

A.W.S.L.G. ALLOTMENT NEWS
ADDISCOMBE, WOODSIDE & SHIRLEY LEISURE GARDENS LTD
GLENTHORNE AVENUE, CROYDON. CR0 7EZ.
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PLOTTING OUR PATH

NEWSLETTER

AUGUST 2021

When you next sit down for a few minutes and have a rest from the tasks that lay ahead, pause, and have a look around you. All that we have now has taken 100 years to come to fruition. The people who laid the foundations had a far-seeing vision, that we should own the land ourselves, that rents should remain as low as possible and that all necessary work be carried out by volunteers.

Through this monthly newsletter we hope to unfold the events that led us all to be here today.

The Addiscombe, Woodside & Shirley Leisure Gardens is recorded as being the first registered allotment society to obtain security of tenure on its own land. And so today, we have 24 ½ acres owned by its members and are still managed by a band of volunteers. This is in accord with the original conception.

You may think about the facilities we enjoy today: the trading centre, canteen, toilets, social events, car parks and in more recent times the wildlife garden. Changes over the last 100 years have been profound; we have a greater diversity of members gathered from across the world bringing with them new vegetables and different ideas of horticulture, we now have a much higher awareness of conservation, not only of the soil itself but of all wildlife and crucially of bees and other pollinators, we are aware of the necessity of conserving water, a precious commodity.

This is a vastly different world than that in which our forebears lived although there are some parallels, they had lived through and survived the 1918-19 flu pandemic. There was a freak occurrence of a scorching summer in 1921, with the highest temperature reaching 34c on July 10th & 11th, the drought continued for weeks afterwards. And so, as you finish your tea and reach for the hoe, look around at the legacy left for us of which we should be extremely grateful.

The original war allotment was owned by Lady Ashburton. This area was earmarked for development in 1919 for the Ashburton Secondary Modern School (where the Oasis Academy is now) and notice to quit was served on the society. The committee was determined, despite whatever problems lay ahead that, if possible, a suitable area of land be found. At that time, the areas surrounding Shirley Road were owned by John Scott, 3rd Earl of Eldon and they were rapidly

being developed for middle-class housing, out of these the committee chose 28 acres of pastureland. Negotiations were opened with the Small Holdings and Allotments Committee at the Corporation of Croydon. After three months the society was informed that the price asked was prohibitive, which would make it impossible to let out plots at a reasonably low rent. But then came a breakthrough. On one side of the land there was a lane leading from Shirley Road, this lane was marked out under the Town planning scheme for a 50ft roadway with negotiations underway by a local builder. The General Secretary, Mr H C Goodall met the borough engineer and the 3 ½ acres frontage area of the proposed allotment site was offered to the builder at a reasonable price. This enabled the committee to set the rents for the plots at 1s 3d per rod, deemed an affordable amount. And so, the society despite all the problems and endless negotiations had achieved its aim. All that remained now was to raise the money for the deposit on the purchase price.

To be continued.

Thanks to David Lay who has spent many years researching the history of our allotments

CFAGS ANNUAL COMPETITION.

This competition took place on Sunday 26th July. AWSLG entered two of the three Categories.

AWSLG won the Amenity Competition. The Judges not only looked at the Amenities – Trading Hut, Canteen, Hall etc but also walked around the entire site judging the pathways including the inter-plot ones, the overall state of the plots (weed control, range of vegetables, fruit bushes and health of plants). Thanks to all who enabled our site to look at its best.

We also won the Best Full Plot competition. Congratulations to David Lay and Blythe Williams. Plot 109. They certainly put much effort and time into ensuring the plot was exceptionally well presented.

CENTENARY CELEBRATION

A reminder this will take place Sunday 29th and Monday 30th: a special Centenary Newsletter will be published on the Weekend of 21st August 2021, this will include the programme of events for each day.

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JOBS TO DO IN AUGUST

FRUIT CARE :

Cut out fruited canes of summer raspberries and tie in new canes to fruit next year. Select strong, healthy canes and cut out weak, forked or misplaced ones (such as those growing out into the paths). Net autumn fruiting raspberries.

Tie in new growth on blackberries and hybrid berries.

Lift and pot up rooted strawberry runners and prepare new strawberry beds for next year. Treat with a fungicide if powdery mildew is serious.

Support heavily laden branches on plums and damsons to prevent breakage. Prune after fruiting.

Remove apples, pears and plums affected with brown rot to prevent the disease from spreading.

Gather scabby leaves from diseased apples and pears. Do not compost anything infected with brown rot or scab instead burn as soon as possible or use the green waste collection as their incinerators heat to such a high temperature that the spores are destroyed.

If bacterial canker has been a problem on stone fruit trees, prune out affected smaller branches, wait until harvest is complete, then spray with a fungicide.

VEGETABLE CARE:

Lift onions, shallots and garlic when ready. Plants should be harvested when the necks start to turn brown and bend over naturally. Avoid actively bending the necks, as this can result in disease. Once harvested, let the tops dry until they rustle like brown paper, and then remove them.

Harvest sweetcorn as it ripens. Push a fingernail into the kernel when the tassels at the end of the cob start to shrivel and brown. If the liquid is milky it indicates they are ready.

Continue earthing up celery, putting a layer of paper between the stems and the soil.

Finish harvesting second early potatoes especially if it turns wet as your crop can be destroyed by slugs.

Weeds can also compete with vegetables for water and act as hosts for pests and diseases, so should be removed regularly by hoeing.

Marrows should be raised off the ground slightly, to prevent them rotting from contact with the soil. Some older leaves can be removed, if necessary, to maximise sun upon the fruit.

Take care when thinning out any late-sown carrot seedlings to prevent the scent released attracting carrot fly females. To protect them from carrot fly use *fleece* or *enviromesh* coverings.

Irregular watering can lead to problems with blossom end rot in tomatoes, splitting of root vegetables and flower abortion in peas and beans. Help prevent this by watering well during dry spells, stored rainwater from a water butt is ideal.

Take cuttings of rosemary, bay and hyssop.

LAWN/FLOWER CARE:

Apply final nitrogenous feed to lawns.

Don't neglect hanging baskets - deadheading, watering and feeding will help them last through until autumn.

Feed containers, and even tired border perennials, with a *liquid tomato or Miracle-Gro* food each week to encourage them to bloom into the early autumn.

Pinks and carnations can be propagated by layering. Propagate irises by dividing the rhizomes.

Take cuttings of tender perennials such as Pelargonium and Osteospermum, as soon as possible. A greenhouse, cool conservatory or a light windowsill are ideal to bring them on until they are established.

Collect and store seed of hardy annuals and perennials for sowing later in the autumn.

SOW OR PLANT OUTDOORS

Japanese onions, Oriental vegetables



Spring cabbage, turnips, lettuce, radish, rocket, sorrel, chicory, fennel & spring onions for late salads. Sow green manures such as crimson clover and Italian ryegrass to act as a soil improver and to cover bare areas.

All items in *bold italic* are available from the Trading Centre.

TRADING CENTRE OPENING TIMES - SATURDAY & SUNDAY 10.30AM TO 12.15PM

SAT 2.30PM TO 4.15PM CANTEEN OPEN FROM 10AM TO 11.30AM