

# ROEHAMPTON GARDEN SOCIETY

FOUNDED 1873

## MONTHLY BULLETIN

February 2014

[www.roehamptonallotments.co.uk](http://www.roehamptonallotments.co.uk)



FRIENDS OF  
PUTNEY LIBRARY

'GARDENERS' QUESTION TIME'

WEDNESDAY, 26TH MARCH, 7-9PM

PUTNEY LIBRARY



Panel of experts on all types of gardening  
will answer questions on flowers, vegetables,  
trees, allotments, balconies, containers

Email questions to:

[friendsofputneylibrary@gmail.com](mailto:friendsofputneylibrary@gmail.com)

**BOOK YOUR PLACE NOW!**

## WILDLIFE WORKSHOP

**ONLY 15 PLACES AVAILABLE**

**SUNDAY 27<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 1 – 3 pm**

**at Store on Site 2 (The Pleasance)**

An interactive workshop with in-depth discussion, tips and practical skills on how to make your allotment attractive to all sort of wildlife, especially amphibians and reptiles.

To book your place please contact Jackie on 07508 559134 or [jisavage@talktalk.net](mailto:jisavage@talktalk.net)

## **CHAIR'S REPORT MARCH 2014**

Let's hope we can get on to our plots soon as I know we are all anxious to get started. As we may still get frosts don't forget to have plenty of horticultural fleece (2 metres wide and 50p a metre in the Store) to hand.

**EVENTS:** This month sees our participation in the first Gardeners' Question Time organised by the Friends of Putney Library – come along to the Library on Wednesday March 26<sup>th</sup> at 7pm and join in. Also please don't forget to let me know if you would to join the free Wildlife Workshop in our Store on Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> April from 1 -3pm. Only 15 places available and filling up fast. Full details of all events are posted on Notice Boards and the Website as well as in the Bulletins.

### **COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY PROPOSAL:**

Following the discussion at the AGM, the subcommittee is preparing a proposal to present to you at an extraordinary meeting in April or May. As soon as we have a date we will let you know.

### **GARDENING MAKES YOU HAPPY:**

The results of a recent survey by Natural England and Defra will come as no surprise to us. It showed overall life satisfaction is particularly high among gardeners, but I was interested to read that it was even higher amongst those who also participated in unpaid voluntary work. See the full report [www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/evidence/mene.aspx](http://www.naturalengland.org.uk/ourwork/evidence/mene.aspx).

We always need volunteers and are still looking especially for someone with accountancy skills. There are opportunities to give as much or as little time as you would like – please contact me or speak to a committee member. Thank you.

**Jackie Savage, Chair**  
**[jisavage@talktalk.net](mailto:jisavage@talktalk.net)**  
**07508 559134**

## **RENTS 2014**

Rents are due from **1 April**. We will be available to take your rent in the Store on Site 2 on any Sunday morning in April, between 10.00 am and 12 noon, or on Wednesday April 9, 16, 23 and 30, between 6 and 7 pm.

Please email/contact the Treasurer at:

[chrominska@fsmail.net](mailto:chrominska@fsmail.net)  
or on 020 878 5083) if you are unable to come to the Store at any of these times and would like to send a cheque for the amount due.

If you wish to calculate the **rent** that you will owe in April, the table below will help you. If you were born on, or before, 1 April 1949 you will qualify for the Senior (over 65) rate.

<b>Allotment rents 2014/15</b>	<b>£ per rod</b>	<b>% increase</b>
Full rate	20.30	4.10
Senior rate (over 65)	16.35	4.14
Disabled rate	15.60	4.00

In addition you will need to pay the **RGS subscription** of £1.50 if you were born on or before 1 April 1954 (the concession rate) or £3.00 (the

full rate). If you are gardening with a partner and would like them to enjoy the full facilities of the site, they should join the RGS and pay the appropriate annual subscription.

Finally, everyone who rents a plot contributes £1.00 towards the **site insurance** and £1.00 per rod towards the **water rates** levied by Thames Water.

