

A.W.S.L.G. TRADING CENTRE NEWS

ADDISCOMBE, WOODSIDE & SHIRLEY LEISURE GARDENS LTD
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OUR 98TH AGM REPORT

The AGM held in December was very well attended by plottolders. Well done to all to all those who give their time so generously that helps to make our allotment site one that we can be very proud of.

Blythe Williams who was Acting Chairperson for the past year retired from the Committee after 15 years. During her speech she summarised the work that had been done throughout the year, thanking various people for their personal efforts, but she didn't mention her own contribution for example: cleaning and painting in the Trading Hut, shopping for the canteen supplies, managing crises, seeking out new garden furniture for outside the hall and canteen. Blythe has our grateful thanks for the exceptional contribution she has made to the management of AWSLG.

The changes to the committee are as follows: Jen Tapping, Chair, Alan Perry, Trading Treasurer continuing for another term, Malcolm Holmes, Acting Trading Secretary as Chris Hewson stood down during the year, Chris will still continue as a committee member. Two new members were welcomed to the committee, Catherine Hawkes and Lubina Reid. One resignation, Joe Richardson. Thanks to Joe for all his hard work.

Presentation of Trophies: Peter Bashford, ground steward presented the following trophies:

President's Cup for Best Plot: Maria Jardim, plot 287

AWSLG Cup for Best Half-plot: David and Marguerite Warner, plot 336b

W.J Bull Memorial Cup for Service to the Society: Paul Endacott, plot 200

The Wildlife Garden Cup: Malcolm Bridge presented this award to Brenda Walsh, plot 14.

SECURITY

Please keep the main gates locked apart from the hours detailed below when the trading centre and canteen are open or the delivery notice is in use.

TRADING CENTRE HOURS OF OPENING

Saturday 10.30am -12.15pm. Sunday 10.30am - 12.15pm.

Canteen 9.30am - 11.30pm Sat & Sun) will continue temporarily in the hall until further notice, hopefully back in a newly refurbished canteen in February.

NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2020

SITE IMPROVEMENT WORKS

Last January the committee drew up a plan of works for both site and buildings. Thanks to the invaluable efforts of our volunteers we have achieved the following: a new underground water supply to the Trading Centre, Polytunnel and Hall, a new water pipe was laid by the Glenthorne Ave area, where once there was a mere trickle of water, now plot-holders enjoy normal water pressure, CCTV and motion sensitive cameras have been installed throughout the site, new picnic benches were purchased and a major revamp of the trading centre was completed. Part of the decision to spruce up the trading centre was the closure of the Shirley Wyevale garden centre. A successful advertising campaign for our Greenfinger membership has resulted in increased sales.

The canteen refurbishment is well under way and we hope to be back from our temporary home in the hall sometime in February. Many thanks to all the volunteers and Peter's working party that have helped so far, much appreciated.

FUTURE PLANING AND EVENTS

Following the first committee meeting of the year it has been decided to form two sub groups. A **Social Event Group** which has a remit to plan this year's events and to plan ahead for our 100th year celebrations in 2021. Secondly a sub group to review the present AWSLG Regulations. We would like to encourage new and existing plot - holders to join us, no prior experience necessary just a willingness to help in whatever way you feel you can. It is an old but truthful adage that many hands make light work.

New Plot-holders Tea Party Saturday 22nd February at 2pm in the hall. Meet some of the Committee and other plot holders, advice given and your questions answered. Tea and cake.

Annual Show date August 23rd. We might have a mini-show later on in the year in respect of later crops.

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JOBS TO DO IN JANUARY

VEGETABLE CARE:

The number one job is to observe good, basic hygiene rules by removing all plant debris from your plots to reduce the spread and the overwintering of disease and pests.

Parsnips can be left in the ground until needed, or lifted and then buried in a shallow trench for easy access. They taste better when frosted. Make sure to mark the trench as you need to remember where they are and cover it with a protective layer of cardboard if hard frosts are forecast.

If you have Brussels sprouts ready for harvesting, pick the largest sprouts from the bottom of the stalk first. Earth up any Brussels sprouts stalks that look leggy and vulnerable to wind rock. Remove the yellowing leaves to prevent grey mould from becoming troublesome.

If we have some cold weather it is alright to continue winter digging as frost will help to improve the condition of your soil by breaking down larger clods. This also exposes soil pests to bird predators. This is a good time to incorporate soil improvers into vacant areas of your plot.

Clear polythene or **fleece** increases the soil temperature which will help to have earlier spring sowings. Use **Black polythene ground cover** to prevent re-colonisation by weeds and save yourself a back-breaking task in the spring.

Place **mouse controls** near stored vegetables and fruit. Did you know that the Little Nipper mouse trap was designed by James Henry Atkinson in 1897, patented in 1899, this perfect design has hardly changed.

Insulate the greenhouse from frost, **bubble wrap** works very well.

Now is the time to make a manure hotbed by combining a mixture of manure, straw and leaves into an square, empty compost bin. Cover with a layer of **John Innes no 3**. Place a cold frame on top and then you are all set to benefit from the heat generated by the rotting manure as this will aid the germination of crops that can be started in January prior planting out in February.

Net crops to reduce pigeon/parakeet damage. We have black netting available in 2 widths, 2 metre and 4 metre.

FRUIT CARE:

New fruit trees and bushes can still be planted providing the ground is not frozen or waterlogged. If the planting site is not ready when they arrive, then heel in the bare-root ones in a spare piece of ground, and leave containerised ones standing - but water them when needed.

Formative pruning of young, free-standing, fruit trees and bushes (under three years old) can also be done from now. They should at first be pruned to encourage branching and bushiness from the main stem. Subsequently, they should be encouraged to form an open-centred 'goblet' shape of main branches, without any being misplaced or crossing.

Check tree stakes and **ties** whilst doing your winter pruning. They may need loosening, replacing, or removing.

Grape vines can also be propagated using eye cuttings. These are shorter than standard hardwood cuttings (having only one bud, or 'eye'), and are used commercially to produce a large number of plants. Only attempt these if you are confident, as longer cuttings have more buds to rely on for rooting.

Divide and plant rhubarb. Cover any crowns in the soil that have been set aside for forcing with an upturned bucket or flower pot and cover the drainage holes to shut out the light. With luck you will be harvesting pale pink sticks soon.

Spray all fruit trees and bushes with a garlic winter wash on a fine day; do not spray in frosty conditions. It won't hurt to hold the job over to next month.

POLYTUNNEL NEWS

We aim to start sowing at the end of January, weather permitting. We are always open to new ideas from you the ploholders on what you would like us to grow this season so do tell us.

We would warmly welcome additional help in the polytunnel as the sowing and the planting are our busiest times so please come and join our team.

Spring bulbs in pots will be available in the next few weeks

TRADING CENTRE HOURS OF OPENING

Saturday	10.30am -12.15pm.
Sunday	10.30am - 12.15pm.
Wednesday	2.30pm - 4.00pm April—September only