



KENILWORTH ALLOTMENT TENANTS ASSOCIATION K.A.T.A.



NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2020

A Happy New Year to one and all and let's hope that this year brings a little more harmony to a world, which seems so full of turmoil at the moment. At home last year we simply had the uncertainty of Brexit, political division and elections, and Royal scandals, which quite honestly made most of us just want to curl up and pull the duvet over our heads! But worldwide, much more serious and aggressive issues between nations are still raging. And talking of raging (in another sense), only this week, Sir David Attenborough once again issued dire warnings on the impact that global warming is now having on our precious earth, and to which he attributes the worsening of the tragic and destructive wildfires in Australia, California and the Amazon. It's now on record that we've just registered the hottest decade ever. And, after a continuously wet Autumn/Winter in the UK, with over 120 flood warnings in the UK by mid-November, it leaves us all in no doubt that weather extremes are set to become more and more the norm!

Thankfully, the river at Odibourne has not caused any huge devastation for us so far this year. Although it has been consistently high, it has breached the banks only slightly. The sad thing it has brought to light though, is that the raised water level has simply emphasised the amount of plastic being carried out to sea, some of which has snagged itself to a halt on the branches of our overhanging willows - (numerous plastic carrier bags from goodness knows where further upstream). We generally pride ourselves on the cleanliness of our stretch of the river and its banks, due in part to the help of our local scout group (ably led by tenant and Scout leader Nick Scofield), who each year scours the river and removes any objects, which simply should not be in there and who also removes anything which could impede the flow of the river. Sadly, Nick was seriously ill last year and the exercise didn't take place. But thankfully, after a protracted and debilitating illness, Nick has made a full recovery, and we would like to thank him, and his scouts for their help in the past and hopefully for years to come. But fortunately, and for our immediate future, we have some extra help forthcoming with a kind offer from our Green Party, organised by staunch supporter and tenant John Watson, who is heading up an Action Day on Saturday 22nd February to clear the river of plastic and glass between

The Ford by the Castle and culminating as far downstream as Common Lane. He and his colleagues will be passing through Odibourne at some stage throughout the day, providing river conditions are not too dangerous. Maybe we could launch our little dingy which resides beside the shop, on a 'maiden voyage'. This was affectionately referred to as HMS Odibourne some years ago, but was never put into service!!!

So after a very busy and successful Centenary Year, may I wish you all, on behalf of the Committee, a peaceful and healthy 2020 and thank all who helped to make last year's celebrations successful. A big, big 'Thankyou' to you all. Our Committee worked hard to make last year a memorable one, but we all realise that without the support of our very many volunteers amongst you, nothing would have been half the success that it was. Thank you all once again for your continued help and support.

Lily Brownjohn (Allotment Secretary)

So, before we start our quick roundup of events since our last newsletter.....

A warm welcome goes to our youngest member Robin, who I was privileged to meet at just 10 days old, born to Anthony and Claire Smith, and who is little brother to big sister Erin (plot 7a Odibourne).

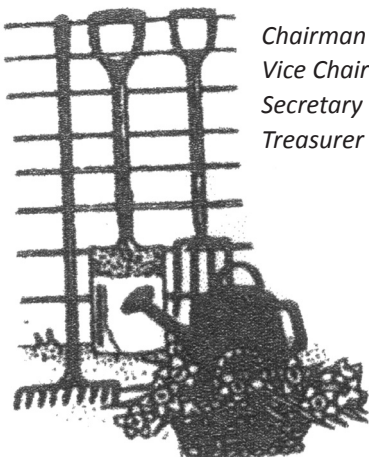
Many congratulations also to Tony and Hayley Barton who got married in the Autumn of last year (plot 65a Odi).

Rent Taking and news of our NEW Website ... www.kenilworthallotments.org

(Site designed and maintained by Nick Wood)

The rent taking event at the end of September, can be quite an enjoyable event as we have the opportunity for a quick catch-up with most of our tenants who we haven't seen for a while, and it traditionally gives us the opportunity to update our records. Just basic information is required such as any change of address and contact details as well as checking on your availability to help us out on Open Days or to help out on shop Rotas or with Maintenance.

