

The GROWER

October 2017

www.cheshamallotments.org.uk

Email your articles, ideas or news to cheshamallotments@gmail.com

AGM and Prize Winners

The annual AGM was held on Sept 5th with Marshall Hall as Chair for the first time. All the committee were re-elected and Chris Spruytenburg was newly elected as a representative for Cameron Road with responsibility for Education & Orientation, with Chris Mackay also newly elected as a representative for Asheridge Road and Database Manager. Bill Richards, the Town Clerk, praised the growing collaborative relationship between the Town Council and CAG. Our thanks to him and to all who attended.



Allen Tilbury
Best Large Plot Cameron Road



Best New Tenants (Joint Winners)
Mr J Harland Smith & Mr M Titouh



Beverly Mackay
Best Large Plot Asheridge Road

Many thanks to the Mayor, Emily Culverhouse, for coming to present the certificates and silverware, and to Mike Allenby, from Chesham Horticultural Society, who announced the winners of the Best Kept plots.

FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME — EA DECISION

In the last issue of 'The Grower', there was a small 'stop press' piece about the (verbally received) decision taken by the Environment Agency not to proceed with investigations in respect of possibly installing a drainage tank for flood alleviation purposes at the Cameron Road site. Subsequently we have received the formal 'Chesham Vale Brook Flood Alleviation Scheme Consultation Response Document' which has confirmed they are not proceeding. The main reasons given are as follows:

1. The size of the available plot is only half the size needed for an attenuation tank.
2. Tree roots from an adjacent plot would make construction difficult.
- 3 The slop of the plot could make construction difficult.
4. The plot is not situated correctly in the valley to capture sufficient runoff to make it worthwhile.

Reference was also made to asbestos but previous checks by the Council have suggested that historic finds of old shed roofs etc. have posed no health risk. However in light of the EA observations, the Town Council will be confirming this again shortly.

Thank you to all the allotment holders who responded to the consultation.

Bill Richards, Town Clerk



CHESHAM ALLOTMENTS GROUP CALENDAR

EVENT	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
Coffee mornings	Saturday mornings 10am—12pm until 15th October	Focal Point Hut, Cameron Road
Rents are due	1st October	Pay at Town Hall
Fish & Chip/Quiz Night	Saturday 11th November 7pm	Town Hall Chesham

CHESHAM HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

EVENT	DATE & TIME	LOCATION
AGM	22nd November 2017	Trinity Baptist Church, Red Lion Street

CHESHAM ALLOTMENTS GROUP REPRESENTATIVES

MARSHALL HALL (Chairman) Plot 47A/47B CR	TIM ANDREW (Vice Chair) Plot 48A CR	RAY WILLIAMS (Treasurer) Plots 215/216 CR	BEVERLY MACKAY (Coffee Morning Organiser) Plot 3B AR
ANDREW SINCLAIR (Community Liaison) Plot 45B CR	JIM ABBOTT (Historian & Archivist) Plot 31/32 CR	DAVE HALL (Maintenance and Facilities) Plot 12 CR	TONY MUIR (Website) Plot 28 AR
CLAIRE MALAN (Secretary)	KATE HUTCHINSON (Editor—The Grower) Plot 58D/80A CR	COLIN WILSON (Events Co-ordinator) Plot 220B CR	CHRIS SPRUYTENBURG (Education and Orientation)
CHRIS MACKAY (Database Manager)	JANE MACBEAN Town Council Representative	CR = CAMERON ROAD AR = ASHERIDGE ROAD	Email: cheshamallotments@gmail.com

Fish & Chip/Quiz Night 11th November 7pm Chesham Town Hall

BOOKING REQUIRED FORPERSONS, COST £8 PER HEAD

I enclose payment of

Name.....

Plot No..... Tel No.....

Email.....

