

Cheltenham and District Allotment Holders' Association

President: Alderman Christine Ryder

www.cheltenhamallotments.org



Affiliated to the National Allotment Society and the Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies.

NEWSLETTER

Spring 2020

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: 01242 582008
SECRETARY: Ms Layla Avaron, Tel: 01242 802777 (and leave a message)
TREASURER: Mr C A Smith, 15 Dunster Road, Cheltenham GL51 0NL. Tel: 01242 523740
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C&DAHA Spring Meeting

Monday March 2nd - Natasha Purdy - Jams and Preserves.

Tasha has a massive passion for making the most of the garden produce and promises us a fun evening with demonstrations and tasting. This is going to be a great talk with lots of information and inspiration. It's one thing to grow all this fruit and veg but Tash is going to give us top tips on making the most of it in the kitchen using different preserving methods and then what to do with our preserves. Jamming, caking and piemaking, chutney is not just for cheese. Pasta sauce, Curry sauce and lots more.

All meetings start at 7pm and are held at the Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham. All members are invited to attend.

Raffle tickets will be on sale, to be drawn at the end of the meeting.

Membership Subscriptions – see page 8

Membership subscriptions for 2020 became due on 1st of January 2020. The subscription is £6.50 for the year.

Advantages of membership include:

- The Seed Scheme (savings of approx. 40%)
- 10% discount at:
 - Dundry Nurseries, Bamfurlong Lane,
 - Cleeve Supplies, Tobyfield Rd,
- insurance giving public liability cover related to your plot,
- a Newsletter four times per year,
- three meetings per year – two with a guest speaker.

(Please inform your neighbour plot holders who are not members of these benefits).

Please note that this is the last newsletter that you will receive if you have not renewed your membership for 2020.

Website Passwords

C&DAHA Website

The new password for access to the members' area of our website is **Sorrel**, which I thought I would try growing this year.

National Website (nsalg.org.uk)

The Username is: s448b

Password: 1848327

Facebook

Follow us on Facebook, look us up under 'Cheltenham & District Allotment Holders Association', [here](#) is a link.

Information on the Internet

Visit <http://www.allaboutallotments.co.uk/>, this website contains a wealth of information about allotments.

Email addresses

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

IMPORTANT - SEE ITEM ON ASIAN HORNETS ON PAGE 7

Allotmenteeer Liability Insurance

At the end of each month, details are sent of all those who joined the C&DAHA that month, to the National Allotment Society. They then send me an email confirming that all those people are now covered by the Allotmenteeer Liability Insurance that they provide as part of our society's affiliation to them. All members who join before the 31st of January 2020 will be covered from 1st February 2020. Details of the insurance cover can be found here:

<https://www.nsalg.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/Member-Benefits-Allotments-19-02-2018.docx.pdf>

Dates for Your Diary

C&DAHA Meetings for 2020

Monday September 7th - TBA

Monday December 7th - Annual General Meeting

All meetings start at 7pm and are held at the Municipal Offices, Promenade, Cheltenham. All members are invited to attend.

An Essential Gardener's Guide and full day workshop with Mary Payne

Wednesday, March 11th, 2020, The Coach House Garden, Ampney Crucis, Near Cirencester. Mary Payne, well known for her lectures on pruning and common-sense approach to gardening, will demystify this vital but poorly understood aspect of horticultural practise. Cost £95, for more information and booking go to www.thegenerousgardener.co.uk or ring Mel Tanner 01285 850256

The Bounty and Benefits of the Kitchen Garden with Sarah Wain

Thursday April 2nd, 2020, The Coach House Garden, Ampney Crucis, Near Cirencester. A talk on how to maximise results over the growing season whether it be with vegetables, fruit, cut flowers or in the greenhouse. Cost £100, for more information and booking go to www.thegenerousgardener.co.uk or ring Mel Tanner 01285 850256

Cheltenham Horticultural Society Spring Flower Show

Sunday April 5th in the Pittville Pump Rooms from 12.30pm to 3.30pm. Admission: Adults £2.00, Children under 16 – Free.

Full details, including the show schedule, can be found on the CHS website, please click on this link cheltenhamhorticultural.co.uk. You can also contact The Chairman, Dot Ward, with any queries on 01242 579750.

The following classes are 'open' and anyone can enter.

Section A – Daffodils Classes 4-9, please see the schedule for details.

Section B – Plants Growing in a Container, all classes, please see the schedule for details.

