

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

Autumn 2025

PRESIDENT	Alderman Christine Ryder
CHAIRMAN	Mr M D Hunt
VIDE-CHAIRMAN	Mrs D M Ashdown
SECRETARY	Ms Layla Avaron, secretary@cheltenhamallotments.org
TREASURER	Ms K Smith, treasurer@cheltenhamallotments.org
MEMBERSHIP	Ms K Smith, membership@cheltenhamallotments.org
SEED SCHEME	Mr P James, Mr C Pearce, seeds@cheltenhamallotments.org
NEWSLETTER	Mrs K McCarthy, newsletter@cheltenhamallotments.org

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Chris Ryder, President

Midwinter

Michael Hunt
Diana Ashdown
Layla Avaron
Claire Plowright

Asquith Road

Dennis Sutton
Alex Robinson

Alma Road

Kate Smith

Swindon Village

Chaz Pearce

Hall Road

Phil James

All Saints

Diana Hale

C&DAHA can be contacted by telephone: 01242 802777 (and leave a message)

Membership Advantages

- The Kings Seeds Scheme (savings of approx. 40%), now including online ordering
- 10% discount at Dundry Nurseries, Bamfurlong Lane (<https://www.dundrynurseries.co.uk>)
- 10% discount at Valley Roundabout Nurseries, Badgeworth Road, on production of membership card
- Insurance giving public liability cover related to your plot and allotment related shows/events you attend
- Newsletter four times per year
- Online access to the National Allotment Society quarterly magazine 'Allotment and Leisure Gardener'
- National Allotment Society Newsletter four times per year
- Three or four meetings per year – two with a guest speaker
- We offer support, guidance and advice to our members

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

Allotmenters Liability Insurance

Allotmenter Liability Insurance is provided by the National Allotment Society as part of our association's affiliation to them. Details of the insurance cover can be found here: <https://www.nsalg.org.uk/join-us/allotmenters-liability-insurance>. Please note that members details are only passed to the insurer in the event of a claim.

Dear Member,




I'm delighted to have taken on the role of newsletter editor and look forward to hearing about your allotment successes and challenges over the course of the year. I have a plot at Asquith Road and am on my third year – still very much a newbie!

I've worked in communications for many years and my allotment offers me much-needed time away from my desk.

Working full-time has certainly presented its challenges for the allotment this year; it's been impossible to get there every day to water. With the sustained heat, I haven't seen as much growth as I would like but have had a strong crop from the raspberries and blackberries. With drought status now upon us, I'd be really interested in your top tips for drought-resistant crops and methods.

The theme of **Allotments and Wellbeing** for National Allotments Week resonated strongly with me, as my allotment is my place for calm and peace. My favourite book on this subject is *The Wild Remedy – How Nature Heals Us*, by Emma Mitchell.

 Another new face is James McLean, who has taken on the role of Allotment and Public Realm Officer at Cheltenham Borough Council. Perhaps not that new a face though – James has had an allotment at the Asquith Road site for the past 9 years, and has been volunteering on site for the last 5 years. He also worked at Dundry Nurseries for almost 30 years. Welcome, James, we look forward to hearing from you.

Newsletter submissions

Please do send me any news, tips, recollections, issues, photos or anything you feel others may enjoy for future newsletters.

We would like to invite representatives from **ALL** of our sites to be on the committee. With so much development going on in the area, our plots are potentially under threat and, when that time comes, C&DAHA will be needed to help. If your site does not have a representative, please consider stepping forward.

Best wishes,

Katy

Katy McCarthy, Newsletter Editor, newsletter@cheltenhamallotments.org

Website Passwords

C&DAHA Website (<https://www.cheltenhamallotments.org>)

The new password for access to the members' area of our website is **Snowball**, a compact cauliflower.

National Allotment Society Website (<https://thenas.org.uk>)

Username is **s448b**, Password is **1848327**

You can now create your own account, click on 'Forgot your username and/or password', you will be requested to enter your email address (it must be the one registered with our Membership Secretary). If you have any problems, contact membership@cheltenhamallotments.org.

If you log into the members area of the NAS website, you can read the latest edition of the NAS quarterly magazine 'Allotment and Leisure Gardener'.

<https://www.nsalg.org.uk/members-area/the-allotment-and-leisure-gardener-magazine/>

Facebook

Follow us on Facebook, find us at '[Cheltenham & District Allotment Holders Association](#)'.

Email addresses

If you are a new email user or have changed your email address, please contact membership@cheltenhamallotments.org.

Dates for Your Diary

C&DAHA Meetings for 2025

Monday September 1st, 2025 – The Brown Jug, Leckhampton, 7pm

In this entertaining and informative talk, Adam Alexander takes us on a journey around the world as he tracks down rare and endangered, but above all, delicious vegetables to grow, save seed from and share. Along the way he includes tips and tricks for saving seeds of many of the varieties he loves to grow and why when we save seeds from our gardens we build resilience into future planting.

