

AUTUMN NEWSLETTER 2018



Pictures by Sue, Aden Terrace



Annual Plot Inspection

The Annual plot judging took place in June, at the start of the three month heatwave. It has been a challenging year for us home-growers!

The 'Beast from the East' hit us hard thro' February, March & April & home propagating showed all the seeds had ground to a halt. Then came the Heat from the West & all took off like a rocket!

It was difficult, at some sites, to whittle it down to one or 2 'Best Plot' awards!

As ever, there were some plots which suffered from neglect, but largely the pleasure was in seeing well organised plots.

We gathered that some fruit trees suffered from the harsh cold spell, which killed off blossom, resulting in negligible fruit.

Mange touts have done well on several sites. Loganberries seem to be very popular all round, as they freeze well despite not being as sweet as raspberries.

August brought the courgette glut, then the beans and tomatoes came to the fore.

Sue, Aden Terrace



Open Days

For the first time in living memory, four sites opened their gates to the public on two Sundays in June, inviting people in to walk around, ask questions, meet the allotmenters.

Several of our sites are clearly visible to the public, and often get questions asked over or through the fence. This was a chance to come in and see close up. Visitor numbers varied across the participating sites of Aden Terrace, Church Walk,

Leaside and Overbury Street, but most stayed for some time with lots of questions about what was being grown, how to get an allotment, etc. This was good publicity for us but also a way of thanking Hackney for letting us have the space to grow. And

those who worked on site that day enjoyed meeting the visitors and showing them around. There were no problems - no children running wild, no damage to plots, etc. So a good time was had by all, and we hope to plan more of these next year.

AGM 2018

The AGM this year is back on schedule, the first Wednesday of October. Doors open at 7.00, in time for you to pay your subscription and plot rental, the meeting starting at 7.30pm.

AGMs have a reputation of being boring - all that business to go through - but this year we hope to complete the business activities in 30 minutes so we can move on to other activities. As last year, after the meeting there will be a seed swap, but this year bring along any chutney, jam, jelly, pickles or any other preserves you have made, for swap or sale (by mutual agreement). There will then be an illustrated talk by Jon Fuller on making the best ever compost (Monty Don eat your heart out)..

RAISE YOUR OWN AGENDA!

An agenda will be emailed to you no less than 2 weeks before the AGM, but please remember, you too as members have the right and opportunity to ask for items to appear on the agenda. Email me with your items (nancylkorman@hotmail.co.uk) by 10 September.

WHERE & WHEN

Wed 3rd October

Doors open 7pm (payments 7-7.30pm, no cash pls)

St Mary, Stoke Newington
Community Hall,
Stoke Newington Church St, N16

Hackney Allotment Society
www.hackneyallotments.org.uk



In praise of tomatoes

by Andrea Sinclair

There's nothing like home-grown tomatoes and I've had a bumper crop this year, and they are ripening, which is not often the case. I grow them out in the open and more commonly they stay green and then get blight at which point I pick them all quickly and make green tomato chutney. As this is my favourite chutney I am quite happy with this! Once blight hits it moves very fast through the plants, and you also have to cook the picked fruit quickly as they will start to rot within a day. You can cut off affected parts and cook the rest with the larger tomatoes.

I grow several different varieties of tomatoes of which I find 'Gardeners Delight' (red cherry) unfailingly reliable and tasty and this year I have tried the black tomato 'Indigo Rose' which looks stunning, and seems to be fruitful. It's supposed to have more antioxidants than

regular varieties.

When you have different shapes, sizes and colours they look lovely and taste delicious roasted with a little olive oil, balsamic vinegar and garlic.

They've obviously enjoyed the sun of this summer, and we've only had to water them once a week, perhaps because we have put lots of compost in our soil.

You can make a comfrey leaf solution to feed them. Cover comfrey leaves with water in a container and leave to rot, then after a month or so dilute the liquid about 1:5 and water. I've actually only remembered to do it once and they're doing fine. I would also warn you that this smells absolutely foul!

Monty Don says that he doesn't grow tomatoes outside anymore, because of blight, but I would recommend that you give it a go as they bring lots of visual and taste pleasure.

FAVOURITES

My favourite tomato is an heirloom variety called **Stupicke Polni Rane**. It's unusual in having potato shaped leaves and is supposed to have good blight resistance. The seeds germinate well and the young plants grow vigorously so I'm able to plant them out quite early.