Committee members



			Plot/Site:
<i>Chairman</i>	Chris Coton	513268	3a Spring Lane
<i>Vice Chair</i>	Pete Hayes	07970 891954	60 Odibourne
<i>Secretary</i>	Lily Brownjohn	855291 or 07768 525007	51 Odibourne
<i>Treasurer</i>	Philip Jordan	733407	37a Odibourne
	Ann Barry	857240 or 07799 564451	70b Odibourne
	Paula Hallam	07763 129678	44 Odibourne
	Trudy Hayes	07557 965089	60 Odibourne
	David Hoy	07770 652874	20 Beehive Hill
	Peter Jones	853930	18b Odibourne
	Catherine Nyman	07980 552963	38 Odibourne
	<i>Committee may also be contacted through our email address katatradingstore@yahoo.com</i>		

Last year, it also gave us the opportunity to announce the imminent arrival of our **website**. If you haven't already had a peek at it, you should do... dare I say that it's had 'rave' reviews so far! It's both informative and amusing, and is yet another vehicle designed to keep you updated on all our news, dates and events, as well as operating as an archive for storing a copy of our Constitution, Rules of the Association, and now also our Newsletters, which are produced twice a year. And aside from all of the above, **it makes us more visible in the public arena**.

Newsletter news...

So, now you also have the opportunity simply to go on line to read the newsletters, which are produced **strategically as a reminder** for distribution just prior to rent taking in September and to inform you when the shop re-opens for the new season from mid-February, so you will have to be **extra vigilant** not to miss these dates/deadlines if you opted not to physically receive a copy through your door. (Please do remember, that rent not received by our deadline will be subject to a fine).

Most of you (as we did miss a few) were given the opportunity at last year's rent taking, to indicate whether to still receive your newsletter through your letter box or use the website and the majority of tenants still preferred and 'opted in' to receive a copy of the newsletter through their letterboxes. You can change your options one way or the other at any time. Please just let Lily know. We are totally flexible and appreciate that we have a diversity of tenants, some of us who happily admit to preferring to sit and relax by the fireside and read, rather than be forced in front of a computer screen! So we are still happy to deliver our newsletter through your letter box if this is your preference. This will be the last 'manually distributed' copy of the newsletter **for those who opted to read it on line**.

We must once again give a very big thanks to Nick Wood, who designed and maintains our website with such a lovely degree of accuracy and humour!

October, and once again we welcomed Thorn's School....

to our Odibourne site and hosted a visit by 'year two' students, with their teachers and helpers. A huge thank you to Caroline, who donated her time **and her plot** for the occasion. This year she showed the youngsters some examples of more unusual crops including yellow raspberries and pink berries as well as unusual vegetables such as chick peas and lentils, Turk's turban and banana squash. The children also had tastings of raspberries, little currant tomatoes and grapes. Also on hand to help out was Paula and Ann Barry, who took the students around Odibourne, to get a sensory insight into plants grown including aromatic herbs, which the children rubbed between their fingers. They hunted down pumpkins and were impressed with how tall our sunflowers grew from one small seed. The senses apart from feel and smell were again given the opportunity to taste, as outdoor cucumbers were also sampled. We must also thank John and Katherine Phillips, who allowed yours truly to dig up some of their potatoes once again, although this year not too many were taken as only the day before, their plot resembled a paddy field due to the prolonged rains. Many lovely 'thank you' letters have been received from the children.

September ... brought harvests of apples and once again, Pete and Trudy were busy churning out amazing juice with our apple press. 2020 apple press days will be advertised by the shop as and when the harvest dictates.

October and November...

Saw Paula and Trudy in 'Promotional' mode, with stands being taken at both the **Eco Fayre** in October at St John's Church, an event to hopefully inspire local people to engage with Environmental issues, and then again in November at **Kenilworth School's Christmas Craft Fayre**, selling our lovely canvas bags for Christmas presents. Both these events helped to **raise the profile of Allotments** and inspired a few new applications for our waiting list.

Thanks to Paula and Trudy for showing their initiative.

Our Pumpkin Weigh-in in October...

Brought the usual good turn-out at The Engine Inn with winners as follows:

CHILDREN'S SECTION:

1ST THEO MOLESWORTH	33 ¾ LBS
2ND THEO MOLESWORTH	28 LBS
3RD OLIVER MOLESWORTH	26 ¼ LBS

ADULT SECTION:

1ST JOHN TRAVERS	88 ½ LBS
2ND MARTIN POOLE	62 ¾ LBS
3RD NIGEL WELLS	54 ¾ LBS

Many thanks to Andy and Lisa once again for their sponsorship and hospitality

Our closing weekend (October) and a Defibrillator & CPR demo at the shop....