Visit his website at <https://theseeddetective.co.uk>

This is an open meeting so members and non-members are invited to attend. The Brown Jug very kindly let us use the function room for a reduced rate. Please support us and them by buying a drink. Raffle tickets will be on sale, to be drawn at the end of the meeting and will cost £1 per strip.

Monday December 1st, 2025 – AGM

Venue TBA, starting at 7 pm. All members are invited to attend. Raffle tickets will be on sale, to be drawn at the end of the meeting and will cost £1 per strip.

Other Forthcoming Events

Saturday September 6th, 2025 – Coach Trip to RHS Bridgewater

Organised by Stonehouse Gardening Club. Coach + Entry = Members £22/ Non-members £26. See www.stonehousegardeningclub.com.

Sunday September 14th, 2025 – GFGS Open Chrysanthemum & Dahlia Show

Dundry Nurseries 1 - 4pm. See <https://www.gfgs.org.uk/shows/default.htm>.

September 26-28th, 2025 – Malvern Autumn Festival

See <https://malvernautumn.co.uk/>.

Member Updates

Jane Edwards, Ryeworth Allotments

This is my first year growing Patty Pans. I did not know of them before my daughter gave me seed packets for Christmas. I was informed by my daughter they shouldn't be much more than 2 inches when picked. They are a prolific grower and very tasty. Cook like you would a courgette. I believe you can hollow out the middle and stuff them too when they are bigger.



Dennis Sutton, Asquith Road Allotments



Bees have learned that they do not need to force open the flower to gain access to the nectar. They make a hole in the base of the flower, insert their proboscis and suck out the nectar. (Left - a bee in action) This means that cross pollination (or any pollination) is not achieved. I have observed this behaviour in both bumble bees and honey bees. Is this why the majority of flowers have fallen off my bean plants? Or have I given them insufficient water, or has the ambient temperature been too high for beans to develop?

Congratulations to Dennis, who was awarded the Ellis Cup for the best vegetable and fruit exhibit in the recent Cheltenham Horticultural Society Summer Show. The lettuce variety is Analena which is a very good Butterhead variety.



Recipe: Self crusting potato and vegetable quiche (or Nancy New Zealand's Crustless Flan)

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 large chopped onion• 2 garlic cloves• 1 tbsp butter• 3 eggs• salt• 1 cup of milk• half a cup of self-raising flour• 2 cooked potatoes, cubed• 1 cup of drained cooked asparagus, spinach, mushrooms, broccoli or any other vegetables• 1 cup of grated cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cook the onion and garlic in butter and cool• Stir in the eggs, salt and milk and beat with a fork• Pour this into a large bowl containing the flour and stir with a fork until combined• Add the vegetables and cheese• Thoroughly oil a 20 - 23cm flan dish and pour in the mixture• Garnish with tomatoes• Bake for 20 - 30 mins at 220 until lightly brown and set in the centre.
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National Allotment Society Annual General Meeting 2025 – Dennis Sutton's report



I represented C&DAHA at the AGM on June 14 at the Woodlands Conference Centre near Leamington Spa. A full report will appear in the NAS magazine but here are a few headlines.

Interim President, Jeff Barber, reported on the main activities in the past year. These included an increase in the membership and that ways to increase membership further are being implemented. Personnel and role changes at HQ, training sessions for local councils, working with the various agencies to protect and promote allotments nationally were reported. The Society had a presence at a number of shows and other events where regional teams were able to engage with the public and promote the society. He was pleased to report that Adam Frost had agreed to become an ambassador for the Society.

The Chair, Mike Farrell, reported a growth in membership including an interest in membership by younger membership keen to learn about self-sufficiency and community growing initiatives. He then briefly outlined the topics covered by the interim President. Looking ahead, he reported plans to expand online resources, lobbying for increased allotment land, especially in new housing developments and stronger partnerships with schools and community groups.

The Company Secretary, Sonia Gallacher, reported that HRH King Charles III had agreed to continue as our Patron, the new website and the updating of the member area including the updating of support information.

Jeff Davies, Treasurer, reported a stable and healthy financial situation, presented the detailed, audited accounts and reported there would be no increase in membership fee in 2025.

There followed a tedious period where there were objections to the fact that a proposal had been put forward by the management committee which was claimed to be illegal. Part of this proposal was to not present the following 10 published proposals. This motion was lost so we had then to vote on these 10 motions. I think all were carried.

The chair of the Governance committee then Reported that a review of the Society's boards, related governance structures and operations needed to be reviewed given the external changes and pressures. They would report to the AGM in 2026.

There followed the usual elections, presentations and thanks which you can read about in the later newsletter.

Outside the formal AGM there were two presentations.

Sarah Foss spoke on the subject of "The Value of Earthworms for allotments". We learned about the number of species worldwide (3,000), their classification and the type of burrow the different groups made. She listed the benefits of earthworms in terms of their impact on soil structure and fertility, much of which we are familiar with. She was in favour of adding as much compost as possible and of using a 'no dig' approach.

