

**Spring
2024**

Bournemouth East Allotment Society Newsletter

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Comments from the Chair

Welcome to the spring edition of our newsletter. On more sunny days, it is possible to believe that spring is fast approaching and we shall be able to crack on with the sowing and planting that starts the new growing season. For new members, our recommendation would always be to sow or plant as you clear patches of your plot as this will not leave empty ground for the weeds to overtake again.



So, now that 2024 is well underway, what is your committee offering in addition to tenanting your plot? Firstly, the shop has increased its opening hours (see shop news). Secondly, the site will need attention, so do look out for working party dates and get involved, so that tasks are not simply left to the loyal few! First one is on 29th March from 11.00am – 1.00pm. Thirdly, we are trialling a new Award Scheme, the result of a partnership between Dorset Wildlife Trust and the SW branch of the National Allotment Society (see separate article).

Then there are our social events. Bacon (& veggie) Butty mornings start at the end of April and continue on the last Sunday of each month, with October being the last. Proceeds go to BEAS. Coffee mornings have moved from Tuesday to the second Sunday of the month, with proceeds going to local charities. On 8th May, our Assistant Site Manager has kindly arranged a visit for members, associate members, their partners and families to Dean Court Garden, Wimborne. There is onsite parking, a cafe, and well-behaved dogs (on leads) will be permitted. Entry is at 10.30am. (Please see separate advert). We are also considering a quiz evening, a trail around Christchurch and a possible talk or hints and tips event, so watch for adverts in the communal area and on the noticeboards. Events will only be arranged if we have sufficient people sign-up.

Any enquiries,
please call
07766110660
or email



beas.secretary@outlook.com

www.bournemoutheastallotmentsociety.co.uk
www.facebook.com/lingdaleplots

Of course, our biggest event is our Open Morning, which will be held this year, on Saturday 20th July, the weekend before schools finish for the summer holidays.

Finally, I need to draw your attention to a Special General Meeting on Sunday 14th April in the Big Green Shed at 12 noon. We hope that this later time will allow those who attend church to come along afterwards. There will be one agenda item – a resolution to amend one of our bye-laws/rules arising from a majority of members responding positively to the issue, in our recent survey, about allowing small ponds and bog gardens.

I hope to meet many of you on your plots in the next few months. If you don't yet know who I am, I am a short lady with very white hair and can often be found on my plot, or serving in the shop.



Lynda (Chair) Plot 101

RENT

Our rent has not increased for 12 years!!!

As a self managed site our committee makes sure that our costs are kept to a minimum for the benefit of all the members and our site remains extremely good value compared to other allotment sites.

In order to make sure that we retain enough funds to continue to cover our water rates and other increasing costs, rents will increase in October by £2 per year for a full plot, which means £1 for a half plot and 50p for a mini plot.

There will be no change for the accessible beds.

Allotment Competition

This year the allotment competition will be open to all members as usual, however the guidelines have been simplified with broader categories and there will only be one judging in late June.

The main guidelines remain to showcase your plot, demonstrating good use of the space for growing a variety of fruit and veg that is well cared for and productive.

There is also a competition for the whole site, vying for best allotment site against the other sites in the Bournemouth Federation.

Care of the overall site is considered, but also the general state of all the plots so, even if you don't want to enter your plot individually in our own competition, your efforts will still contribute to the whole site entry.

These elements of competition are a great motivator to keep your plot well kept and tidy. You can also join in the working party (details here to the right) for a bit of community spirit while maintaining and improving our site.

Entry forms for the competition will be available soon.

Working Party!!

Friday 29th

March

11am—1pm

***Come and join us to
lend a hand
together at our
working party this
Friday.***

***This is to tackle
some jobs on the
site that need a
combined effort.***



***Please bring any tools that you are willing
to use and meet us on site from 11 am.
We have a list of small and not so small
tasks to make our site pleasant for all our
members.***

The party bit is tea, coffee and cake!!

We look forward to seeing you there.

Shop News

Since the shop re-opened this year, we have had a steady flow of people in to purchase what they need to get the year going. We were successful in obtaining 3 trailer loads of professional compost from Kings Park Nursery when they closed earlier this month, but they all went very quickly! We still have some Horse Compost, Organic Compost and some Peat-Free Multi-Purpose Compost and are searching for more sustainable Peat-Based compost. We also have Grow Bags ready for the tomato growing season. The new order of other items has been delivered, including some new ones to our shop, so please come and have a look round.

Further to the recent questionnaire that was sent to all members, we have added a few additional shop-opening times to our rota. Those of you who have looked at the rota (either on the notice boards or on the website -

[Our Shop \(bournemoutheastallotmentsociety.co.uk\)](http://Our Shop (bournemoutheastallotmentsociety.co.uk))) will notice that from April to August we are

opening on Wednesday afternoons from 2:30 to 3:30 and from May to August on Thursday evenings from 6:00 to 7:00. Should it happen that these are not supported, then we shall cease the experiment and close again. It should be noted by all that the shop can only open when there are volunteers to run it. None of us are paid!

