

# Fairfield Allotments

## Newsletter 17 – June – July 2008



LOTTERY FUNDED

## Extension to the Allotments

It's time for a few big messages of thanks to supporting organisations.

Our application to the Lancashire locals climate change fund has been successful... a hotly contested pot of money! The applications to the fund that met the criteria amounted to over £83,000, but the fund only had around £20,000 to distribute, despite this the allotments were still successfully awarded £6000!

The environmental and community team at the county council have found us £5000 and paid for planning applications as well as work by our landscape designer to draw up costings and plans for all the work.

The national lottery Awards for All scheme awarded us the maximum possible under the scheme of £10,000.

The local Galbraith Trust has given us a generous £1000.

We have also secured £2000 from the allotments reserve at the council (this is money put aside when we pay our lease to the council)

We're a good way in to raising the £1000 we've promised our other funders to raise. (There will also be another couple of thousand pounds worth of in-kind labour added to that by the time we've finished!)

Adding it all up we've hit nearly £25,000; so we think we're close to setting dates with the contractor for when work can start.

## Fairfield Fun Day

Is on Fairfield Green July 5<sup>th</sup> – from 12 noon until 5pm

We are taking a stall again this year at the Fairfield Family Fun Day, with proceeds going towards Allotment Association funds & particularly the extension. Last year we could have sold our produce twice over. You can help this year by potting up any extra herbs, flowers & veg you have left over. Cut flowers, vegetables, herbs, cress etc always sell well. If you have any spare vegetables or fruit - rhubarb and redcurrants are particularly popular, bring it on the day or let us know if you are OK to come and pick things on your plot if you are not around. Cut flowers obviously go quickly so let them flower for the week before so there will be lots to pick on the day. This year we will also be selling the recipe book, so come and buy as many as you can if you haven't got your copies yet. Other ideas include decorating earthenware flowerpots and selling them (artistic volunteers please), along with gardening magazines or books you no longer need.

As JW can't make the day this year Jean Laurie has nobly taken on the task of organising our stall this year, if Jean's not already grabbed you and you are willing to get involved, let us know. On the day itself, you can leave donations beside the Sunnyside Lane gate, or drop it off at plot 12b in the days running up to the Fun Day. If you wouldn't mind helping out for an hour, please leave your name and phone number in the greenhouse on 12b and Jean will find space in the rota.

A big winner with the children, mums and dads helping, is the **Miniature Garden** and **Vegetable Creatures** competition £1 per entry (entrants to be tabled by 2.20 pm, prize giving at 4pm

## Garden Competition

The garden competition was cancelled last year, as the judge was unable to make it. However we are hoping to organise it again this year for the same weekend as the Fairfield Fun day. The competition is not as serious as it used to be with judges using their own criteria; which are normally, general appearance of the plot, health and range of crops (& flowers) being grown and a general sense of care of the allotment. It's also a good opportunity for us all to make sure our plots are numbered and looking as good as they can. The committee tend to have a site visit shortly afterwards to see if any plots are looking neglected!

## Donations

Many thanks to all the extra donations that came in this year to make sure our funds remain with a healthy reserve. These funds will be held back for the allotments and not be allocated to the extension, which is an entirely separate fundraising project. As you may know we did not have to replace the mower as we now have an arrangement to share a mower with the Fairfield Association, which so far seems to be working well. Thanks to the Fairfield Association for enabling this.

## Dogs

A reminder, as there seem to be new dogs on site, for the safety of your animal please keep it on a lead and don't allow it to stray on other peoples plots (unless you know they don't mind). As the mowing season has started please be very careful to clean up after your animal where necessary, there have been a couple of recently reported of dog mess being found on paths and tracks.

## Water

This season's dry spell should remind us of the need to store as much water as possible over the rainier seasons. Please, if you haven't already done it, add guttering and barrels to sheds and greenhouses. If you got one add another couple, it all adds up to save mains water usage and reduce our bills.

Some of the mains water containers are showing signs of deterioration to both their plumbing and the tanks themselves; we've been repairing them in the short term but are now needing to think of a longer term solution. Please can all members be vigilant and report any new faults. If you think there might be a leak...please turn off the local tap, and let us know as soon as possible.

The **Seasons** according to the Met Office are as follows: **Spring**=Mar-May, **Summer**=June-Aug, **Autumn**=Sept-Nov **Winter**=Dec-Feb, **Look** at the mean Rain, Sunshine and Temp figures for the UK since 1914 - here... <http://www.metoffice.gov.uk/climate/uk/2008/spring.html>



**FAIRFIELD FOOD**  
a guide for glut-ions

## The Fairfield Recipe Book

The recipe book was launched at the AGM, sold very well at Potato day thanks to Jean & Barbara. Thanks also to Andrew Brennan for continuing the great sales of the recipe book at the Easter egg hunt in the orchard. We're still looking for events and opportunities to sell copies, let JL know if you are aware of anything coming up.