Section H – Vegetables:

- 100. Three stems of forced Rhubarb
- 101. One Winter Vegetable

- 102. Three different Winter Vegetables
- 103. One Flower and one Vegetable grown by yourself
- 104. The heaviest Leek.

Section J – Seasonal Fun (ages 4 – 100):

- 110. A decorated hard-boiled egg.
- 111. Animal made from recycled material.
- 112. Chicken made from soft material (knitting wool, felt etc.).

Section D – Floral Art, all classes, please see the schedule for details.

Section E – Junior Exhibits, all classes, please see the schedule for details.

RHS Malvern Spring Festival

Thursday 7th to Sunday 10th May, 9am – 6pm each day. For full details see the website <https://www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/malvern-spring-festival>

Ashton under Hill Open Gardens

Saturday 13th & Sunday 14th June, 1pm to 6pm. Further details at www.ashtonopengardens.co.uk

MyHarvest

A research team at the University of Sheffield are working with members of the public growing food in allotments, gardens and other own-growing spaces across the UK to understand the yield of typical UK staple fruit and vegetable crops. If you would like to participate, details of how you can do this can be found on their website myharvest.org.uk.

Request for Committee Members

The current C&DAHA committee does not have representatives from all the allotment sites in Cheltenham. We would very much like to have people on the committee from every site so that we can fully represent the views of our members. The committee meets for about 2 hours 4 times a year. If you could spare that time, please let one of the members listed at the top of the front page know. We need members from the following sites:

Blacksmiths Lane, Reddings Road, Hatherley Road, Charlton Kings Parish Allotments (Croft, Haver, Sappercombe & Ryeworth), Severn Road, Hayden Lane.

Winter Events

Cheltenham Borough Council (CBC) Allotment Competition Award Ceremony – 22nd November

The CBC Allotment competition award ceremony was held in the Municipal Offices, it was hosted by the Mayor, Roger Whyborn. A talk was given by Councillor Diggory Seacome about a Caring for Communities & People project being run on a plot on the Hayden lane site. The project title is 'Come Grow with Us' and it is aimed at helping people with mental health problems and vulnerable adults. Starting with an overgrown plot in April 2019, the plot is now looking very tidy and they are in need of more space. Any surplus food they produce goes to local food banks.

Fiona Warin, the CBC Allotment officer gave a talk on how she became the allotment officer, then the awards were presented by the Mayor. The following prizes were awarded to members of the C&DAHA.

Best New Tenant

Highly Commended

Kellie Brown & Stephen Dowle - Alma Rd

General – Senior Section

Highly Commended

Horace & Maline Webb - Hayden Rd

Brian Sloan - Hatherley Rd

Peter Bogle & Jeff Messenger – Alma Rd

John Rendell – Midwinter

Third Place

David Lake – Asquith Rd

Second Place

Serena Meredith

First Place

Jenny Spooner – Reddings Rd



Best Wardens Plot

Third - Peter Cadogan – Asquith Rd

Second – Chris West – Alma Rd

First & Wardens Cup– Brian Bailey – Redding Road

Best Kept Site

Third – Alma Rd

Second – Hatherley Rd

First – Reddings Rd

The Chris Colman Cup was awarded to Mark Ewing at Warden Hill

The Townsend Rose Bowl for the Best individual plot was awarded Brian Bailey – Reddings Rd.



C&DAHA 43rd AGM

The C&DAHA 43rd AGM was held on the 2nd December 2019 at 7pm at the Municipal Offices.

Alderman Chris Ryder gave the President's address, she said the year seemed to have gone so quickly. It seemed to her that allotments give people so much pleasure. It's worth remembering that sites can only be redeveloped if they are underused, so we need to be vigilant in making sure there are not too many vacant plots. She thanked everyone for coming to the meeting.

Our Chairman, Mike Hunt, said how useful Chris's knowledge and contacts have been to the Association. He thanked Diane Ashdown for being someone he could bounce ideas off and thanked Colin Smith for all the work he has put into the Association over the years as treasurer, membership secretary and running the seed scheme. He thanked Layla Avaron for her support as secretary, Kate Smith for the newsletter and Dennis Sutton for organising our stall at the potato weekend amongst the many other things he does for the Association.

Claire Plowright had made some beautiful bouquets of winter plant material; Layla gave these out to the members of the committee.





