

# Linlithgow and District Allotment



## August 2022 Society Newsletter

### Committee Members:

Val Corry (plot 31)  
(Chair)

Fenella Duncan (plot 7)  
(Secretary)

Claire Metivier (plot 3)  
(Infrastructure)

Margaret Mundie (plot  
65 & 84) (Deputy Chair)

Alan Nicoll (plot 19)  
(Support for  
Membership Secretary)

Suzanne Ralston (plot  
67) (Membership  
Secretary)

Lynne Stanford (plot 25)  
(Treasurer)

Neil Valentine (plot 78)  
(Maintenance)

### CONTACT DETAILS:

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## Harvest Celebration

Each year about this time we share what we have been growing on our plots and enjoy a communal BBQ lunch. For the last two years because of COVID restrictions this has been suspended. It was so rewarding to once again meet face-to-face on 24 July, welcoming some new plotholders as well as some of our long-time members, and their children. The prizewinners were:

Pick of your plot (on a plate, in a basket...) – 1<sup>st</sup> Neil and Alison Valentine / 2<sup>nd</sup> Margaret and Duncan Mundie / 3<sup>rd</sup> Yvette Wilson

Best wonky vegetable or fruit – 1<sup>st</sup> Margaret and Duncan Mundie/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Yvette Wilson

Best bake or make using allotment produce – 1<sup>st</sup> Morag Stevenson/ 2<sup>nd</sup> Margaret and Duncan Mundie/ 3<sup>rd</sup> Alison Fraser.

Many thanks to all who entered. Many thanks once again to Margaret and Duncan for cooking the BBQ food and all those who helped to make this a very successful day.

The judging of the best small and large plots was postponed because the judge was unwell. This will be rearranged for a later date. We will let you know when a new date has been arranged.

## Cleaning rota for August

Here is a reminder of the cleaning rota for each week. For new plot holders the instructions for cleaning the toilet and community shed are in both buildings. When completed sign the sheet provided. Please let me know if there are any issues, materials needing to be replaced etc. Note: there are no litter receptacles in either building or anywhere on the site. All litter should be taken home.

|           |                          |                  |
|-----------|--------------------------|------------------|
| 65( & 84) | Margaret & Duncan Mundie | 8 August 2022    |
| 66        | Alex & Carole Gourlay    | 15 August 2022   |
| 66a       | Martyn Pugsley           | 22 August 2022   |
| 67        | Suzanne Ralston          | 29 August 2022   |
| 68a       | Peter & Lynsey George    | 5 September 2022 |

## Plot inspection dates

I am repeating this insert for our new plot holders and to remind all of the next plot inspection date. Plot inspections are prescribed in the LADAS Constitution (4.5) with the requirement of quarterly plot inspections. These inspections are to check that site rules are being followed.

The dates for plot inspections will be **1 March, 1 June, 1 September, 1 December each year**. The next plot inspection is scheduled for **1 September**. The expectation is that at least 75% of the plot will be under cultivation during the growing season being well stocked with crops in a healthy condition. Where there are unplanted areas, these should be reasonably free from weeds. Weeds can quickly spread to neighbouring plots when left to set seed. A good tip is to use a hoe for annual weeds. There is no need to dig out but when hoed off these can be left to die on the surface and then either be removed or raked in. Hoeing is best done on a dry day. Always hoe before the weed has set seed. Perennial weeds should be dug out. If there are mitigating circumstances for your plot not being well tended, please contact the Committee in advance of the inspection date.

## Hopetoun Discount Cards

There are still some discount cards for New Hopetoun Gardens Centre that have not been uplifted. They are on the table in the community shed. This card gives you 10% off purchases in the garden centre (not in the shop in the café area).

## Facebook

For those of you on Facebook, here is another group that may be useful to explore. If there are other groups that you have found useful, please let me know and I will pass on through the Newsletter.

## Website

The website is being continually updated. The key LADAS documents have been uploaded. There is a separate section for newsletters.

## Site rules

Thank you for the comments received. The Committee have now discussed these and the rules have been modified as a result of some of your comments. The original site rules and the final version have been out for consultation and there have been no further comments. The final version is being forwarded to you in a separate email. The Site Rules will be posted on the website.