## AGM

The AGM this year was held at ...

**The Sun Hotel & Bar**

Time: 7.30 pm

Day: **Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> February**

Thanks to everyone who came to the AGM. It was well attended, but not as well as in the last couple of years, perhaps the committee should have noticed it was Valentines Day. What an unromantic bunch. The AGM is an important event to recognise that we are all members of the association and an opportunity to have your say, cast your vote when necessary and recognise the contribution made by the volunteer committee.

If you are reading this online then follow this link

## [Seasonal tips For June](#)

**Harvest** -Salad crops should be available, lettuce, spring onion, radish etc, Summer cabbage and early carrots. With carrots the later thinnings can provide a great addition to a salad or just steamed with a cooked meal. The early potatoes will be coming in this month. Because your potatoes will be going from ground to pan in a matter of minutes you will discover a truly wonderful flavour. Beetroot, young turnips and summer spinach may all be welcome fresh additions to your diet.

The early peas could well be cropping in June, especially in the south Cultivating As with May, we really need to keep on top of the weeds. Hoeing them off as small seedlings will make the job far easier than waiting for them to grow and send their roots down. Hoeing is best done on a dry day so that the weeds do not have a chance to recover. Don't forget to sharpen your hoe before you start and frequently as you use it. Keeping a small sharpening stone or file in your pocket will make this more convenient. Continue thinning out your carrots, parsnips, beetroot etc. As I said above, later carrot thinnings can provide a tender and tasty addition to a meal.

Water when required. Your best measuring instrument for water is your finger. If the top of the soil looks dry, insert your finger into the soil. If it's dry at the tip, then you need to water. Don't just sprinkle a few drops on the surface, it probably won't penetrate and do

any good. Far better to give a good soaking less frequently that will get to the roots of your crops. In very dry weather, keeping the surface friable by hoeing will help keep the water from getting to the surface by capillary action and then evaporating away. It also helps water soak in when you do get some rain. **Planting**- You should be able to plant out brassicas now. Broccoli and calabrese, Brussels sprouts, summer cabbage. If you have started beans in pots, both runner and French these can go into the outside too. Leeks may well be ready to move to their final position. Ideally they want to be about pencil thickness. Don't follow the old guidance to trim the leaves and roots when transplanting leeks. It has been proven to be of no benefit and is counter-productive. Outdoor tomatoes can go to their final position now. When moving plants from greenhouse to outdoors it is a good idea to condition them to the move. Take them out in the day and put them back at night for a few days or move from greenhouse to coldframe. This avoids shocking the plant by a sudden and drastic change in climate

**Sowing** -There is a lot to sow this month and with many crops you can sow one set and then a few weeks later re-sow to give you a succession of fresh vegetables at the peak of perfection. In dry weather it is a good idea to soak your seed drill before sowing and then just water with a fine rose after. - French and Runner Beans Main crop peas Beetroot Carrots Turnips Swedes Cauliflowers Chicory Endive Kohlrabi Sweetcorn Squash Courgette and

Marrows Cucumber Successional sowing ensures you always have fresh crops at the peak for your table

**In the greenhouse** -Keep pinching off the side shoots with your tomatoes and keep an eye out for pests such as aphids, whitefly, red spider mite. If you are subject to attack by these pests it is worth checking out biological controls as these are perfectly safe to use and, used correctly, more effective than traditional chemical controls. Many of the chemical controls of the past are no longer available anyway so the organic alternatives are now the mainstream choice.

**Fruit**- Make sure your fruiting plants have sufficient water when the fruit is swelling. This is critical to a good crop. Thin out plums and apples in June. Better to have one reasonable apple than three miniature marbles. Nature naturally tends towards this and sheds excess fruit. This is known as the 'June Drop'. It's best to thin out after this.