One of the other items from the results of the questionnaire was that people would like to see more plants in the shop. This can only happen if people grow more than they need and donate the extra to the shop for other people to purchase. Please remember this as you plant your seeds this spring.

Please keep an eye on your emails, our Facebook page and the website for up to date information about availability of items.

As ever, if there is anything that you think we could successfully stock please let us know, bearing in mind that it needs to be something that sufficient customers would buy!

Save the Date! Our Annual Open Morning Saturday July 20th

This event is a fund-raiser that also showcases our sites and we need the help and donations of as many members as possible.

How can you help?

- **Preparation starts now!**

When you are planting on your plot, please put in a few extra seeds or seedlings so that you will have enough to harvest for the produce stall. The plant stall would welcome your spare plants or shrubs from your garden.

We can always sell good quality bric- a-brac and welcome cakes and pies on the day itself. Last year, we were really short of jams, pickles and chutneys, so please save some from your store cupboard, or think about making some specially.

- **Volunteers, we need you!**

Our open morning wouldn't take place without our dedicated volunteers; help to set up and to serve is always needed. A bit nearer the time, we shall be putting up notices of who to speak to about what!



SITE REMINDERS

WATER TANKS/BUTTS

The water tanks/butts are turned off during the winter months to protect the system from weather damage.

Please ensure that those on or near your plot are emptied by you or a neighbour and cleaned out of silt etc. so that you have pest free and uncontaminated water ready for your seedlings and plants later in the spring.

At present the majority of the butts are full of rainwater, thanks to the very wet winter, but will not be replenished with mains water until they are turned on again after your cleaning.

Plot inspections

Don't forget – if you have difficulty working your plot through illness or other reasons, or if you are on holiday and someone else is looking after your plot, please let the Site Manager know at beas.sitemanager@outlook.com

VEHICLES ON SITE

Please do not bring vehicles on site when the paths/drives are soft/wet as this damages them. The site team are sorry that we have had to close them due to very heavy rutting and damage. We are aware this is an inconvenience to those wishing to have compost or sheds etc delivered or remove rubbish to the tip.

It would be of great assistance if anyone has surplus turf which can be put in to fill the ruts as it is still taking a lot of work to repair the damage. The site has been reopened, but care needs to be taken when driving round, particularly on the corners.

Please do NOT put stones or ash in the ruts, as these will damage the grass mower, and extend the recovery time.

BONFIRES

Bonfires are currently permitted on site until the end of May, however, please remain considerate to our neighbours by making sure that smoke does not blow towards houses. We have already received complaints!



Secret to unlocking the small gate on the main site!

We have noticed some people having difficulties opening the padlock.

If you lift the bar that the padlock fits into, it is easier to get your keys into the padlock to open or relock it. It is also easier with a smaller bunch of keys.

PLEASE do not place the padlock on the top of the bar as it makes it more difficult to open.



THANK YOU !!!

Shout out to Mike Draper who has resurrected all of the BEAS wheelbarrows, with various spots of mending and welding, replacement wheels and nuts and bolts. Some old barrows had parts salvaged to save others....all in all a heroic effort for which we're very grateful.

Loo blocked : There was an issue recently. One of the toilets was found jammed with paper. It was unblocked but unfortunately, the same toilet was found blocked the following weekend. Could we please ask parents to supervise their children when they come over to the toilet rather than just giving them the key?

BEAS Excursion

Save the date...

8th May 2024, 10.30 am
for our visit to

Deans Court
Near Wimborne



A group trip by car for a private tour of the ancient gardens of an elegant historic house including a walled garden.

There is onsite parking, a cafe, and well behaved dogs, on leads, will be permitted.

further details to follow.

Bacon Butties

*Sunday Socials continue on the last
Sunday of the month*

from April to October

*In the big green
shed from 10 am
Take a break from
digging for a bacon
butty breakfast and
a chat.*



Sunday contact

Coffee mornings have started again !

Some regular customers enjoyed a social break in the Big Green Shed and a chat with coffee, teas, hot choc, biscuits, cakes!

Members, associate members and former members are all welcome to join us on the 2nd Sunday in the month from 10 am





DWT & SW NAS Wildlife Friendly Spaces Award

Working together, Dorset Wildlife Trust and the National Allotment Society (SW) would like to celebrate allotments that are taking action for nature and helping wildlife by awarding a certificate, valid for 3 years, and a plaque. To apply we need to send in photos that evidence 6 or more of these features/actions:

- * Native hedge
- * Trees and shrubs that flower and fruit
- * Wildlife meadow
- * Nectar and pollen rich flowers
- * Climbing plants
- * Water available at different heights
- * Pond, bucket pond or bog garden
- * Water saving and rainwater harvesting
- * Log pile, tree stump or stone pile
- * Bee home or insect home
- * Bat box, bird box or hedgehog house
- * Using only peat free compost
- * No chemicals, including slug pellets
- * Compost heap, wormery or homemade liquid fertilizer
- * Upcycle and reuse materials rather than buy new
- * Grow green manures
- * Sell excess produce, tools and equipment
- * Share wildlife knowledge and record what is seen on the site
- * Leave seed heads and dead stems
- * Promote wildlife friendly gardening in the community



Please look out and email to beas.communications@outlook.com or bring into the shop any photos you have from previous years. If brought in, please pencil your plot number on the back. We shall also need photos from this year, so please remember to take some to submit. It would be good to be the first society to win this award.

