



AGM 2017

The 2017 AGM took place on 18 October

AGMs are not usually lively events but this year we had a semi-heated debate about the re-opening of the waiting list. There is a separate report about the outcome of this discussion but most of the talk revolved around how to be fair to everyone whilst still giving some priority to those groups who might be described as "deserving" or "under-represented" such as those living in council/social housing, those without a garden, those with a disability, people from minority ethnic groups. All these had supporters but I think the meeting came to see how difficult it would be to promote one group over another, how much information we would need to do this, and how few plots we have available in some years – the effort would considerably outweigh the result. We are in a completely unknown situation as we have never advertised the waiting list before.

In addition to the waiting list, there were proposals for two additions to the Bylaws.

These were thoroughly discussed and amended and now read as follows:

- Plot-holders are to be encouraged to contribute to the upkeep, maintenance and improvement of their site as a whole. This may be by attending organised work days or by undertaking individual projects at the request of the site representative. Passed unanimously.

- Members are expected to treat each other, and in particular, site representatives, with courtesy and consideration at all times. Rudeness and abuse will not be tolerated, and will be reported to the Committee. The Committee may decide to investigate further and this could lead to the loss of a plot and expulsion from the Allotment Society. Agreed by a majority vote.

At the end of the meeting there was a seed swap organised by Annie Wilson. Any left over seeds were donated to a local primary school. We hope this will be a regular feature of the AGM so please be prepared next year!



Open Days

This year we want to open the allotment sites to the public for one day in June after the plot inspections. If you are in the public eye, it is not unusual to have people asking questions through the fence, so this is a chance for them to get a bit closer. It will also give people who have considered getting a plot a chance to talk to plot holders and find out what it entails.

Your site representative will be in contact with you about this, but in essence, we hope that the sites in E5 will all open on one Saturday or Sunday in June, and the sites in N16 on another Saturday or Sunday. Each site will need to arrange to have some plot holders available to answer questions and show people around.

Plot Awards 2017

ADEN TERRACE

Best Plot: Vikki Yapp

Most improved: Cathy Yexley

LEASIDE

Best joint newcomers:

Lorna Hays and Jo Easton

SPRING HILL

Best plot: Kay Kante

Most improved: Ginny Strawson

SPRING LANE

Best plot: Eleanor Jackman

Best newcomers: Henrike Donner and partner, and Imelda Messenger

SMALL SITES

Best Plot: Val Shepherd and Mark (Church Walk). Not so much best plot (although their plot is always good) but for being such team players for the site.

HAS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR

Penny Miller -
pmsrink@yahoo.com

VICE CHAIR

Ruth Gladwin

SECRETARY

Nancy Korman -
secretary@hackney
allotments.org.uk

TREASURER

Hugh Naylor



SITE REPRESENTATIVES

ADEN TERRACE

Sue Sharples

CHURCH WALK

John Clarke and
Maggie Wilkinson

LEASIDE ROAD

MJ and Helene Gullaksen

OVERBURY STREET

Jane Hough and
Amanda Scope

QUEENSBRIDGE ROAD

Phillip Turner

SPRING HILL

Phillip Pearson, Jon
Fuller, Beth Webber and
Frederica Brook

SPRING LANE

Helen Bishop

SPRINGDALE ROAD

Annie Wilson

ST KILDA'S ROAD

Henrietta Soames

Re-opening the waiting list

Our waiting list has been closed since 2008, a decision of that AGM in view of the large number of people on it (over 300!). It has taken us 10 years to reduce the number waiting to under 15, and so the Committee has been considering how to re-open it and to be fair to those wanting to apply.

The membership of the HAS at present does not seem to reflect the diverse population of the borough of Hackney and the committee was keen to use this as an opportunity to at least make the possibility of having an allotment as widely known as possible. Advice was taken from the Council's Diversity and Equalities Officer who provided information about groups within the borough that could be contacted. We also agreed to

interest Hackney Today in doing an article about the HAS as a means of reaching more residents. A note about allotments and the application form would also be placed in the eight Hackney libraries. The committee did not think it fair or viable to give priority to one group over another; our way will be to try and make as many people as possible aware that the waiting list is re-opening and encouraging them to apply.

To avoid the situation we had before (of a huge number of people waiting and paying £4 each year for many years), the committee decided to cap the waiting list at 100.

Applications can be made by post for a two week period of time in March. At the end of this, applications would be drawn



picture by Helene Gullaksen

randomly. If fewer than 100 had applied, all would go on the waiting list in the order in which they were drawn. If more than 100 applied only the first 100 would get on the waiting list.