Our Treasurer reported that financially the society was in much the same position as last year, we expect income to be slightly down on last year as there will be no income from the Malvern Shows. The outgoings are lower as the NAS now provides third party insurance to members and the Gloucestershire Federation of Gardening Societies provides the insurance for our stand at events such as the Potato Festival.

Our auditor, Fiona Jones, is moving away from Cheltenham so someone will be needed to take her place. Chris Ryder said that we also need to find another purpose for our cups, any ideas from members would be welcomed. This year the Chris Ryder cup was presented to Mike Hunt for all the work he does for the association (see picture above).

Under Any Other Business, Mike Hunt said that some members who have allotments on the Hayden Lane site had contacted him because they had seen a plan on which their site was shown as a possible site for a housing development. Mike contacted Cheltenham Borough Council and Fiona Warin, the allotment officer, spoke to the Head of Planning, they said that they knew nothing about this and that there was intention to build houses on that site.

Potato Festival – Dundry Nurseries

The Potato Festival took place on Saturday 18th and Sunday 19th January.



The C&DAHA stand at the potato festival



Relaxing after a busy morning



Help needed – there's too much choice (150 varieties)

We signed up 2 new members over the 2 days and 4 members dropped by to renew their subscription.

I understand Saturday was a very busy day with Sunday being much quieter. Despite being on the Stand at the warmest time of day, and being well wrapped up, I still seem to manage to go home with frozen toes ❄️

Tips, Tales, Wanted and Offered

No Dig – Request

In November last year, Helen Johnston, Administrative Officer for Charlton Kings Parish Council contacted the C&DAHA. One of her roles is to support the Allotments Committee. A current area of interest is 'No dig'. Some people may be aware that I have been a 'No dig' gardener for many years, but I don't consider myself any sort of expert though so I pointed her towards Charles Dowding, his website charlesdowding.co.uk/ contains a wealth of information. The Committee looked into asking Mr Dowding to give a talk, but the cost was too great (£460 + £90 travel), so they have come up with the idea of some panel-led session (like a Gardener's Question Time) with some of their own allotment holders who practise the 'No dig' system and asked if any of our members would be able to support such and event. I have said that I would be willing to do so, if there anyone else who is a member of the C&DAHA who would be willing to take part, please can you contact me, Kate Smith, newsletter@cheltenhamallotments.org, or phone 01242 257718. I don't know when this might take place at the moment.

John's Organic Tips

1 Start seedlings in eggs shells

Make a drainage hole in the bottom, fill with moist compost, place seed and cover. When planting on or out, lightly crush the shell and plant the crushed shell into the ground.

2 Home Made Fertiliser

Blend eggshells and kitchen waste to a thin soup then add some to a watering can, dilute to 1 part soup to 20 parts water, then water around hungry plants.

3 Keeping Tools Clean and Rust Free

Add 2 cups of used cooking oil to a bucket of soft sand and mix together. Keep small tools in the mixture.

4 Organic Weed Killer

Mix together ½ litre of white vinegar, 2 tablespoons of salt and 1 teaspoon of lemon juice. Heat until all the salt is dissolved then add 1 teaspoon of washing up liquid. Leave to cool and store until needed. Spray only onto weeds and watch them die.

Update on PAS100 compost – from Scott

Scott had a load of PAS100 compost delivered in early December 2018, this is an update on how it performed.

The material has retained its structure and its dark appearance. It has remained on the surface throughout the year, so it needs to be dug in if the intention is to incorporate it. It did not make any obvious great difference to plant growth (compared to the spent mushroom compost I used the year before, which gave most of the vegetables a real boost)

I will use a mixture of both this year, the PAS100 will help with my heavy soil, the mushroom compost will give the veg a good feed.

It would make a good growing medium for new deep beds, especially those with heavy soils.

Coffee Grinds – Bill's Restaurant, Regent Street

If any members C&DAHA would be interested in their used coffee grinds, members are welcome to pop in and collect them whenever they like (Please take a container with you). They have room to store them if someone would like to collect them in bulk at intervals. If anyone is interested, please contact Ella, ella@bills-email.co.uk, 07519 070651, or drop in and ask about them.

VHS Tapes Wanted

Dundry Nurseries are involved in recycling as a way of raising money for the butterfly garden. If you have any tapes that you do not want, please can you take them to the nursery, there is a container at the back of the nursery for them to be put in.