You could also apply for the award as an individual and win a smaller plaque. Here is the link if you are interested: [Wildlife-Friendly Spaces | Dorset Wildlife Trust](#)

If you have already received one of these individual awards, do let us know.




This Certificate was awarded to:

.....

On:

.....

In recognition for outstanding efforts to take action for wildlife at this allotment site.



NEW MEMBERS CORNER

SPRING ON THE PLOT

As the days lengthen and the earth warms up, your allotment needs plenty of attention. Here's a checklist for the season to help you get the best from your plot.

1. Soil Preparation:

- **Weed Out the Winter:** Begin by removing any lingering weeds. Clear the ground, and if you spot compacted soil, gently break it up.
- **Boost with Organic Matter:** Add a generous layer of compost or well-rotted manure. Your soil will thank you.

2. Sowing Seeds:

- **Peas, Spinach, Lettuce, and Radishes:** Sow seeds directly into the soil.
- **Carrots and Beetroots:** As our site soil is generally light and free-draining, sow these root crops now.

3. Pest Control:

- **Slugs and Snails:** These can wreak havoc especially after the prolonged wet season we have just had. Set up barriers, use organic slug pellets, or encourage hedgehogs and birds to your patch.
- **Netting:** A simple net can shield your tender seedlings from hungry birds.

4. Planting Out:

- **Timing Matters:** Wait until temperatures are consistently warm enough before planting out. Ensure your plants are hardy and have been "hardened off" (acclimatized to outdoor conditions).
- **Choose Wisely:** Opt for robust varieties that can withstand the unpredictable spring weather.
- **Successional planting** (planting a few every couple of weeks rather than all at once) will help against the unpredictable weather and avoid a glut of produce all at once.
- **Potatoes:** Plant First Early Potatoes from mid-March and Second Earlies a couple of weeks later. Maincrop Potatoes are usually planted in April.

Dig trenches about 30 cms apart to leave space for earthing up and put some compost in the trench. Plant potatoes about 12 cms apart.

5. Grow What you love to eat :

- If you'd cook it, grow it!

Habitat for wildlife

Trees on your allotment can be a valuable provision of habitat for wildlife. Apple and pear trees, in particular, tend to have plenty of blossom which will attract pollinators in the spring.

Insects, birds and small mammals can find a home in the branches. Fungi and organisms, on the tree as well as in the soil are an important element for biodiversity. Remember to keep trees well pruned, to maximise fruit production and to keep within the recommended limits for our site (2 metres max height and not overhanging paths or neighbours plots).

Any fruit and berries that you leave on the tree after harvest are food sources for wildlife. Windfalls which remain on the ground are a good food source for birds into the colder weather.

Dead wood and fallen leaves are great for the ecosystem and break down into mulch to add structure to the soil.

Other tips to help wildlife include

- putting bat boxes or birdboxes on your plot.
- Leave a small log pile or an undisturbed corner for hibernating hedgehogs or as a bug hotel.



Recipe - Spring Cabbage Stir-Fry

This time of year is sometimes called the 'hungry gap' before the new year's produce can be harvested, but you may still have winter cabbage, kale or spring greens that have overwintered and are available on your plot. These can be perfect for cut-and-come-again harvesting. Just pick some of the outer leaves and let the inner leaves continue to grow. They will continue to produce great tasting green vegetables until the end of spring when temperatures warm up and the plants run to seed. At that time the overwintered greens can be removed, freeing up space to plant other summer crops.



Here is a simple yet tasty and healthy recipe that can be adapted for any greens.

Ingredients:

- Spring cabbage (shredded)
- Carrots (julienned)
- Garlic (minced)
- Ginger (grated)
- Soy sauce
- Sesame oil
- Sesame seeds (for garnish)

Instructions:

1. Heat sesame oil in a wok or pan.
2. Add minced garlic and grated ginger.
3. Stir-fry shredded cabbage and julienned carrots until crisp-tender.
4. Drizzle with soy sauce.
5. Garnish with sesame seeds.
6. Serve as a side dish or over steamed rice.

Hope for Food

While you are planting seeds for summer veg, don't worry about planting too many seeds!!

If you have space to get them started, any extra plants are always welcome in the shop, and if you end up with more produce than you can use, fellow allotmenteer Peter D regularly cooks for the local charity 'Hope for food'. Excess fruit or veg is collected from the shop on a regular basis to support this endeavour.

Also in support of the same charity Pat Rodgers is knitting hats which are on sale for just £5 at our coffee mornings and through our shop.

Allotment Cook Book

available in the shop or contact beas.shopmanager@outlook.com

£7 for members (RRP £8.95)

