

# Cheltenham and District Allotment Holders' Association

**President: Councillor  
Christine Ryder**

[www.cheltenhamallotments.org](http://www.cheltenhamallotments.org)



*Affiliated to the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Limited and the Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies.*

## NEWSLETTER

## Autumn 2015

CHAIRMAN: Mr M D Hunt 6 Arle Close Cheltenham GL51 8JZ Tel: 01242 230609  
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Mrs D M Ashdown 20 Cromwell Road Cheltenham GL52 5DW Tel: 582008  
SECRETARY: Mrs R Boase Tel: 01242 802777 (and leave a message)  
TREASURER: Mr C A Smith 15 Dunster Road Cheltenham GL51 0NL Tel: 01242 523740  
NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Mr S Boase Tel: 01242 802777 (and leave a message)

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### Our September Meeting

**Monday, September 7<sup>th</sup> 2015 at 7 pm in the  
Municipal Offices**

Will Scott, from "The Walled Garden, Worcester" will give us a tool sharpening demonstration. Our members are invited to bring their knives, scissors, secateurs and shears for demonstrations.

Over the years Will and Julia Scott have created a delightful garden combining colour and scent from a host of herbs, flowers, vegetables and fruits. The garden is occasionally opened to the public as part of the National Garden Scheme charitable fundraising.

Raffle tickets will be on sale at the meeting.

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**Please note the details of our AGM, on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December at 7 pm in the Municipal Offices, Cheltenham. The Agenda will appear in the next edition of this newsletter.**

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### Cheltenham Horticultural Society

Some CDAHA members entered the CHS Summer Flower and Craft Show which took place on Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> August. I understand that the cherry tomato class received the most entries and that there were a number of successes. Congratulations to all the prize-winners!

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### Website report and new password

We now have an Ask a Question section on the website. If you would like some growing advice or

have a question about how to run an allotment then submit your question and we will do our best to give you an answer. You need to have a Facebook, Twitter or GooglePlus account to submit a question. The link is on the homepage.

In the last six months the website has received an average of 250 visitors per month. During 2015 we have received 23 membership applications via the website and also applications using the form downloaded from the website.

Popular articles include a monthly gardening column by Chris Evans of Dundry Nurseries, and the latest news and events available for members of the association.

There are also Members Pages with info about the association and back copies of the newsletter. If you haven't visited it yet, why not take a look. To access the Members Pages the password is **Winston**.

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### RHS Malvern Autumn Show

If you would enjoy an excellent day out I would recommend the forthcoming RHS Malvern Autumn Show. There are lots of things to do and see on this spacious showground.

It takes place on the weekend of 26<sup>th</sup> - 27<sup>th</sup> September 2015. Colin and Rosemary Smith will be there on the National Allotment Society stand and I'm sure they would be pleased to see you.

For more information or to pre-order your ticket, go to <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/malvern-autumn-show>

## Email addresses

If you are a new email user or have changed your email address, do please let me know. This ensures your receive this quarterly newsletter promptly as well as the occasional bulletin of topical news.

newsletter@cheltenhamallotments.org (Ed)

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## Meeting with Allotment Officer

In the Spring two members of the Committee represented the Association in a useful meeting with the Borough Council Allotment Officer. Various topics were raised including rent levels, designation of land for allotments, turnover of plots, Council allotment strategy, self management of sites, funding for Council sheds, appointment of voluntary wardens, and the possibility of commissioning the organisation of allotments to a letting agent.

For a full report see the members' section of our website. Alternatively I will have the details available at our AGM in December. *Ros Boase (Secretary)*

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## Edible Flowers

As you may know many varieties of flowers can be added to dishes to bring additional colour and flavour. For instance the flowers of nasturtium have a peppery taste comparable with watercress when added to salads. They can also be used to garnish steaks and casseroles.



Chive flowers can also be added to salads, omelettes or scrambled eggs. They have a crunchy texture and

have a mild onion flavour. In the Spring I'll suggest a couple more seasonal flowers you can use to brighten up your cuisine.



*My thanks to Rosemary Smith for suggesting this topic. (Ed)*

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## Aspirin Solution and Tomatoes

In the last edition I passed on the tip of spraying growing tomato plants with a dilute solution of aspirin. I have tried this on my Sweet Million variety and whilst it may be my imagination or wishful thinking I felt they really did seem sweeter than in previous years.