Last year, during the plot inspections, I noticed that my tomatoes were the only ones that were ripe and this year they started to ripen in June and went on cropping through September. They taste delicious are great raw or cooked.

Annie, Springdale Road

TOMATO 'STUPICKE POLNI RANE'

GENUS: *Lycopersicon lycopersicum*

GROUP/SPECIES: Heirloom

TYPE: Half-Hardy Annual

SITE: Full Sun, Shelter

MOISTURE: Well-Drained

HEIGHT: 1.5-2m (5-6.5ft)

SPACING: Leave 45cm (18in) between each plant. Plant them deep, sinking them to a depth of 0.5cm below the seed leaves.

SOWING, SEEDS: Sow under cover at end of Jan-March for planting out in April/May.

CARE TIPS: They need staking and feeding for best results. Need trimming and support, pinch out the tops once they have set 5 or 6 trusses. While still small, you also need to pinch out the side shoots. Water regularly to prevent splitting.

SEED AND PRODUCE SWAP, AGM WEDS 3RD OCTOBER

Do you have surplus seeds, produce, chutneys or jams you would like to swap? Bring them along to the AGM, leave at the desk, pick up a token and at the end of the meeting start swapping!

RECIPES

Some of our members' best

I bought a few packets of dried ingredients for pasta in Italy. It was simply dried tomatoes, garlic, lemon rind, oregano and chilli. It was delicious just cooked in olive oil and stirred into pasta. I tried it with fresh tomatoes using the same ingredients, it's different but delicious and ridiculously easy. Adjust measures as you wish.

REALLY EASY TOMATO SAUCE

- 4/5 medium tomatoes or small equivalent (skin tomatoes by pouring hot water over them in a bowl) chop roughly
- 1 small onion or half a large one chopped
- Grated lemon peel
- 4 cloves garlic peeled and crushed with salt
- Oregano
- Crushed chilli pepper
- Black pepper

Put all ingredients into a pan with half and half water and olive oil and slowly cook until reduced.

This can be mixed with French beans or on its own with pasta or polenta
Bron, Aden Terrace



SPANISH TOMATO CHUTNEY

- 3lb green tomatoes
- 1 lb onions
- 1 red pepper
- 1 tblsp salt
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- 1 tsp ground black pepper
- 1 tsp mustard seeds
- Few chillies to taste, chopped finely
- 850ml vinegar (white wine or cider)
- 12oz sugar

- 1/ slice toms and red pepper and chop onion finely
- 2/ sprinkle with salt and leave several hours
- 3/ drain and put into preserving pan with vinegar and spices
- 4/ simmer 10 mins
- 5/ add sugar and simmer until thick enough (to your taste and depending on liquid content of tomatoes) 20 mins - 1 hour.

- 6/ put into sterilised jars and seal

Andrea, Spring Hill

* * *

If you have a glut of courgettes! (Does anyone not?)
This pasta sauce is lovely and easy.

COURGETTE AND LEMON PASTA SAUCE

- One onion
- Garlic crushed with a bit of salt
- 2 medium courgettes grated (if they're a bit big and watery squeeze and drain)
- Olive oil
- Chilli flakes if you like it a bit hot)
- 1 lemon, fine grated zest
- Black pepper

Sweat onions in olive oil add garlic Add courgette and some veg stock powder and lemon zest Cook slowly until it all breaks down. Add more olive oil to taste

Bron, Aden Terrace



COURGETTE PICKLES

- 1 pound courgettes
- 1 small yellow onion
- 2 tablespoons salt
- 2 cups cider vinegar
- 1 cup sugar
- 1 1/2 teaspoons dry mustard
- 1 1/2 teaspoons crushed yellow and/or brown mustard seeds
- Scant 1 teaspoon ground turmeric

1. Wash and trim the courgettes, then slice them one-sixteenth-inch thick; a mandoline works best. Slice the onion very thin as well. Combine the courgettes and onions in a large but shallow nonreactive bowl, add the salt and toss to distribute. Add a few ice cubes and cold water to cover, then stir to dissolve the salt..