Kate's Allotment – Winter

Back in November I was thinking I really needed some mushroom compost, so I asked Google where I could get some from. Up came Shurdington Nurseries, I had passed their sign many times but never been there. They had 50 litre bags, but that was quite expensive for the quantity I wanted, or I could have a truck load delivered to my drive at what seemed a very reasonable price (if you have a trailer, you can collect and thus do away with the delivery charge). The last time I had mushroom compost delivered from the Evesham Market Gardener, Gary Andrews, I had 32 bags, he says the bags are about 100litres each. By my reckoning, if I wanted about the same amount this time, I should get 3 cubic metres. So, on 26th November I had 3 cubic metres of lovely warm mushroom compost delivered, it was a cold bright still day and the heap of compost steamed in the winter sun. Wow, it seemed a much greater amount than I was expecting! In my shock and awe, I didn't think to take a photo. Since that time my lovely, kind husband has been trundling wheelbarrow loads down to my allotment, the garden has also received some as well and there is still more to go.



There are a few more leeks to be eaten, you can see on the beds in this picture, the lovely dark brown colour of the mushroom compost.



Pigeons continue to be a nuisance, these flower sprouts (and all my other brassicas) have to be covered. The flower sprouts have been very good, the pigeons have just eaten the vegetation at the top where they could get at it. I'm going to grow them all in cages tall enough that the brassicas won't reach the top next year.



I like to keep planting leeks right through the year so that even in winter there are some nice small ones to put in risottos (above left are Below Zero). The trug in the righthand picture shows my final carrot harvest plus some nice brussels sprouts (Half Tall – the plants actually seemed much the same height as other Brussels sprout varieties) and flower sprouts.

This year I'm trying a few different potatoes, as well as the usual pink fir apple, I'm trying Sarpo Kifli and Verdi, I'm always looking for the 'resistant to all bugs and diseases' but still tastes good varieties. I was disappointed with Athlete last year. I'm also going to try growing sorrel to add to salads and a variety of kale called Emerald Ice. I found that the spinach variety 'red kitten' goes to seed very quickly in warm weather, so this year I thought I would try 'Giant Winter' and Amazon F1 instead. I'm going to try growing some tomatoes outdoors this year. It's always good to try something new.

Relevant Suppliers

Gardening Gloves

For gardening gloves and hand care products, have a look at www.lovelyhands.co.uk, Claire Wiseman is based in Cheltenham and runs 'Lovely Hands' as an on-line business.

Coffee Sacks

Kate Davis stocks 'coffee sacks', which some gardeners find useful. She is local, her email address is katedavis968@hotmail.com, phone: 07583 905922.

The sacks are £2.00 each with discount for bulk buying.

Specialist Garden & Pet Bedding Supplier

E-coco Products UK are a specialist supplier based in Bredon. They supply peat free composts for orchids, citrus, chillies and many other plants and organic substrates for chicken bedding and other small animals. You can contact them through their website e-cocoproducts.co.uk, Email ecocoproductsuk@gmail.com, Tel: 07792 116164.

Bulk suppliers of Manures/Composts

Horse Manure

Home Farm Equestrian Centre, Brockhampton Lane, Swindon Village, GL51 9RS

www.homefarmequestriancentre.co.uk

Mushroom Compost

Shurdington Nurseries, Whitelands Lane, Little Shurdington, GL51 4TX, open Mon-Fri 08.00 – 17.00, Sat: 08.00 – 13.00 Tel: 01242 863738

They can supply in bulk or in bags.

Wholesale Supplier of Gardening Products and Tools

K G Loach, www.kgloach.co.uk, 01260 275902

KG Loach have been around for around 50 years, as they are a wholesale supplier, they would be of use if you can get together with fellow allotmenters to buy in bulk.

Recipe – Mild chickpea, carrot & pepper curry

This recipe comes from Waitrose + a few corrections.

Serves 2

Prepare 10 minutes (more like 20 I think)

Cook 30 minutes

- 1 tbsp liquid coconut oil**
- 3 mixed red, yellow & orange peppers, deseeded and cut into chunky pieces
- 1 large onion, thinly sliced
- 1 tbsp curry leaves (fresh or dried)
- 2 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 400gm can chickpeas, drained.
- 2 medium carrots, diced
- 1 tbsp Marigold Vegan Vegetable Bouillon (or similar)
- 1 tsp Chaat Masala ***
- 1 tsp Garam Masala ***
- 125gm Brown Basmati Rice

** I couldn't find liquid coconut oil, so just use the normal solid sort found in the supermarket.

*** The recipe says 2-3 tsp Chaat Masala to taste, but I found 2 tsp tasted far too salty so substituted 1 tsp Garam Masala which, for me, works very well.