**Liz Chrominska**

### ***PLOT INSPECTIONS: THURSDAY 13 AND FRIDAY 14 MARCH***

At this time of year the team is looking for a start of cultivation, before the rents are due on 1 April. Weeds should have been removed and at least 60 % of the plot area should either be ready for planting, have been planted with the first crops of the year or have viable crops left over from the winter. Soft fruit should have been pruned. The team expects to see plenty of clear bare ground. Paths around a plot should have been tamed and made safe for “pedestrians”. We will check that anything notified after the November inspection has been adjusted. Please have your plot correctly numbered.

If your plot has been badly neglected, we will not accept your rent and you will lose the plot. We will contact you individually after the inspection if essential work needs to be done. With more than one hundred people on our waiting list it is vital that allotment plots are not being wasted.

**Paula Alderson, Site Manager**

### ***SUMMARY OF PLOT INSPECTION PROCEDURES***

1. Plot inspections are carried out at four-monthly intervals: March, July and November.
2. The inspection team will consist of the Site Manager, a non-committee plot-holder and the Site Secretary for each site.
3. Follow up letters: Each Site Secretary will write the letters regarding problems arising from plot inspections on their site.
4. Letter guidelines: It was agreed there will be different types of letter to reflect the seriousness of each individual issue and will reflect the context of the plot holder and plot. Letters will include an invitation to the recipient to inform of any extenuating circumstances. Letters will include a request to make a response either in writing or by phone.
5. Where appropriate, letters will notify the recipient what needs to be achieved and in what time frame with a follow-up deadline.
6. Letters can be by email or hand, but termination letters will be sent by post.

### ***NEWS FROM THE STORE***

The Store continues to offer a range of 'tried and tested' favourite products and new products, attempting to meet the needs of all the Members! Our new initiatives are proving very successful,

including Kings Seeds, loose Potatoes and Onions, Root Trainers and more Soil Improvers and Fertilisers! We shall endeavour to continue to offer great products, at great prices....so, shop local!

Whilst researching new products with the RHS, they gave some extremely useful advice regarding soil quality. We all know that plants need nutrients to grow and many of us add generous amounts of wonderful organic manure and fertilisers to enhance our allotments. Although good, and containing many nutrients, it is essential to know the pH of your soil to add the most suitable soil improver or fertiliser. The pH of soil is a number that describes how acid or alkaline the soil is. A pH of 7.0 is considered neutral, an acid soil has a pH value below 7.0 and above 7.0, the soil is alkaline (chalky). Knowing the pH of your soil allows you to choose, more accurately the plant suited to that soil or the appropriate additive to add to change the pH of the soil. Plants vary in their preference for high, neutral or low soil pH. (The RHS website, [rhs.org.uk](http://rhs.org.uk) 'Soil: understanding pH and Testing' has more info). It is advisable to test your soil frequently, so as to maximise health and growth of plants! A pH Soil Meter can test the pH of soil quite easily and because of the importance of not overloading soil with inappropriate additives, the Store is now stocking excellent pH Soil Testing Meters! They are not the cheapest on the market but are of better quality and long lasting and come with full instructions and an extensive list of Plant pH preferences. They cost £12.50 each (this type usually

retailing for £19.99) - great value! Remember "RIGHT SOIL, RIGHT PLANT!"

**Barbara McCall, Joint Trading Secretary**

## **SAVE THE FARM TERRACE ALLOTMENTS!**

Latest news on this campaign to save these historic allotments from the clutches of development is extremely encouraging and exciting!

If you remember the Farm Terrace Allotments, established in 1896, have been engaged in a legal battle, since early last year to stop Watford Council and the Secretary of State from re-developing the allotment site. Members of the Farm Terrace Allotments, launched and won a very successful legal challenge against the UK Government. On the 7th February, after extensive investigations, their Barrister informed them that in his opinion they had 'more chance of winning in the High Court, than not'!

So they are to proceed with their case to stop the redevelopment of the Farm Terrace Allotments!

