

Newsletter

Ash Road Allotment Association

The Newsletter

Anything for the newsletter? Please let me know. Chris Martin (Plot 59). Mobile 07939 559 424. Email: chris.e.martin@ntlworld.com

Coffee and Advice

Remember you are invited for ***FREE*** coffee on Sunday mornings. Come along to the Hut at 11 am.



Allotment Calendar

There are still some copies available of the **2018 Allotment Calendar** that features photographs taken at the Allotments. The Calendar is A5 size, opening up to A4 when hanging. **Copies can be bought at the Hut for £3.00.**

Remember we are also planning early for a **2019 Calendar**, so we'd encourage you to **send in suitable photos taken on the allotment site**. The photos need to be high resolution, so preferably taken with a camera. Please email any submissions to ash_road_allotments@aol.co.uk

Charity of the Year

Each year the Committee selects a Charity to benefit from donations raised at our events. This year's charity is the NSPCC.



Site Security

Unfortunately the Christmas period saw more incidents of damage and vandalism. Yet again it appears that the intruders made their way into the site from Batcliffe Wood. The Committee has identified security as a priority and has agreed a number of measures to try and prevent these incidents. Some of the first steps will involve improving boundary/fence security alongside the Wood and installing CCTV and warning signs to deter intruders. Local Community Police Support Officers have now also agreed to patrol the site.

There are measures that all of us can take to help improve security:

- **Don't leave valuables or power tools in sheds** and don't lock your shed (locks imply there is something valuable in them).
- **If you see someone on site who you do not know, ask who they are** and which Plot is theirs.
- If you witness vandalism or intruders causing damage, **'phone the Police non-emergency number 101**
- Please come to our next **'Work Party'** on **Saturday January 27th at 10am**. The task will be to make more secure the site boundary with Batcliffe Wood. If you can **bring any spare, rooted brambles or similar hedging bushes** that would be great. Work parties are a good opportunity to get to know other plot-holders. If you can only spare an hour, your help would be much appreciated.
- Always remember to **scramble the padlocks**, even on a quick visit.



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Spot the Birds



The December 2017 Newsletter included a list of birds species seen on the Allotments. Since then we've added Nuthatch to the list, courtesy of Andy Smithson. There are now 29 species in total. If you can add to the list, please contact a Committee member or email chris.e.martin@ntlworld.com.

The list so far:

Blackbird
Black-Headed Gull
Chaffinch
Collared Dove
Crow
Goldfinch
Greenfinch
House Martin
Jackdaw
Jay
Kestrel
Magpie
Nuthatch
Red Kite (on the ground and in air)
Robin
Rook
Song Thrush
Sparrowhawk
Sparrows (Hedge and Tree)
Starling
Swallow
Swift
Tits (Blue, Coal, Great, Long-Tailed)
Wood Pigeon
Wren

Remember the RSPB has its annual Big Garden Birdwatch on 27-29th January!

Allotment Events 2018 - Dates for Your Diary

Sunday 13th May - Plant Sale

Sunday 5th August - Allotment Barbecue

Sunday 2nd September - Allotment Annual Show

[All dates subject to confirmation]

January Tasks

Hopefully your hardy veg (leeks, brassicas and root veg) are still providing something for you to harvest. Check nets to make sure your brassicas are still protected from pigeons!

Continue winter digging on those days when the ground is not frozen or too waterlogged.

There is still time to try out the new secateurs Santa brought you - apples and pears are dormant and can be pruned. But remember that stone fruits, like plum and cherry should be summer pruned. Bare-rooted trees and bushes can still be planted until March.

Use the bad weather to plan for next year - order seeds if you haven't already and decide where on the plot you will grow things.

Let's make a big effort to encourage bees on the allotment this year. A succession of pollinators helps. For a really early start a few bluebells, crocus, daffodils and primulas/primroses can help on those early spring days when warmth brings the first bees out.

Notices

- The **Water Supply** remains switched off for the winter
- The **Work-Party on Saturday 27th (see front page) will be having a Bonfire** to dispose of parts of the old wooden boundary fence that it plans to remove. If you have any wood on your plot suitable for burning, please bring it along to the Bonfire site by the morning of the 27th.
- Winter gales can often bring down loose or damaged branches from trees either on or site or overhanging the site boundaries. Please **report any damaged or potentially dangerous trees or branches** to any member of the Committee as soon as possible, or email ash_road_allotments@aol.co.uk
- Winter is the quiet period, but this should not mean plots are abandoned. **Remember that initial plot inspections will take place in late February 2018** to make sure they are being used or work is at least underway. It is only fair that we draw attention to plots that appear to be abandoned or unworked early in the year so that we can give plot holders the chance to take remedial action or re-let plots in time for the 2018 growing season.

New Year Recipe

Happy Healthy Eating for 2018! Lynne Snowden has kindly sent in this healthy recipe for New Year. This is a nice way to make use of some of the onions and garlic you may have in store and the green vegetables you may still find on your plot.

Lentil and Green Veg Patties

Ingredients:

- 1 large onion finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove crushed
- 3 tablespoons of vegetable, or nut oil of choice.
- 8oz (400 grams) red split lentils.
- 1 pint (600ml) of veg stock
- 2 tablespoons tomato puree
- 100 grams (4oz) blanched almonds finely chopped
- A good handful of chopped up broccoli heads and /or other leafy green vegetables, such as kale, finely shredded.
- One tablespoon of fresh mint, or a teaspoon of dried mint.
- Rock salt from a grinder
- Freshly ground pepper
- 2 tablespoons of plain flour.
- Some preferred frying oil.

Preparation Time - 30 minutes

Cooking time - 50 minutes

Method:

Fry onion and garlic with seasoning over a moderate heat for 2 minutes until soft and glossy. Add lentils and stir in to oil them.

Pour stock over, adding tomato puree and finely chopped green veg, almonds and mint. Allow to boil and then turn heat down to a simmer for 40 minutes until the stock is absorbed. Once all the liquid has vanished, allow to cool slightly.

Divide mixture into required number of patties and mould into burger type shape.

Add some seasoning to plain flour on a flat surface and coat each patty with flour.

Fry the patties in hot oil over moderate heat for approx 5 minutes on each side or until crisp.

Serve hot or cold with a green salad or as an accompaniment or starter.

Enjoy.