1 Heat half the coconut oil in a frying pan and fry the peppers for about 8 minutes until lightly browned. Remove to a plate. Add the remaining oil to the pan with the onions. Fry for 5 minutes. Stir in the curry leaves and garlic, and fry for another 2 minutes.

2 Tip the chickpeas and carrots into the pan and stir in the bouillon and 250ml water. Bring to a simmer, cover and cook gently for 10 minutes until the carrots are tender. Use a fork to crush some of the chickpeas, which will thicken the juices slightly.

3 Stir in the peppers, chaat and garam masala, and cook for a further 5 minutes, adding a dash of hot water if needed. Season.

Cook the rice and serve with the curry. I usually find if I start the rice cooking when I start frying the peppers, everything ends up cooked at about the same time.

Many thanks to all who have provided input to this newsletter 🌟🏆

ASIAN HORNET

Vespa velutina

What is it?

An invasive non-native hornet originally from Asia. Suspected records should be reported immediately. A highly aggressive predator of native insects, posing a significant threat to honey bees and other pollinators. Accidentally introduced to France in 2004 where it spread rapidly. A number of sightings have been recorded in the UK since 2016.



Where might I see it?

Most likely to be seen close to bee hives - bee keepers should be alert. Active from February to November in suburban areas in the south of England and Wales, or around major ports.

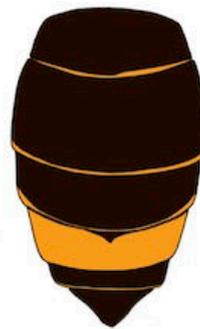
What does it look like?

Distinctive hornet, smaller than our native species. A key feature is the almost entirely dark abdomen, except for the 4th segment which is yellow.

- Slightly smaller than native hornet
- Dark abdomen, 4th segment yellow
- Bright yellow tips to legs (native hornet dark)
- Entirely brown or black thorax (native hornet more orange)

Asian Hornet abdomen

Native Hornet abdomen



- Makes very large nests



- 'Hawks' outside honey bee colonies killing bees as they attempt to defend their hive

DANGER!

This hornet stings. Do not disturb an active nest. Seek advice using the details below.

For more information or to report any sightings please go to:

www.nonnativespecies.org/alerts/asianhornet

or email: alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk

If you have an iPhone or Android, download the free recording app:

Asian Hornet Watch

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION 2020
Please ensure you fill in all sections and sign the form

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

Please find enclosed my **£6.50** joining fee/membership renewal subscription for 2020

Name.....(Please print)

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Email address.....

Telephone No: Daytime..... Mobile.....

Allotment Site..... Plot No (s).....

Consent: C&DAHA will hold the above data in electronic format. The data will only be used for the purposes specified in our data protection statement (see below).

By submitting this form, you are agreeing to this data being stored and used as described below.

Please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope if you are applying by post in order to receive your membership card.

✂.....

Data Protection Statement

To conform to the new General Data Protection Regulations the Association is required to obtain your consent to hold your contact details. The holding of a mailing list under the regulations is "**considered as legitimate and expected**".

We will always store your personal details securely.

Data held: Your name, address, telephone number, email address, allotment site and plot number.

How we use the data: We will use it to provide the services we offer you, namely:

- to send out the C&DAHA newsletter by post or e-mail,
- to send you magazines, details of upcoming events or other relevant information
- to make available the monthly blog
- to enable you to participate in the Kings seed scheme.

The data will also be used by the committee for purposes of your opting into the Allotmenteeer Liability Insurance. This information will be forwarded to the National Allotment Society who will send it to Shield Total Insurance who guarantee to store it securely.

Time frame data stored: Data will be kept for one year after termination of membership.

Sharing data: Your data will be shared with Kings Seeds, The National Allotment Society and Shield Total Insurance only.

Member rights: You have the right to have your name removed from the list, to obtain all details held about you, to have your history deleted, to change your details and to complain to the Information Commissioner's Office. Please inform the Treasurer if you wish to exercise any of the above rights.

Consent: The Association is required to hold evidence of your consent to its holding of the contact information. There is an item on the joining/renewal form asking you to consent to our storing the information you have given and for us to contact you to send you information related to the Association's activities. You should keep a copy of your consent/renewal form along with this document.

Chairman of the Cheltenham and District Allotment Holders' Association May 2018