Russell Atwood spoke about his 'no dig' approach. He talked about "lasagne gardening" involving his "flat compost heap" where several layers of compostable material are spread over the whole of his vegetable plot. Mr. Atwood referred to Charles Darwin's work on Earthworms and to Charles Dowding's work on no dig methodology. He talked about the materials he uses for his compost to produce a layer 6 inches thick! He listed the materials he used including grass cuttings. It seemed that he spent his whole life sourcing compostable materials to the extent that few of us could afford to do.

Andrew Topley of Kings Seeds was present with some free seeds which disappeared at a great rate.

Seed Scheme 2025 – 2026

This year we are delivering an order pack to all members, with the Kings Seeds catalogue, an order form, a summary sheet and a membership joining/renewal form. If you have not received your pack by **30th September**, please contact Mr Chaz Pearce on 07947 109864.

Our seed scheme, which is operated in conjunction with the National Allotment Society 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 supplies seeds to a large sector of the commercial market.

Not only is the cost of the seeds greatly reduced, but C&DAHA earns commission on each order which is higher for seed orders completed and delivered to Kings Seeds by 14th November 2025. This helps to keep our membership subscription low.

Ordering using the Kings Seeds Order Form

Kings Seeds make up individual member's orders prior to despatching the bulk order to us, they charge **£1.95** for this service, 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. Please ensure you include your **home address** on the **Kings Seeds Order Form**.

You should ignore the part of the order form which asks for your membership number as this is intended for Societies or Associations and not individual members.

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

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. Please ensure you include your home address on the Kings Seeds Order Form and the delivery charge of **£4.00**.

Please complete your Kings Seeds Order Form, the coloured Summary Sheet and the Membership Form and return them together with your remittance no later than **Friday 17th October, 2025**, to: Mr Chaz Pearce, 37 Wymans Lane, Swindon Village, Cheltenham, GL51 9QH. **Please do not send to E W King & Co.**

Please make cheques/postal orders payable to "C&DAHA" and do not send cash through the post. You can also pay by bank transfer to: The Cheltenham & District Allotment Holders Ass, Sort code: 08 92 99 Account No: 65189063, Reference 'Seeds 2025'.

Late orders for seeds etc. can be accepted but must be accompanied by an additional **£3.50** to cover postage.

Seed collection will be from the AGM on Monday 1st December 2025 or from C&DAHA HQ in Asquith Road on Saturday 6th December 2025 between 12pm and 4pm or by arrangement with Chaz Pearce 07947 109864. Please ensure you indicate your collection choice on the Seed Summary Sheet. You should retain the catalogue and send only the order form, summary sheet and remittance to Chaz Pearce.

Please check with your catalogue and order form that you have ordered what you actually intended to order before sending your form. Please either take a copy of your order form or keep a list of what you have ordered or mark what you have ordered in your catalogue. Please keep them safely as this enables you to check your order on receipt of your seeds/plants.

If anything about using the Seed Scheme is unclear, please contact Chaz Pearce, or another member of the committee listed on the first page, for clarification.

Online ordering

Now that all members are able to have an online account with Kings Seeds, you can make your order using your account using the Digital Seed Catalogue and it has the same prices as the paper catalogue. When you order online, you can choose either to have the items delivered directly to your home address or added to the C&DAHA's group order. This option will be at the Delivery Address stage of the checkout process and C&DAHA will make the group order soon after the 17th October deadline. The arrangements for collecting orders made using the group order option are the same as if you had made a paper order.

The charge for having your order added to the group order is £1.95, the same as if you were making the order with the sheets we have supplied with the catalogue. Orders must be completed by 17th October, and can be collected in December.

The charge for having the order delivered directly to your home is £2.60. Orders should be completed by 14th November for the club to receive the higher rate commission. Delivery should be within 3 working days.

Please email seeds@cheltenhamallotments.org if you have any questions, or would like to have a Kings Seeds online account.

Suppliers

Dundry Nurseries (<https://www.dundrynurseries.co.uk>) and **Valley Roundabout Nurseries** (Badgeworth Road) offer us a very generous discount of 10%. Please help support them as much as you can.

Garden Essentials

Food Loose in Cheltenham sells plastic free gardening items. Currently they keep seaweed fertiliser. You can find them at 15 Grosvenor Terrace, Cheltenham, GL52 2SA Tel: 01242 894700. Their website is <https://foodloose.tillex.co.uk>

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.

Soil Testing

Safe Soil UK offer a range of soil testing services from basic fertility to tests for various types of contaminants as shown on their website: www.safesoil.co.uk. You can contact them through their website, or phone Robert Galster on 07795 486 409 or email him at rgalster@safesoil.co.uk

Horticultural Supplies

For mushroom, other composts and bulk supplies try Shurdington Nurseries: Tel: 01242 863738 <https://www.shurdingtonnurseries.co.uk/>. They are a family run business, if you can't find what you are looking for on their website, phone them and ask as their website generally doesn't show everything they sell.