Did you know that due to the relaxation of planning laws an increasing number of Allotment Sites in the UK are being sold off by Local Authority for redevelopment. Since 2007 there have been 132 separate applications to close down Allotments under Section 8 of the 1925 Allotment Act. Out of 132 applications 97% were approved (128 cases), only 4 refusals. UNTIL NOW!!

If they win their case it will be a

landmark legal victory of great significance for all Allotments, nationwide! Councils will have to take notice and will think twice before attempting to steal any Community's Allotment Heritage!

The RGS is already a supporter of this cause and the Farm Terrace Allotments now need the continued support of all Allotmenters around the country. Legal costs are staggering and they have re-launched a Fighting Fund for donations, aiming to reach a target of £15,000 (they now have £12,000). Which is the amount needed to get the papers to court. In total they will need £25,000. Hundreds of people have donated through their website <http://www.gofundme.com/save-farm-terrace>. PLEASE DONATE TO THIS WORTHY CAUSE, they need your support!

You can also read all about their campaign at this website and see all the legal documents. They have had supportive media coverage the Press and the BBC. There will also be a Donation Box left at the Store for Members to donate there, if that is easier, and I will send it to the Farm Terrace Fund with our message of continued support!

SAVE THE FARM TERRACE  
ALLOTMENTS! DONATE TODAY!  
**Many thanks, Barbara McCall**

### **SITE 2**

Free wood chippings will be delivered to site 2 towards the end of February. Ideal for slippery, muddy paths. Please help yourself.

**Georgina O'Reilly, Site 2  
Secretary**

## **NEW PLOTHOLDERS AND MEMBERS**

### **SITE 2:**

no vacant plots

### **SITE 3**

Plot 50A let to Rikke Amstrup  
Plot 114A vacated by Elmoustafa Hassani and let to Chris de Courcey.

## **VISIT**

### **Chiswick House Camellia Festival**

1-30 March 2014  
10.30 am – 4.0 pm  
(last ticket 3.15)

The Camellia collection at Chiswick House is one of the finest collections in the country and they are displayed in the newly restored conservatory.

Tickets cost £8, concessions £7 and reductions for English Heritage and Art Fund members.

From Putney main line station you can get a train direct to Chiswick Station and it is a 7 minute walk, down Park Road to the entrance. [www.chgt.org.uk](http://www.chgt.org.uk)

**Jackie and I are going to the Festival on Friday 21 March.** We will be at Putney mainline station at 10.00am in order to catch the 10.08 train to Chiswick. Please join us if you would like to or meet us in the Chiswick House café, if you want to travel a different way. We will be at the café between 10.30 and 10.45. **Please let me know if you are coming either send me an email: [Patdark13@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:Patdark13@yahoo.co.uk) or phone me on 020 8789 7568.**

### **March Recipe**

This recipe uses lots of the vegetables on our plots at this time of year. It is a comforting soup that is a meal in itself served with some bread and cheese.

### **Minestrone Soup**

1 onion , finely chopped  
1 clove garlic, chopped or crushed  
Knsb of butter and 1 tablespoon olive oil  
2 celery stalks, finely chopped  
2 carrots, finely chopped  
1 litre vegetable stock  
1 tin tomatoes  
1 dessertspoon tomato puree  
2 leeks, well washed & thinly sliced  
175 gm (6 oz) green cabbage, finely shredded  
75gm (3oz) cut macaroni  
handful of torn Basil  
handful of chopped parsley  
salt and grown black pepper

Grated Parmesan cheese to serve

1. Heat the butter and oil in a large pan and add the onion, celery and carrots and sauté for about 10 minutes stirring from time to time.
2. Add the tomatoes and garlic, stock and Basil. Simmer for one hour.
3. Add the leeks, cabbage and macaroni and cook for another 15 minutes.
4. Add salt and pepper and tomato puree and taste to ensure seasoning is right and macaroni is cooked.
5. You may need to add more stock, puree and seasoning according to taste.
6. Serve in warm bowls with lots of Parnesan cheese.