The most important change for ploholders is the use of hosepipes. The relevant section is highlighted below. The new Section 13 of the site rules:

**13. Water:** Water conservation measures such as the use of water butts and mulching should be used to conserve water and control weeds. Water butts are obligatory on all sheds and greenhouses. **Limited use of hosepipes is permitted for watering plots only when this is not a hindrance to other ploholders wishing to use the standpipe.** Hosepipes may be used for refilling water butts in dry periods. Ponds are not permitted on plots.

## Watering (Advice from Gardening Which?)

The dry, hot weather we have been having can be a problem for growing fruit and vegetables. Keeping them hydrated is important. The use of mulch to retain and reduce water needs was mentioned in the last newsletter. Here are some other tips to reduce wastage, improve the ease of watering and help to boost plant health:

- Water the base of the plant with a watering can with a rose. Watering close to the soil maximises the spread of water. Experts are now suggesting that watering your



Growing Fruit And Veg UK

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/294133877781946/>

plants using a bottomless plastic bottle in the soil to be the least effective method, even causing drought-stress and reducing the spread of water throughout the area.

- Give plants a good soak rather than sprinkling water.
- Water in the morning and evening when it's coolest to reduce water lost to evaporation.
- Prioritise the plants you water.

Different vegetables have different watering needs.

### **Water throughout growth**

Fast and continuously growing vegetables need regular watering in dry spells:

- Lettuce, salad leaves, spinach
- Oriental greens
- Summer cabbage
- Radish
- Calabrese and cauliflower
- Courgette and cucumber
- Runner beans

Top tip: Soaking when cauliflower and calabrese heads begin to swell will increase their final size.

### **Water at key growth stages**

- Peas and broad beans - a good soak when the first flowers appear and again when the young pods begin to swell should increase the crop in dry weather
- French beans - water when flowering and again when pods start to form
- Sweetcorn - give a good soak once cobs start to form and the silks appear
- Pumpkins and squash - give a few good soakings once fruits begin to swell, and target water near the centre of the plant
- Tomatoes, aubergines and peppers - once flowers start to set fruit, water regularly all summer
- Potatoes - once they finish flowering, wet the soil not the leaves, and water throughout growth to encourage new potatoes

### **Water sparingly**

These are mainly root vegetables, perennials and over-wintering crops which don't need much attention once established:

- Beetroot, carrot, parsnips and turnips
- Onions, garlic and shallots
- Asparagus and artichokes
- Brussels sprouts, sprouting broccoli, spring and winter cabbages

Top tip: When planting seeds into dry soil, water the bottom of the seed drill thoroughly and leave to soak in water before sowing - then cover with dry soil

## **What to do on your plot in August**

The warm dry weather we have been having has hastened the maturity of crops and harvesting crops will be the main task this month. Some crops can be sown to overwinter. There will also be some pruning to do.

- Harvest **sweetcorn, garlic, onions, shallots, beetroot, celery, french beans, runner beans.**
- Continue harvesting soft fruit – **blueberries, blackcurrants,** and begin harvesting **autumn raspberries.**
- Continue to harvest **courgettes.**
- Keep feeding **squash** and **pumpkins** and watering if the weather is dry.
- Second early **potatoes** will be ready for lifting this month.
- Begin lifting maincrop **potatoes** later this month and into September.
- Sow **spring cabbages** for overwintering either in pots or in the ground in the second week of August.
- Plant **brassicas** for autumn use or overwintering, such as **winter cauliflowers** and **kale**, where peas and beans have been cleared.
- Plant **spinach.** The variety 'Giant Winter' is a good choice. You can plant every 4 weeks to have a supply of young leaves for salads.
- Begin to earth up strong growing **leeks** this month to give long white stems.
- Cut down to ground level the stems of fruited summer **raspberries** which have borne fruit this year. They will look brown and will show signs of having carried fruit. Leave this year's fresh green shoots, which will fruit next year.
- Consider growing **green manure** in bare soil as crops are cleared from beds. Green manure sown now is easy to grow and provides plenty of organic matter when cut down before flowering. This adds organic matter and nutrients to the soil. Here is a website about green manure that you may find helpful.  
<https://www.rhs.org.uk/soil-composts-mulches/green-manures>

## Suggestions

We are always keen to hear from plot holders with any suggestions or ideas you have to improve the site and particularly to foster our community of growers. Just contact us on [linlithgowallotments@yahoo.org.uk](mailto:linlithgowallotments@yahoo.org.uk) or speak to one of the Committee.

## Happy growing!

Val Corry (Chair)