We are fortunate enough to obtain a regular supply, so there is no reason to hoard pallets. At present these are free; it may be necessary to charge members for excess pallets if this practice continues. We would also make a plea to those of you taking pallets to leave a TIDY PILE of the remainder beside the Tesco's wall. Please do not take them apart until they are on your plot. This is a car park. Nobody wants to come back to a flat tyre!

### **FENCING**

Thanks to Joe and Tim Donovan, who have shored up most of the damaged fence adjacent to the paddock.

### **WATER TANKS**

Gerry has been a star in obtaining a load of large second hand water tanks which will be plumbed in over the summer. In fact Ted and Peter have already started to plumb them in.

### **Warning! Warning! Warning!**

The bark we have delivered is ideal for using on paths around raised beds on your plot, it MUST NOT be used as a mulch or compost. Apart from the risk of introducing diseased material to your soil, it will also alter the pH level if used too lavishly. It is also highly likely to kill off the very plants that you are carefully mulching!

### **Remember, Remember – the 1<sup>st</sup> June!**

Please remember that we like to be neighbourly so we do not allow bonfires from the 1<sup>st</sup> June to 31<sup>st</sup> August when our neighbours might well be out in their gardens enjoying the sunshine

### **And finally .....**

The next newsletter will be published in about four weeks time, because, as I said in my Introduction, there is so much going on. Watch out for more information about the celebrations on Sunday 18 July. Why not put the dates of the Harlyn School Fete and our Centenary Barbecue in your diary now. There will also be feedback on both Ken Guy's walkabout and the (rather wet) Northwood Hills Fun Day.

Jenny Jessup