An eventful weekend as well as it being the last weekend for seed orders. We had an interesting and informative demonstration by Seringa Dudley from Kenilworth Heartsave, on how the **defibrillator** works, which was well attended. Many thanks to Nicky Schofield for organising, and apologies if anyone was disappointed and unable to be squeezed into the limited space in the shop for the demonstration, but monthly courses are currently being run at the Abbey Medical Centre if you are interested. Please contact Ryan Smith on Ryan.Smith@abbeymc.nhs.uk. Our eventful morning was rounded off thoughtfully and appropriately with a 'Heart Warming!!!' (Sorry, couldn't resist that) hot soup and crusty bread at the shop, supplied by Nick and Chris and was much appreciated by all.

You really Otter see this...(apologies once more)!

On the same freezing cold morning, two tenants were treated to a spectacle never seen before at Odibourne. As Phil and Steph were making their way up to the demonstration, they witness an Otter, unself-consciously ambling down towards the river bank. It trotted right across the main path in front of them, and although Phil, couldn't quite believe what he was witnessing, he was quick enough to get the old phone camera into gear and has taken an amazing video of the event. This has been downloaded onto our website.

AGM October 2019 – Abbreviated report by Chairman Chris

'At the AGM I reported another successful year for your Association and highlighted some of the important events of the year. The treasurer reported a successful year financially, recording a surplus of income over expenditure despite acquiring a rotavator, gazebo and our contributions to the defibrillator and centenary BBQ. Core income and core costs were largely as expected. No rent increase was proposed.

The committee's motion to adopt a Constitution came back to this year's meeting having been out to consultation. This was passed by a majority vote. Pat Hough put forward a motion to

“actively encourage organic gardening” and after a discussion and a vote of 8 for and 9 against, the motion was modified to “encourage environmentally ecologically friendly methods of growing, harvesting and pest control” this was passed 14 for and 0 against. Another member suggested the Association should encourage plot holders to “not buy plastic gardening sundries, use existing items until worn out then throw them away”. He thought this could be covered by the previous motions mention of environmentally friendly methods of gardening. I think the majority of plot holders are environmentally aware but the Association will be looking to help, advise, and inspire. And in Pat’s words “We dedicate this as a commitment in this our 100th year, and dedicate this approach for future generations”

Chris

End of November, and so our Centenary year was rounded off with our annual Presentation Evening held at the Sports and Social Club...

and our Town Mayor, Alison Firth, who presented our cups and trophies, had us in stitches as she regaled us with amusing anecdotes of her time spent with us as a plot holder. She confided in me that one day, perhaps when time permitted, she might like to come back and take on an allotment once again. **Ali, you are welcome back at any time!!!**

And a ‘thank you’ to Nigel Wells, who generously sponsored a Trophy for our new Scarecrow Category. As we had so many entries under the ‘Novelty’ section, our judge, Town Clerk, Maggie Fields, made the suggestion that we create a separate category just for ‘topical’ Scarecrows and this is the Trophy that Nigel has sponsored. Many thanks to Nigel (who also donated a ‘Free membership to Ryton Organic’ as a raffle prize). Please note that we obtained somewhere in the region of just over £100 worth of raffle prizes to add to the raffle table, due to the generosity of some of our local businesses.

And so into the New Year with our first informal event – a ‘thankyou’ drink from KATA...

for our **Shop and Maintenance volunteers**, which took place on Thursday 23rd January at 7.30pm at the Virgins and Castle

The KATA Shop (update from Pete & Trudy)...

‘Following a very successful 2019, we are re-opening the shop on Saturday 15th February 11-12, (with a shiny new re-surfaced floor, a bit of a re-vamp and a new cane rack)! **If you are interested in volunteering to help on the shop rota please let us know.** In March we will resume opening times 10-12.

Moving forward after many requests from plot holders we will be adding more environmentally friendly products to our shelves. We now have for sale, thanks to Nick Schofield, some fabulous wooden seed trays, he has kindly spent the winter months splitting pallets, sawing and constructing them (on the dining-room table) these reusable trays with the aim to reduce the use of plastic we bring to the allotments. On the reusable note, please remember we have a large selection of plastic trays and pots on the shelves next to the shop that anyone can use and re-use.

