

KINGS ROAD ALLOTMENT NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 1

MAY 20016

EDITORS NOTE.....

Welcome to our first issue of The Kings Road Allotment Newsletter, which we have decided to produce to keep you abreast of all the latest Association news and maybe even entertain and inform you on all matters horticultural. In this issue we introduce you to the Association Committee, why it has been created and what activities we have planned for the next few months. In addition, we have created a number of articles which we hope will become regular features in future newsletters, but, this will also depend upon YOUR support. Please see the last page on how you can become part of this newsletter and help us make Kings Road Allotment a fun and productive place to be!

Amanda

KINGS ROAD ALLOTMENT ASSOCIATION COMMITTEE

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JOHN BOLD- Chairman

DUNCAN ANDERSON- Secretary

PAUL CHIPPERFIELD- Treasurer

CHRIS COLE-POWNEY - Member

JOHN HAWES- Member

GAYNA MORRIS- Member

PAUL PIKESLEY- Although not an Association member, Paul is the Site Secretary and responsible for liaising with the Council.

Initially the Association was formed for a number of reasons. Firstly, to allow those plot holders that are members, access to insurance

that insures them against a claim, should anyone have an accident on their plot (Yes! It is individual plot holders and NOT the council that are liable, should someone have an accident!) Secondly, to provide us with affiliation to the National Allotment Society, which helps to preserve, protect and promote allotments and through which we could seek advice/ assistance, should there be any issue with regard to the continuation of Kings Road Allotments. Thirdly, to allow access to Kings Seed Scheme which offers a minimum of 35% off seeds from their catalogue. Finally, we aim to offer a number of events to allow members to interact and make KRA a fun place to be. I would just like to point out however, all this relies upon the voluntary efforts and time given by all Committee members (and their dedicated wives!). If you feel you can help in any way (maybe volunteer to arrange the occasional day trip out, help with the reinstating of paths etc., your time and efforts would be gratefully received!

MY FAVOURITE CROP.....

*My favourite crop by far, has to be tomatoes. Yes, I know they can be time consuming and there is the constant risk of blight (especially on our site for some reason!), but, provided there is enough sunshine, they produce a bountiful crop that you can use well after the plants are no more. (See this issues "Top Tips".) In my limited allotment career, I have tried a number of varieties and **Sungold** still remains my all time favourite. It produces small, orange, deliciously sweet tomatoes on long trusses that can be used in a variety of ways. Another small variety I tend to favour is **Tomatoberry**, which produces strawberry shaped tomatoes, with a balanced sweetness and acidity that makes them perfect for salads. In the last few years I have started to try "blight resistant" varieties, with some success. **Ferline** is a strong favourite, producing large tomatoes with a firm and tasty flesh. Trusses can be large and therefore heavy and from my experience, it may be necessary to support some of the trusses to prevent them breaking off at the stem. Ferline does eventually succumb to blight, but this is well after other tomato varieties do. Last year I also trialled a brand new variety, **Crimson Crush**, which was supposed to be 100% blight resistant. Ultimately the plants produced largish tomatoes with excellent flavour. They did succumb to blight towards the end of the season, but this only affected some of the leaves and never reached the fruits or stems. So... this is definitely one I will sow again!*



Finally, this year I am trialling a variety, called **Magic Mountain** which, apparently, has good resistance to early blight and complete resistance to late blight. A cordon trained variety, it provides fruits weighing roughly 56g each, that have a rich flavour and varied uses, from salads, to sauces, to roasting. This all sounds very promising and it better be, costing £3.99 for only five seeds!!! I will report back with my opinions once the growing season is over!

So, there you go, this is my favourite crop and my favoured varieties. Hopefully this year we will have a better summer than last and the tomato plants will flourish and provide a bountiful crop!

TOP TIPS!

Don't just give away your excess glut of tomatoes. Freeze them and use them in soups, stews and pasta sauces. Not only will this save on buying tinned tomatoes, but they also retain the wonderful flavour of home grown tomatoes. Wash and dry the tomatoes you want to freeze, place the required amount in freezer bags. Using a straw, suck the air out of the bag and tie quickly and place in the freezer. When you are ready to use them, run them under tepid water and rub the skins which will come away easily. Then use as desired!

WHATS ON.....

SCARECROW COMPETITION: Brighten up your plot by using your imagination to create a scarecrow. Entries will be judged by the Committee at the Queen's Celebration Event .

QUEENS CELEBRATION: SATURDAY JUNE 4TH- Dig out your Union Jacks and help us celebrate the Queens 90th year! . Exact details are yet to be finalised but we hope to have a BBQ/ afternoon tea and maybe a drop of the potent stuff to toast the Queen! We should be most grateful if those attending would contribute by bringing something for the BBQ, a cake or whatever your tittle is. Keep your eyes on the noticeboard for further details.

CAKE BAKE OFF- Bake a cake for the Queens Celebration Event. All entries will then be judged by the Committee (It's a hard life!!!!) and the winner will receive a prize!

TALLEST SUNFLOWER: Easy to enter! Simply sow a few sunflower seeds and the tallest entry wins a prize. To be judged by the committee in August.



KINGS SEED SCHEME

We are planning to have the seed scheme up and running by the end of the summer, so that seeds can be ordered for the following sowing season. We need to submit a bulk order to receive a discount. If this is between £75 and £175 we will receive a discount of up to 35%. However, an order over £175 will receive a discount of 50%. A poster will be put up on the allotment noticeboard, once details have been finalised.

We are also looking for people to help organise the seed scheme. So, if you are willing to lend a hand, please contact one of the Committee members

HOW YOU CAN HELP.....

As I mentioned previously, we are looking for people to lend us a hand and make Kings Road Allotments, the Association and it's newsletter a success. Why not consider one (or two of the following:

- Help run the Seed Scheme

- Write and submit an article for the Newsletter. (Eg: “My Favourite Crop”; Your “Top Tip” for growing a particular vegetable; a favourite recipe that you use your produce for.)
- Bake a cake for the “Bake Off”.
- Take part in the Scarecrow competition.
- Let us know if you would like to detail anything in our Swap, Shop & Freebies section.....

SWAP, SHOP & FREEBIES

If you have anything allotment or gardening related that you want, or would like to sell or give away, let us know. We will detail it in this section and so that you can liaise with each other

TRIED AND TESTED.....

LIME & COURGETTE CAKE

150g Caster sugar

3 Eggs

250g SR Flour

125ml vegetable oil

1/2 tsp Bicarb. of Soda

1/2 tsp Baking powder

250g Courgette finely grated (Squeeze roughly half the water out of the courgette once grated)

FOR ICING

1-2 dsp Lime juice

200g Icing sugar

50g soft butter

This is a great way to use up courgettes, especially those that grow to marrow size! If they are this large, peel first, scoop out and discard the soft inner pulp and finely grate the firm flesh.

Preheat oven to Gas 4 (180C or 160C fan).

Beat together the eggs, oil and sugar in a bowl until creamy. Mix in the flour, bicarbonate of soda and baking powder. Add the courgette and carefully mix till incorporated.

Pour into a tray bake tin lined with baking paper (20cm by 24cm) or two 20cm sandwich tins.

Bake at Gas 4 (180C or 160C fan) for 30/ 45 minutes or until a knife comes out clean.

To make butter icing, mix icing sugar with the softened butter and enough lime juice to make a soft dropping consistency. Spread over the top of the cake creating soft peaks and sprinkle with grated lime zest and enjoy! If using sandwich tins, ice between the two sponges and on top of the cake, then ENJOY!!!!

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