PLOT INSPECTIONS

These will take place in June but we expect plots to show signs of being worked from March onwards.

Please ensure that all paths are cleared and free of weeds, at least two thirds of the plot should be clear of weeds and

planted and bags of compost etc should be stored neatly in one area.

WILDLIFE CORNER

FUNGICIDES MAY BE CAUSING BUMBLE BEE DECLINE

Do you use fungicides on your allotment? They are now being linked to a steep decline of Bumble bees. How fungicides kill bees is now being studied, but is likely to be by making them more susceptible to the deadly nosema parasite or by exacerbating the toxicity of other pesticides.

The widespread decline in bees and other pollinators is worrying because they fertilise about 75% of all food crops. Pesticides, habitat destruction, disease and climate change have all been implicated in bee declines.

It appears a very common fungicide could also be the cause of wild bee declines. Chlorothalonil is the most used fungicide spray in the UK and is found in sprays recommended for tomato blight.

www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/dec/29/alarmlink-between-fungicides-and-bee-declines-revealed

For information about organic gardening without pesticides: www.gardenorganic.org.uk/



IDENTIFYING BEES

If you want to find out more about bees Friends of the Earth are running a Bee Count from 17th May to 30th June which you can sign up for and get a free App to help identify and record different species.

PLANTS THAT ATTRACT BUMBLE BEES

Plant a variety of flowers in a range of colours that bloom from spring until autumn. Bees can't see the colour red, and to them it looks much like the surrounding green foliage. However, they are highly attracted to shades of purple, blue and yellow. Plants with flat, single blossoms are easiest for the bees to access as they have difficulty reaching the nectar inside double blooms.

YOUR TIPS & QUERIES



A 'perfect plot' example at Leaside

PLANTING TIPS FOR SPRING

Now's time to plant tomatoes & chillies indoors. For brassicas, French Marigolds are a good companion to deter whitefly. Start off indoors now to be ahead of the game.

Sue , Aden Grove

SAVVY SAVER

Warm soil and protect seedlings with old net curtains which are just as effective as buying new fleece.

Sarah Kissack, Aden Grove

CLIMBING FRENCH BEANS...

A few months before planting it works well to dig a trench about a foot deep along where I'm going to plant my climbing French beans, fill it with raw kitchen waste and cover it over with soil.

As I can only bring one bucket at a time I do it gradually and make sure the waste is well covered (to stop foxes digging it up), mark where the next bucket will go with a stick and work my way along the bed.

The raw waste warms as it decays and the beans seem to love it as they go on for months.

Bron, Aden Grove

SPROUTING BEANS

An easy way to add some extra vitamins to your winter diet.

Put a few tablespoons of brown lentils into a jar, 1 measure of seeds to 3 measures of water. Soak overnight in a dark cool place. Next day, drain water out through a sieve (or put some netting over the jar, secured with an elastic band). Then rinse the beans thoroughly with fresh water & this time leave them just moist not 'bathing' & rinse x 3

daily. (I've just done daily rinse once & it works fine.)

Repeat for 3-4 days, after which time the beans will have sprouted & ready to add as garnish to a dish or salad. Store in refrigerator.

Can be done with aduki beans, alfalfa, fenugreek, lentils, mung beans & peas. (Chickpeas take longer.)

Sue, Aden Terrace

CAN YOU HELP?

What is the best way to deal with asparagus beetle which comes out just as the asparagus is coming along nicely and nibbles the spears?

I like to grow fennel, and use the seeds of the Florence variety but have difficulty in getting the plants to form a decent sized bulb. Any suggestions?

many thanks

Sylvia Cummins, Springhill site

Thanks to everyone who has contributed to this newsletter. If you have a contribution for the next newsletter please email butterfieldgreen@gmail.com