Some extras in the shop:

- We will continue to have a stock of recycled goods available, these will change week on week so keep your eyes peeled. **Please note that recyclable items must only be taken from the side of the shop, and not from the storage area behind the shop.** If we haven’t yet got round to pricing some of them up, please don’t be shy in offering a donation for them when the shop re-opens!
- We still have some of our lovely centenary tote bags for sale.
- Wood chip and manure will be available again this year, **please make sure you pay for your loads.**

- Essential gardening equipment for loan, please make enquiry in shop or contact Pete and Trudy
- Bins, veg for Pigs, we have had bins by the gate for Spencer’s Retreat to collect, these will remain, so please feel free to enter any excess/waste fruit and veg.

Email: Katatradingstore@yahoo.com

Fb: kata Kenilworth allotments.

Look forward to seeing you. Pete and Trudy.

Site Maintenance :

‘Thank you to everyone who helped with maintenance last year. Our sites need attention all year round, from mowing and tree coppicing to organising and tidying. We will be putting **dates for working parties on the noticeboards and the website.** On a wander around Odibourne the other day I noticed a number of plots that do not have water butts, this prompted a thought about why? If you would like a water butt on your shed or greenhouse but not sure where to start or how to do it, please drop us a message as we are looking at supporting plot holders to be as sustainable as possible.

The maintenance of the sites includes maintaining hedges and trees, these are often on plots. If you have a tree that you need assistance with, please let us know and we can arrange time with you.

The willow coppicing was completed at the end of 2019 and we have a lot of branches left around Odibourne, these will be slow to move as we plan to use them for creating hedging and then lying the rest as animal and insect shelter on the area cleared by the bridge on Manor road.

Creation of a new wildlife area: Referring back to the area by the bridge on Manor Road, which has been tidied and now contains a variety of logs placed for animals and insects, - this area will also (fingers crossed) see the development of a bee and butterfly wild flower area.

Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award: We have had 4 teenagers volunteering their time, helping out some plot holders and clearing the shop out ready for winter. Over the last few months they have turned up in all weathers, if you see them around please say hello. We are so pleased that we are able to support them.

And finally, please help us keep our main through path in good condition... both for your own safety and the well-being of our main track (most especially at Odibourne). The track is terribly waterlogged at the moment and it would be appreciated if no-one takes a vehicle down there until it has totally dried out. Your vehicle may get stuck or slide off into someone’s plot causing a lot of damage to all and everything concerned. Retrieval of cars in the past has been an expensive business for some unsuspecting plot holders, and please be aware, the cost of recovery of vehicles is not the responsibility of the Association.

Pete & Trudy’

****Re Plot Judging: cut-off dates***

Most are aware that our plots are pre-assessed for inclusion prior to our judging taking place. This is to save our judge time on the day, otherwise she would have to be on site for several days and nights to whittle out the best plots! In fairness to all tenants, some of whom leave their last minute weeding and labelling until the night before- (valuable points), we will announce *a cut-off date for the pre-assessment to be sure that no-one is caught out!*

Paula has requested that anyone interested in volunteering to help with Events, to please contact her for details of what this will entail. Contact number on front of newsletter.

Dates for the diary:

Sat 15th Feb 11-12	Shop re-opens (cuppa and cake on offer)
Mar Sat 14th/Sun 15th	Competition potato and buckets available from shop (during shop trading hours)
Mar Sat 21st/Sun 22nd	As above
May (beginning of)	Plot inspections by Committee will commence across all three sites
May Sat 9th	VE 75 Street party in Kenilworth Town Centre. Dig out and re-use those fabulous 'land-girl' or (boy) costumes!
June Sat 13th	Lions Show in the Abbey Fields from 12.30pm.... let's hope for better weather this year!!! Contact Paula for participation and/or setup details
June Sun 21st	NGS Kenilworth Gardens Open Day – at our Beehive Hill site 12-5pm. (Rhubarb raid on the day as usual)!!! and donations of plants for our little plant stall welcome. Contact Madeleine (plot 16) or Site Rep Dave
June Sat 27th	Kenilworth Carnival Participation may be a strong possibility after last year's success – let Paula know if you are interested in joining in the fun!
July Sun 5th	Potato crop weigh-in at the shed – 12.30pm
July w/c Mon 13th	Judging of plots (date to be confirmed) – <i>*see item about cut-off date for inclusion on previous page</i>
Aug 10th – 16th	National Allotment week. The theme for this year is 'Growing Food for Health and Wellbeing'
Aug Tues 11th	Judging of scarecrows (from 9.30am) by Town Clerk Maggie Field
Aug 16th	Open Day at Odibourne 2-4pm Contact Paula if you can help set-up or assist on stands
Aug (end of)	Measuring of sunflowers
Sept Sat 19th/Sun 20th	Rent collecting in shed (during shop opening hours) by Committee
Sept Sat 26th/Sun 27th	As above
Oct Sat 3rd	Eco Fayre
Oct Sun 11th	Pumpkin weigh-in at The Engine starting at 12.30 (complimentary light lunch included)
Oct 15th	AGM at The Abbey Club, 7.30 (Room to be booked)
Oct (last w/end)	Shop closing – date/s to be decided.
Oct Sat 31st	Last day for seed orders (order form to be handed in to Chris at 69 Spring Lane, - next to Spring Lane Allotments)
Nov Sat 20th	Presentation Evening 7 for 7.30pm at The Sports and Social Club (Room to be booked)