On reflection I think I should have left some plants not sprayed as a control but maybe I'll be a little more scientific next year! Did anyone else try it? If you did I'd like to hear if you thought it made a difference. (Ed)

## Miniature Wildlife Garden

Do you have a corner of your allotment you could spare to help wildlife? We all benefit from a bio-diverse ecosystem and growers can do their bit even on a small scale. The photograph of a mini wildlife garden on the Hatherley Road site illustrates what can be done using a tiny patch of ground.



An untidy heap of rocks and stones can provide shelter for insects and mason bees whilst a small pile of logs, sticks and twigs comprise a habitat for benign bugs and beetles. If you allow wild grasses to grow their full height the environment will be good for voles or shrews and for the crane fly grubs on which they like to feed.

You could easily construct a 'bug hotel' from a bundle of short bamboo canes packed into an old flowerpot and if you have access to a drill, bore holes in some softwood off-cuts. With luck you find that ladybirds, hoverflies, lacewings and solitary bees will find a home with you.



For a colourful display scatter a wild flower seed mix. The bees will visit and pollinate your vegetable and fruit flowers as well.



Lastly you could create a miniature wildlife pond so birds can call by to drink and bathe. It is important to have a shallow edge or a rock so amphibians can get out easily.

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## The Judges at Work



Judging for the competition has now taken place and the results will be announced, and trophies presented, at our AGM on Monday 7th December. Thank you to all who entered. Do encourage your allotment neighbours to have a go next year.

## Seed Scheme 2015 – 2016

If you are a new member, or have used the seed scheme before, an order pack will normally be delivered to you by volunteers. Please ensure that your allotment plot has a clearly visible number as this will expedite delivery. The pack comprises the Kings Seeds catalogue, an order form and a coloured summary sheet. If you have not received your pack by 30<sup>th</sup> September please call Mr Colin Smith on 01242 523740.

Our seed scheme, which is operated in conjunction with the National Society of Allotment and Leisure Gardeners Ltd. and Kings Seeds, offers good quality seeds at very favourable prices compared with Garden Centres and other retailers. Kings Seeds are one of the largest seed companies in the UK and also supply seeds to a large sector of the commercial market.

Again this year we are taking advantage of the option provided by the suppliers under which they make up individual member's orders prior to despatching the bulk order to us. The charge for this service is £1 which is already entered on the summary sheet. Please do not forget to add it in when calculating the total amount on the summary sheet.

The closing date for receipt of Seed Scheme orders is **Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015**

As before, **fruit bushes and asparagus** are ordered on the same sheet as the seeds. Delivery of these will be to your home address in March, weather permitting. Seeds will be available in late December and if they are required at that time please contact Colin Smith. Normal distribution will be in January.

Late orders for seeds etc. can be accepted but must be accompanied by an additional £3 to cover postage.

All you have to do is enter your requirements on the order form enclosed with the catalogue, total the value of your order, complete your details on the summary form and return it with your remittance to:

Mr Colin Smith, Linara, 15 Dunster Road, Cheltenham, GL51 0NL. **Please do not send to E W King & Co. You should retain the catalogue and send only the order form, summary sheet and remittance to Colin Smith.**

You may ignore the part on the order form which asks for your membership number which is intended for Societies or Associations and not individual members.

Please check with your catalogue and order form that you have ordered what you actually intended to order before sending your form. Your catalogue enables you to check your order on receipt of your seeds/plants. Please keep it safely.

Please complete your order form(s) and the coloured summary sheet and return them to Colin Smith together with your total remittance no later than Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November 2015

Please make cheques/postal orders payable to C&DAHA and do not send cash through the post.

**Please do not order seed potatoes from this catalogue as we will not accept them.** You will get a better deal at the Dundry Potato Festival.

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## MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION 2016

To: Mr. Colin Smith, 15 Dunster Road, Cheltenham, GL51 0NL

Please find enclosed £5.50 to renew my membership for 2016 (Please make cheques payable to (C&DAHA).

Name:.....(Please print)

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Email address:.....

Allotment site.....Plot No:.....