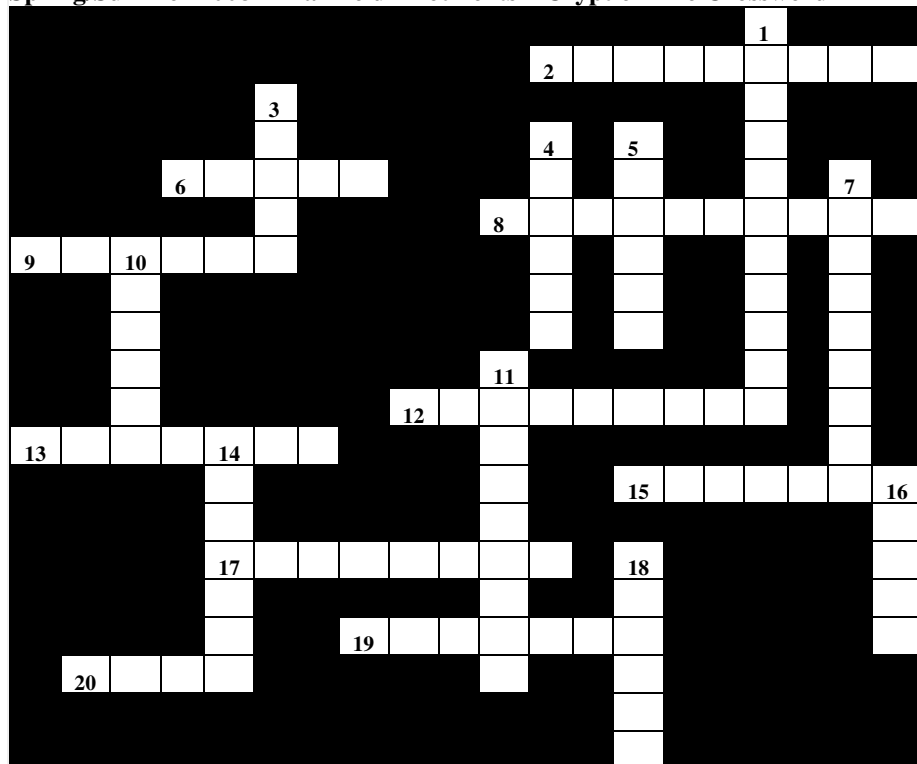
**General Tasks** -The infantry of slugs and snails are attacking at ground level so take action to keep them down and the air force of birds are coming from the skies to eat your crops. Don't forget the netting. The butterflies are about now as well. Beautiful as they are, check the undersides of your brassica leaves for the yellow or white eggs that will hatch into caterpillars and devastate the plant. You can squash them, wipe or wash them off easily at this stage. (these tips are thanks to John Harrison <http://www.allotment.org.uk/index.php>)

**Interesting websites**  
<http://www.gardenersworld.com>  
<http://www.self-sufficient.co.uk/Allotment-Gardening.htm>

**Your allotment committee is:**  
**Acting Chair:** Caroline Eames **Secretary:** John Lambert, 6 Carr House Lane, Lancaster LA1 15W Tel: Tel. 01524 849371 [john@jlambert.f9.co.uk](mailto:john@jlambert.f9.co.uk)  
**Treasurer:** George Burnett, 94 Westbourne Road, Lancaster LA1 5JX Tel. 01524 62585  
 Gillian Allen, Jon Barry, John Weedy & Sid Duncan

**Committee people needed**  
 If any member does feel like helping out on the committee, or just coming to the meetings, you will be welcome. Committee meetings are held at **The Sun Hotel & Bar on Thursdays (about every 2 months)** Planned meetings are as follows:- 27.03.08, 01.05.08, 10.07.08, 03.09.08, 08.01.09, 05.02.09 which is the **AGM** (If you have received this newsletter by email make sure you click on all the coloured headlines and notes. They will link you to other interesting web sites. If you have a paper copy but use email please let us know your email address for future newsletters).

### Spring/Summer 2008 in Fairfield Allotments – Cryptic Prize Crossword



**Across--** : 2. Funday July 5<sup>th</sup>, 6. Can you help out on this, 8. A colourful dwelling perhaps  
 9. F1 \_\_\_\_\_, 12. Literally meaning “wet and sweet” beans 13. For growing tomatoes etc.  
 15. \_\_\_\_\_ your kitchen waste, 17. Our first!, 19. A type of Scottish hill spear maybe,  
 20. Not onion seeds- but..

**Down--** : 1. An old heirloom tomato variety, 3. Green, red or yellow, 4. \_\_\_\_\_, sprouting  
 5. To plant potatoes in 7. Green spears maybe, 10. For beans to climb 11. Could be 20 feet tall  
 14. \_\_\_\_\_ of sweet peas, 16. Is this onion supercharged, 18. Fairfield on July 5th

### NOTICES

**Manure** delivered by trailer load. Phone Stuart Taylor 01524 67446 (please check ground conditions on delivery day)

**Black plastic and various plastic containers available** from plot 51A ask Caroline or Mark when they're on the plot.

**Articles or comments for publication in the next Newsletter. Send to**

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