A bit of an update from our Head Office.....

Did you know

that our National Allotment Society (NAS) is celebrating its **90th birthday this year?** To find out more about its history and for details of the Nat. Allotment Society 90th Birthday AGM, held this year in Leeds on Saturday 6th June, at the Mercure Leeds Parkway Hotel Otley Road, Leeds LS16 8AG, please visit the website: www.nsalg.org.uk.

Our National Allotment slogan is to Preserve, Promote and Protect.

And a bit of a challenge....

Some of you out there have proved to be superb photographers. The NAS has issued a 2020 Christmas card challenge to take the perfect 'Winter Allotment' shot to grace their 2020 Greetings cards. Three people will be shortlisted and will each receive a choice of gardening books. One overall winner will also receive their own supply of Christmas cards. Go on, have a go, - you've nothing to lose. Just send three images to diane@nsalg.org.uk by 25th May 2020. Please check for full terms and conditions: www.nsalg.org.uk

And why not volunteer for a free fun day out.....

Our National Association are once again looking for volunteers to help out on their stand at the Gardeners World Live Show 18th – 21st June at the NEC as well as The Malvern Spring Show 7th – 10th May. Please contact Cartwrightkarin@yahoo.co.uk for further details, or speak to Paula or Trudy, who volunteered last year. There's a free sweatshirt on offer!!!

Thanks once again to our Chairman Chris...

Who's just dropped off my spuds! A time consuming job, from ordering, to door to door delivery, what service indeed! By taking advantage of the superb value from King's Seeds, saving around 40% on regular prices, our tenants get amazing value, but by taking advantage of the King's 'incentive deadline ordering' scheme, the Association received further

discounts which this year brought in another worth-while bonus to add to our funds. Chris has already delivered our seeds and onions and has just delivered our total order of 141 kilos of potatoes!!! Thank-you Chris.

Are you missing a wheelbarrow?

Odd items, which often find themselves on another plot at the time of flooding on Odibourne, usually find their way back to their original owners in the end, but some do finish up in the re-cycling bay if not claimed after a few weeks. One very good 'Chillington' wheelbarrow has been reclining up against the water trough on plot 24 for just over three weeks now. If you have lost one, this may be yours.

Slugs - Friend or foe?.....

Believe it or not, all slugs are not our enemy!!! The RHS are doing a survey on slugs, so if you would like to find out more about how you can help by joining in with the survey, please go to www.rhs.org.uk Applications for entry close on 2nd March (You can also Google RHS Slug Hunt clicking on the appropriate headings for direct access to the survey)

And Finally...

We have just received some lovely news that one of our tenants (Claire Jones, plot 43 Odibourne) has been accepted by the RHS to design a small garden in the 'Blooming Borders' section at Tatton Park Flower Show this year, 22nd – 26th July. Her design concept is based on mental health and her own experiences and how gardening is her natural medicine. The garden is named 'First Steps' and will contain two statues, one in the darkness and the other encouraging the first to step out into the light (hence the name of the garden). It will be a garden that is easy to replicate in other gardens/communal areas using easy to obtain/grow plants. Its effect can impact on and help others and can also be done on a budget.

Well Done Claire, and on behalf of everyone at KATA, we wish you every success. – Lily