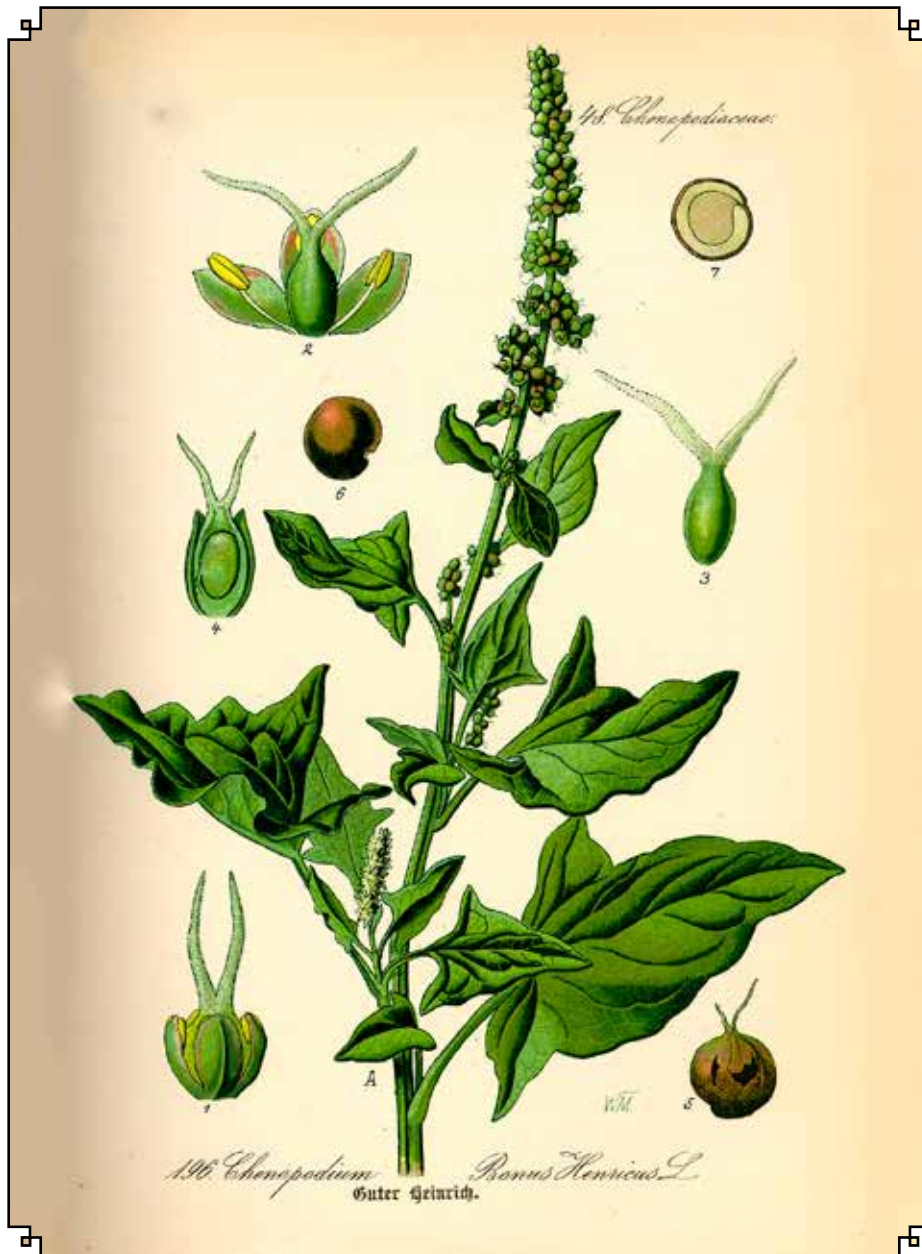
Making raised beds at Leaside

WINTER REPORT AT LEASIDE

At Leaside there's been a couple of good communal days this month first cutting back saplings and bramble around the edges of the site and then sorting out the compost bay which will soon be used for a delivery of horse manure.

We'd like to get a wood chip delivery but are wary of getting macerated twigs and leaves which won't last long. Any tips on how or when to good wood chips which are good for the paths?

Guy, Leaside



Perennial Vegetable:

Good King Henry

by Kay, Springhill

I am using “Forest Garden” principles in my allotment, so perennial plants are more welcome than annuals.

Perennials will knit together and cover the ground, utilising both the top-soil and the sub-soil. Short-lived annuals don't have time to build up the strong, deep and interconnected root and fungal networks which would make the most of the land. Growing annuals also involves regular periods of underutilised bare earth, which welcomes weeds, wastes nutrients and takes time to manage. I will probably always have some annuals but it is finding/trying

new edible perennials that excites me.

I thought I'd share my experience of one of my candidates – Good King Henry (*Chenopodium bonus-henricus*, aka inter alia Lincolnshire spinach, poor man's asparagus), an ancient heirloom crop which is theoretically a perennial substitute for annual spinach.

I'd grown this in pots before trying it in the allotment, but was eager to free GKH's thick and strong roots into deep earth. My plants have settled in easily (despite warnings online that it doesn't like being transplanted) and my GKH is now about to start a second year on

site. It has been ignored by slugs and birds and produced leaves for 9 months of the year. Each plant covers about 40cm² of ground, a nice mound 30cm high plus seed stalks above that, with no room for weeds. Edible carpet - tick.