### **Are You the Complete Kitchen Gardener?**

See the advert on page 8 about a new series on BBC 2. They are looking for talented amateur gardeners to appear on the show.

## **NOTICES**

### **RGS CONTACTS**

Site Manager is Paula Alderson;  
Site 2 Allotment Secretary is  
Georgina O'Reilly;  
Site 3 Allotment Secretary:  
Helen Finch & Paula Alderson

### **SECURITY**

If you see anyone trespassing or  
causing damage on the Sites or in  
an emergency phone 999 or text  
phone 18000.

### **DISCOUNTS**

10% discount to RGS card holders  
when you show your RGS card:  
Adrian Hall Garden Centre at  
Sheen;  
Wimbledon Gardener, Merton  
Road,  
Capital Gardens, opposite  
Wandsworth Prison.

<b>DATES FOR</b>	<b>2014 DIARIES</b>
Visit to Camellia Festival at Chiswick House Gardeners Question Time, Summer Show	Friday 21 March  Wed 26 March  14 June
Autumn Show AGM	13 September 26 Nov

### **Small Ads**

#### **The Cartridge People**

Help raise funds for the RGS while  
saving money yourself when you  
buy ink cartridges from the  
"Cartridge people":  
[www.cartridgepeople.com/  
RaisingMoneyFor/Roehampton-  
GS](http://www.cartridgepeople.com/RaisingMoneyFor/Roehampton-GS)  
10% of your order goes to RGS

**Recycle Used Cartridges** in the  
box in the Store.

### **The Conservation**

#### **Foundation Tool Shed**

Mend and re-furbish broken and old  
gardening tools for schools.  
[conservationfoundation.co.uk](http://conservationfoundation.co.uk)

### **THE STORE**

The Store is open Sunday morning  
between 10.00 a.m. and noon.  
There is a café serving, tea, coffee  
and homemade cake.

We are always looking for  
volunteers to help run the Store on  
Sunday mornings. If you can help  
Contact Carol Martinez via the  
website  
[www.roehamptonallotments.co.uk](http://www.roehamptonallotments.co.uk)  
Or leave a message in the Store or  
email at  
[root@roehamptonallotments.co.uk](mailto:root@roehamptonallotments.co.uk)

[www.vegetableseeds.com](http://www.vegetableseeds.com)

### **AUSTIN MOWERS (sharpens shears as well)**

300 Garratt lane, SW18 4EH.  
020 8874 4206  
[www.austinmowers.com](http://www.austinmowers.com)  
[austinmowers@aol.com](mailto:austinmowers@aol.com)

### **NEXT BULLETIN**

Comments, questions to Chair &  
Committee via the website:  
[root@roehamptonallotments.co.  
uk](mailto:root@roehamptonallotments.co.uk)

Comments and copy for the next  
Bulletin, by 25 March 2014 please,  
to Pat Dark (tel. 8789 7568) 27 St  
Margarets Crescent, SW15 6HL.  
[patdark13@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:patdark13@yahoo.co.uk)

**Next Bulletin: 6 April 2014, by  
email, in the Store and on both  
sites**



**Are you the complete KITCHEN GARDENER?**

**Is your garden, allotment or window box  
your pride and joy?**

**Do you grow your own fruit, veg & flowers  
and do you know what to do with them?**

We are looking for talented amateur kitchen gardeners who have the skills and the dedication to compete in BBC2's 'THE BIG ALLOTMENT CHALLENGE'. Someone who can cultivate the perfect carrot, make their green tomatoes into award winning chutney and turn their dahlias and sweet peas into floral arrangements fit for a Queen.

We are offering successful applicants the chance to turn a plot of land into a patch of beauty so if you have the skills to compete and are interested in featuring in our series, please contact [grow@silverriver.tv](mailto:grow@silverriver.tv) or call 0207 907 3401 for an application form.

The deadline for applications is 12pm on the 13th of March 2014.