2. After about 1 hour, taste and feel a piece of courgette-- it should be slightly softened. Drain and pat dry.

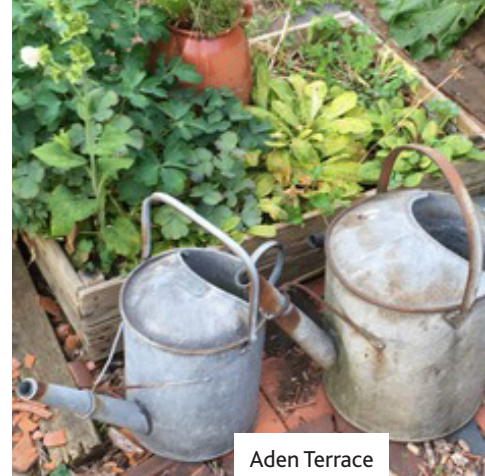
3. Combine the vinegar, sugar, dry mustard, mustard seeds and turmeric in a small saucepan and simmer for 3 minutes. Set aside until just warm to the touch. (If the brine is too hot, it will cook the vegetables and make the pickles soft instead of crisp.)

4. Return the courgette to a dry bowl and pour over the cooled brine. Stir to distribute the spices. Transfer the pickle to jars, preferably ones that have "shoulders" to hold the courgette and onions beneath the surface of the brine. Seal tightly and refrigerate for at least a day before serving to allow the flavours to mellow and permeate the courgette, turning them a brilliant chartreuse colour.

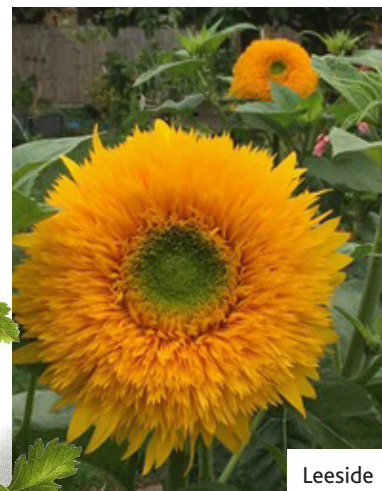
Guy, Leaside



Cima di Rapa



Aden Terrace



Leeside

Gardening Tips

by plot holders

CIMA DI RAPA

If you go for your holidays to Southern Italy you have probably been buying this leafy vegetable in armloads as Broccoletto or even Broccoli. Here it's rare to find in the shops, but I have seen it in the Stoke Newington Green fruit and veg shop opposite the old Fresh and Wild on Church Street.

It's not a glamorous looking veg ; it's a variety of turnip tops really. Whether turnips tops of the English variety taste good I don't know ? but Cima di Rapa stir-fried with garlic is really delicious. It cooks down to almost nothing, like spinach, so you need a quantity. I see that one or two people on the Aden terrace allotments have started growing it successfully. Seeds are available from Sarah Raven and Seeds From Italy and there is a brilliant website telling you all about how to grow it www.growitalian.com.

You sow seeds in rows like lettuce and thin to 6" apart eating the thinnings. Unfortunately it goes to seed easily so you need to water if it's dry and it's probably

therefore best grown after mid-summer. The plants grow to about a foot high and, as they are brassicas and so related to field mustard, oil seed rape, turnips, etc., they are prone to flea beetle and whitefly.

Cima is fast growing and likes the cool so I'm going to sow another crop soon and hope to have a good crop for xmas, and if that doesn't work, I can always dig it in as a green manure.

Chris, Aden Terrace

WHAT TO GROW IN SHADE

Most of us would love to have a plot that has sun all of the day but most plots in Hackney have corners of shade from buildings or trees. Autumn is a good time of year to buy pot grown fruit bushes ,which will grow in shade.

Fruit in shade

Redcurrants, whitecurrants and gooseberries, as well as fruit such as raspberries, blackcurrants and rhubarb, which originate from woodland edges ,will produce reasonable crops in some shade.

Apples, pears and plums prefer a more open position, but cooking apples can tolerate a partially shaded position. 'Morello' cherries are also productive on a shady wall.

Vegetables in shade

Beetroot, chard, kale, kohlrabi and lettuce are all relatively tolerant of some shade, but sowing seeds in modules in bright conditions and then transplanting will get them off to an early start with an established root system.

Lots of useful advice on allotments at www.rhs.org.uk

PARSLEY:

I have learned that parsley grows best for me when sown behind some sort of wind barrier or in a cold frame. This seems to reduce the drying out of the soil surface while the seeds are germinating.

Elsa, Springlane



Gardening Tips

continued

Homegrown
Minestrone by
Guy, Leaside

GROWING SUCCESSES - BIG AND SMALL

I've tried gherkins for the first time and have pickled some! I also grew some Jalapeño chillies from last year's seed swap.

I'm trying 'Wallone' Endive - which seems to do very well and lasts through winter picking. Broad beans too. Potatoes haven't cropped so vigorously this year.