First tip – don't imagine it can be a substitute for spinach in salad. Articles online call the leaves waxy/succulent and suggest that baby leaves can be eaten raw. Waxy succulence wouldn't stop me chopping up leaves for salads. What stops me from eating the leaves raw is the fuzzy/fibreglass-reminiscent downy feeling to their underside. Nothing particularly visible, but a bit peculiar. There is also advice to use new shoots as an asparagus replacement. Sorry, I've never seen a shoot that begs me to treat it like asparagus. As for sautéing the straggly-looking seedheads – I don't think so. I think GKH's main use is as a cooked green – for when the slugs/birds have annihilated the delicate annual leaf that you had in mind. It works well, for example, as the green in a spinach/ricotta lasagne, or as the green element in a saag or as a green frolic in a stir fry. You can hack off a quantity of leaves, rinse (which immediately sorts out that weird texture) and chop them up. They seem to retain more volume than spinach. Some sites claim the leaves are bitter, but you'd be hard-pressed to notice if you're cooking it with other things – I've certainly never noticed any bitterness.

So, overall, it's a useful zero-effort Plan B source of green cooking leaves, useful for when you want to replace or supplement other, less hardy, edible greenery. The deep roots bring up all sorts of exciting vitamins and minerals from the sub-soil, so you can feel well-nourished and virtuous. GKH seeds are supposed to be hard to germinate but I find a few babies every year. The sheer numbers of seeds means a few live ones always get through. They are easy to spot (arrow shaped leaves with backward-facing points, and a red-tinted stalk) so easy to remove or transplant, as you wish. All-in-all, a useful green edible, giving you an area of the allotment that doesn't need pest-control, watering, weeding, or any other kind of tender affection. I give it 8/10.

RECIPES

*Recommended,
tried, and tested*

RANSOMS PESTO RECIPE

Once you have planted wild garlic, it will self seed. The leaves will be ready to collect March/April



- ✎ 2 handfuls of wild garlic leaves
- ✎ 100-150 ml. olive oil, plus extra for sealing
- ✎ 50g pine nuts or walnuts or hazelnuts, lightly toasted
- ✎ 50g grated Parmesan cheese
- ✎ Salt & black pepper to taste

- 1 Rinse & check over wild garlic leaves, then shake dry & chop roughly.
- 2 Put the leaves, olive oil, nuts of choice and parmesan into a food processor. Whizz until blended.
- 3 Transfer to bowl & season to taste & put in sterilised jar.
- 4 Pour over extra virgin oil to seal.
- 5 Store in fridge.

Sue, Aden Grove



Green-fingered
and red-booted
at Leaside



Two recipes for Spring from Made in Hackney, a Local Community Food Kitchen which teaches food growing and cooking skills and has lots of plant based recipes on its website

BROAD BEAN & MINT HUMMUS

A very moreish dip which can make use of slightly tougher beans later in the season too.

- ✎ 1.5 kg broad beans in their pods
- ✎ 4 tablespoons olive oil
- ✎ Juice of 1 lemon
- ✎ Leaves from a small bunch of mint

- 1 Pod the broad beans.
- 2 Boil the beans in lightly salted water for 8 minutes.
- 3 Drain the beans and blitz them in a food processor with all the other ingredients.
- 4 Add water to loosen the paste if

necessary.

- 5 Enjoy as a dip with raw vegetables cut into sticks, such as celery and carrots.

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SPRING VEGETABLE SOUP

- ✎ A bunch of spring onions
- ✎ 2 celery stalks
- ✎ 2 small fennel bulbs
- ✎ 1 litre vegetable stock
- ✎ 200g of mange tout or sugar snap peas
- ✎ 100g podded young broad beans
- ✎ A bunch of chard or spinach

- ✎ 2 small lettuces such as little gem
- ✎ 2 tablespoons finely chopped mixed herbs ie mint, parsley, chives.

- 1 Chop the spring onions, fennel and celery into small dice.
- 2 Heat the oil in a medium saucepan and add the chopped ingredients until soft.
- 3 Add the stock and simmer for 5 minutes.
- 4 Add the peas and broad beans and cook for 1 minute.
- 5 Shred the lettuce and chard and simmer for another minute.
- 6 Add the chopped herbs and remove immediately from the heat.
- 7 Season and serve.