***Please bring your own drink and nibbles AND a dessert to share.
There will be a raffle, so bring some extra cash!
Contributions for raffle also gratefully received.***

Please Indicate the number of meals required below :

FISH

SAUSAGES

FISH CAKES

VEGETARIAN

Please email cheshamallotments@gmail.com to reserve your places or hand your form/ payment in at the Coffee Mornings or at JPS Stationers in the High Street or to any Allotments Group Officer/Representative. Please make any cheques payable to Chesham Allotments Group. Thank you.

From the Chair

As the summer growing season comes to a close, I find myself reflecting on what went well over the summer (sunflowers) and what I grew too much of (sweetcorn). And about the allotments in general. Did you know we have 256 allotments across two sites in Chesham? That the average rent for an allotment in Chesham is £17? That the Chesham Allotments Group represent you to the council and have a committee consisting of 13 allotment tenants and one Town Councillor (who currently also has an allotment)? That there are 4 allotments inspections a year? And that we hold four social events and 26 coffee mornings? That the allotments were not owned by Chesham Town Council until 1974, but allotments had existed on the Taylor's Farm Site since Victorian times and in 2015 we celebrated our 100-year anniversary? Isn't it great to be part of this grand tradition?

Asheridge Road new water provision

We are hoping to get some extra water provision at the Asheridge Road site. Our Town Council representative on the committee, Jane MacBean, has been on the case and has got a quote from Paul Isom, the Parks and Premises Manager for the work of laying the extra water pipe. It has to go before the Council to be approved but will hopefully be done before next summer.

Improvements at the Focal Point

If you have been to the Cameron Road site recently you may have noticed some not very attractive red and white hazard tape along the Focal Point lawn. This is to warn people where there is a drop they need to be aware of. As this is not a very satisfactory solution, the committee have put in two requests for grants to help build a permanent fence along the side, one from Chesham Connect, which has already been granted, and the other from the Town Council which will be decided in September. The new fence will be built over the winter ready for next year's social season. If anyone has any building expertise and would like to be involved, please get in touch!

Apple Of My Eye

If anyone is thinking of buying some fruit trees, I would really like to recommend Bernwode Fruit Trees, just off the A41 near Waddesdon. They grow and supply the most amazing range of potted trees; several hundred varieties of apples and pears and also some figs, quince and soft fruit. They do a lot of work involving research and conservation of old varieties, and can also graft new trees from treasured old favourites. The couple who run the place are so helpful. I bought 5 plants (Norfolk Royal and Miller's Seedling apples, Fondante d'Autome, Citron des Carmes and Black Worcester pears) and they are going to put another one that I want (Horsham Russet apple) on to the necessary root-stock for me for next year. www.bernwodeplants.co.uk *Chris Challis*

Fish & Chip/Quiz Night

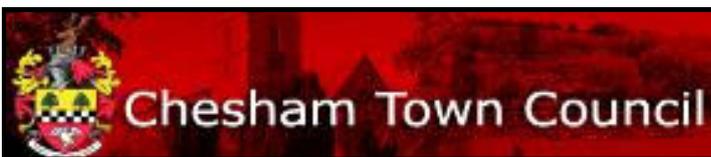
**11th November 7pm at
Chesham Town Hall**

Our late autumn Fish and Chip/Quiz night will be on 11th November 7pm at Chesham Town Hall.

Do come along - either with a team or just join up with some others when you arrive - to our last get-together of the year. Booking form on page 2. We look forward to seeing you there!

Rents Due!

As always your allotment rent is due on the 1st of October. Still brilliant value at an unchanged rate per pole this year - the average rent for an allotment in Chesham is £17. Don't forget that if you have recently had a big birthday (involving a 6 and an 0) there is a 30% discount on your rent. All tenants will need to sign a new contract this year so be prepared when you pop into the Town Hall.



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LET'S PRESERVE IT by Beryl Wood

A book review

I am writing this in the middle of August, mid-season for the preserving pan. The soft fruit surplus has been turned into jams and jellies and the smell of vinegar begins to taint the kitchen as the cucumbers, plums and courgettes are turned into relishes and chutneys, getting in early before the tomatoes get serious. During slack times, there is always piccalilli to get ready for Christmas! (It needs at least three months in the jar to mature.)