We recommend planting 'Broccoli Raab', if you are at a loss - 40 days after planting seeds and we have a bedful to cut and come again for some months. Also radishes are a good filler in an empty corner.

Sue, Aden Terrace

FREE ADVICE

As a new gardener, there are zillions of ways you can get advice about what and how to grow. As

an experienced gardener, you can always learn something new.

● **Sutton Seeds** - has a vegetable garden planner full of ideas about layout, etc

● **Thompson and Morgan** - has a monthly what-to-do section and other sections on top 10 veg to grow, blogs, etc.

● **RHS** - has a monthly what-to-do section and advice on specific vegetables.

GARLIC:

Regular gentle hoeing to brake up the soil around the plants in order to increase oxygenation of the soil has given me much bigger bulbs.

Elsa, Springlane



Sweetcorn at Spring Hill



Long-tailed tit

● **Garden Organic** - has reams of information available, information sheets on growing specific vegetables, a monthly guide to growing, information sheets on fertilizers, weed killers, growing in an organic way.

HAS is a member of Garden Organic, and you can use the member enquiry service, asking your own specific questions, once you have logged into the Members Area. Our user name is hackneyallotments@hotmail.com and the password is HAS2014.

Or you can just google growing vegetables, and a load of possible sites will come up. Growing vegetables is a big business now and everyone wants to be helpful so google away.

Nancy , Aden Terrace

PAYING MEMBERSHIP FEES AND PLOT RENT FOR 2018/19

All fees are due to be paid before or at the AGM on the 3rd October. If you do not meet this deadline there is now a £1 late payment fee that will be due in addition to membership and plot rental. Please note the new fees below.

HOW TO PAY ELECTRONICALLY

This is the process used to pay from a Smile account; different banks may have slightly different processes:

Select 'Pay Bills' option

Bill type 'Other'

Recipient organization 'HAS'

Reference from your bill '[your name]'

Recipient account number 65555383

Recipient sort code 089299

PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU USE YOUR NAME AS THE REFERENCE ON THE PAYMENT, not any reference number given to you. We need to know whose rent/membership is being paid, otherwise we will chase you for non-payment. If you bank with The Co-op your name will not appear as the reference, so please email Nancy Korman with the date and amount of your payment. If you pay electronically, no receipt will be posted to you as you will already have a record of the payment. There is also no need to complete

and post the form below, but please email nancylkorman@hotmail.co.uk with any changes in contact details or AGM business you would like discussed, including if you would wish to stand for any office.

If you use **telephone banking**, you can pay that way using the HAS account details above.

HOW TO PAY BY CHEQUE

If you do not use electronic banking then please complete the slip below and return it to Nancy Korman, 21 Northchurch Terrace, London N1 4EB with your cheque made payable to HACKNEY ALLOTMENT SOCIETY by 1/10/18 or bring it in person to the AGM.

NAME AND ADDRESS ON THE BACK OF THE CHEQUE PLEASE.

You will receive confirmation of payment by email if possible, or by post if requested. Paper receipts will also be available on request at the AGM.

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HAS ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP & PLOT FEES 2018/19

Name: _____

Address: _____

Tel: _____

email: _____

I ENCLOSE:

£4 membership (waiting list) ☐

£35 m'ship and rent (full plot) ☐

£19.50 m'ship and rent concs ☐

£19.50 m'ship and rent (half plot) ☐

£11.75 m'ship and rent concs (half plot) ☐

please provide proof of status for concessions

☐ To keep costs down, all communication from HAS will be by email unless you tick this box to receive paper copies by post

I would like to stand for election to the following post:

I would like the following to be discussed at the AGM:

HAS COMMITTEE MEMBERS

CHAIR

Penny Miller -
pmshrink@yahoo.com

VICE CHAIR

Ruth Gladwin

SECRETARY

Nancy Korman -
secretary@hackneyallotments.org.uk

TREASURER

Hugh Naylor

SITE REPRESENTATIVES

ADEN TERRACE

Sue Sharples

CHURCH WALK

Maggie Wilkinson
and Sarah Madge

LEASIDE ROAD

MJ and Guy Dehn

OVERBURY STREET

Julia Clarke

QUEENSBRIDGE ROAD

Phillip Turner

SPRING HILL

Phillip Pearson, Jon Fuller
and Beth Webber

SPRING LANE

Helen Bishop and Elsa
Hamaz

SPRINGDALE ROAD

Annie Wilson

ST KILDA'S ROAD

Henrietta Soames