At this time, I turn unfailingly to a little book that has become my bible in recent years.

In these days of cookery books full of glossy full-page photographs written by celebrity TV chefs, this small volume is remarkably unassuming. The only illustrations are a few line drawings. After two brief opening sections dealing with general principles — Equipment And Preparation and Points To Remember — there are nearly 600 recipes arranged by alphabetical listings of ingredients, from apple butter to wine jelly, and finally 'XYZ end of season relish', a recipe that polishes off the unripe tomatoes and peppers. Cross-referencing makes it easy to use. It contains all the classic jams and chutneys and some real curiosities. The recipes are short and easy to follow: if you can put ingredients in a preserving pan and simmer them, you can follow this book. For popular items there is a brief introductory paragraph of general instructions followed by a number of possible lists of ingredients: six for plum or green tomato chutney, five for red tomato. It was first published in 1970. Beryl Wood's research was extensive, to say the least. She largely eschewed the cookery books of the time, which she found uninspiring, scoured as many 'Granny's store cupboards' as she could and amassed a huge number of recipes.

Let's Preserve It was republished in 2011, I suspect after Nigella Lawson drew attention to it. It is still available on Amazon, and I couldn't recommend it more highly.

Tim Andrew

Apple Jam / Apple Jelly / Apple Cheese

Jam: Peel and core apples (put in separate pan for jelly), thinly slice; weigh, put in pan with small quantity of water and 2 cloves per 1lb fruit in muslin bag; cook gently until tender; cool, put through liquidiser or sieve (removing cloves); return to pan with ¾lb preserving sugar per original lb apples, stirring until dissolved. Boil until set. Pot and cover.

Jelly: Use peel, cores, windfalls (but not bruised pieces). Put quartered apples (plus peel etc) in pan with a little water; simmer until tender; strain through jelly bag (reserving pulp for butter); measure liquid and return to pan with 1lb sugar for 1pt juice, stirring to dissolve; boil fast to set. Pot and cover. (To make herb jellies, add chopped herbs when setting point has reached and leave to cool for 10 mins before potting.)

Cheese: Take pulp from jelly (or start fresh with quartered apples softened in a little water). Liquidise, then sieve. Weigh and return to pan with 1lb sugar per lb apple pulp. Simmer until dissolved; boil rapidly until fairly stiff. Pot and cover.

Apple Pickle

1lb apples, ½lb onion, 1pt white vinegar, 1tbs salt, ½oz peppercorns, a few chillies.
Peel, core and cut apples and onions; pack in jar with a few chillies; boil vinegar with salt and peppercorns; pour over fruit; cover when cold.

Pear and Orange Jam

1lb cooking pears (peeled and cored weight), ¼pt water, 1lb sugar, zest & juice of 2 oranges. Put peel and cores in muslin bag; put with cut up pears and water in pan; simmer until soft and pulpy; remove bag; use wooden spoon to mash until smooth; add sugar, stirring until dissolved, then zest and juice of the oranges; bring to boil stirring constantly for about 10 mins or until thick. Pot and cover.

Whisky Sauce

½ bottle whisky, (*cheap stuff only, I implore you*), add 4oz red chillies, shake once a week for 1 month. Use as tabasco.

XYZ –End of Season Relish

2lbs green tomatoes, ½lb ripe tomatoes, 2 medium onions, ½ small white cabbage, 2 red peppers, 2 green peppers, 2 stalks celery, ½ cucumber, 1½pts white vinegar, 3oz salt, 1tsp cayenne, 2oz dry mustard, 5oz sugar.

Prepare and chop all vegetables; put in a bowl, sprinkling salt between layers; stand overnight; drain well, squeezing out all liquid; put in pan with all other ingredients; cook gently for 1½ hrs., stirring frequently; pot and seal. (If you prefer a darker pickle use malt vinegar and brown sugar.)