



Jonathan Clark &lt;jonathan.clark@whatho.net&gt;

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## [Trap Ground] Allotments Autumn newsletter

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Gillian/Stuart Skyte &lt;skytes@tiscali.co.uk&gt;

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Reply-To: skytes@tiscali.co.uk

To: virginia.wallis@whatho.net, TGAA membership &lt;trapgroundallotments@googlegroups.com&gt;

TGAA News

Newsletter of the Trap Ground Allotment Association

Autumn 2011

The Autumn newsletter includes contributions from a number of committee members. If you would like to write a short piece for the next edition, contact Stuart Skyte.

Threatened crossing closure - no news yet

The Chiltern Railways project Inquiry aimed to have ministerial decisions by the late summer. In the absence of any news, the future of the level crossing is still unknown. In case it is closed, we need to ensure that the mitigating measures to do with the railway bridge path and the car park are achieved beforehand as promised.

Network Rail's recent renewed attempts at closure have been opposed by the city council officers on our behalf, while the railway's apparent collection of photographs of our use of the crossing seems an absurd waste of public money. Nevertheless, please don't give them any support by injudicious dashes over the tracks.

Skip on the site

The first of the autumn skips will be in place very soon. Each skip costs us about £220, so please do not put organic material in or things you can put in the rubbish at home. Potential rubble hardcore like broken glass and stones can be used to fill ruts in the paths so we will provide a bag for this next to the shop. Please make use of this instead of the skip. Netting, wire, polythene, etc, and large objects go in the skip.

Communal recycling

Our grateful thanks to John Ashby for the recycling site. His central-ising of compost and bonfires is a boon and he, in turn, wishes to thank us for our co-operation in following instructions. He is not uncritical of the latest compost production, and reminds us to minimise the soil we throw away with our weeds. Please help

yourself to the bonfire ash.

### Successful school visit

Oxford High School sent a party of Sixth Formers to visit us and appreciate the beauty of the place and the productivity and variety of crops. The mowing team having done its stuff, the site looked particularly orderly, and the abundant evidence of creative cultivation impressed some future gardeners.

### Mowing

Thanks once again to the volunteers on the mowing team who keep the main paths, open grassed areas, and quite a few of the smaller paths, looking neat and tidy. They are: Jojo Coles, Dick Dendy, Peter Ramsay, Chris Goodall, Gerald Sacks, Tony Hollander, Peter Jarvis, Kate Lack, Neil MacLennan, Jonathan Clark and Dave Taylor. Feel free to thank them personally.

The smallest paths we can mow must be at least three feet wide, and unencumbered by encroaching raised beds, plastic ground cover, fruit trees, bricks and stones, dead ends, tight corners and the like. If you make your small paths easier to mow, we are more likely to tackle them for you. If you don't want us coming down your path, make it obvious by putting an obstacle in the way..like a log.

The ride-on mower takes quite a lot of bashing from obstacles and we are told it really needs replacing. The bearings on the cutters get ruined by the various bits of plastic - e.g. ground cover, baler twine, netting - that the mower picks up particularly when doing the smaller paths, and it is expensive to replace them. Please help us to help you by making sure the mowed areas remain free of encumbrances. The mechanics at Aladdin in Hayfield Road help us quite a bit to keep the equipment running at no charge, so if you have surplus crops, they are worthy and grateful recipients.

### Any other bees news

There has been a bee-hive in the north-east corner of the site behind the new pond since late August. The bees seem to have settled in well, and we hope they have enough stores to enable them to over-winter successfully, ready to start pollinating our crops and producing honey in the spring. The apiary is chained off to prevent people wandering past the bees by accident. We hope there will be something like three or four hives there by the end of next season. The current bee-keepers are Jonathan Clark and Howard Cox. They stand ready to answer questions if you wish. Their contact details are on notices on the notice-boards and by the apiary.

### Photo competition 2011

A reminder that this year's photographic competition theme is structures and that entries - a maximum of three per person - should be submitted by 31 October. As in previous years, the judge will be professional photographer and plot-holder, Hugh Palmer. Details on the TGAA web site ([www.trapgroundallotments.org.uk](http://www.trapgroundallotments.org.uk)). All entries will be displayed electronically at the Harvest Supper..

## ..Harvest Supper 2011

This year's Harvest Supper is on Saturday 12 November at St Margaret's Institute. As well as good food and wine (bring your own to share), there will be a (not at all serious) gardening quiz and the announcement of the photo competition winners. The cost is only £5 per head. If you'd like to attend, and you are welcome to bring friends and/or family, contact Stuart or Gillian Skyte on 01865 559618 or at [skytes@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:skytes@tiscali.co.uk). Please say if you are bringing a main course or a dessert.

## The new Alan Titchmarsh?

..not quite, but you might like to be aware that plot-holder Stuart Skyte now has a monthly slot on BBC Radio Oxford (95.2FM).talking about allotment news. This is on Sunday morning at 12.30. There is a gardening slot each week from 12 noon, with a rota of allotment "experts" giving their update at 12.30.

## Beware of Leek Moth

Sounds a delightful creature but it can wreak havoc with leeks, onions, shallots and garlic. It's difficult/impossible to eradicate; all you can do is prevent it attacking your crops by growing leeks, etc under fleece or, ideally, Enviromesh. Both are available in the on-site shop. The advice is not to grow alliums in the same place as an outbreak has occurred.

## Seed orders

TGAA members now benefit from three discount seed schemes - with Dobies, Marshalls and Thompson & Morgan. Special order forms and catalogues are available from the allotment shop and/or from TGAA Secretary Virginia Wallis. To order from Marshalls, you need to join their garden club and order online - for an invitation to join the garden club, email: [secretary@trapgroundallotments.org.uk](mailto:secretary@trapgroundallotments.org.uk).

Dobies gives 30% discount on seeds and 10% on everything else. Thompson & Morgan gives a 50% seed discount with 15% off non-seed items. Marshalls gives a discount of up to around 35%. The deadline for returning completed order forms is 13 November 2011. This is also the deadline for ordering Tucker's seed potatoes from Vibeke Mannion.

## Other discounts

Members who have bought a TGAA membership card (which costs only £1) can benefit from a 10% discount at Yarnton Nurseries and a discount on plants, bulbs and seeds at Burford Garden Company.

Thank you..

..to Vibeke Mannion for donating a "good-as-new" strimmer for communal use. Much appreciated and, doubtless, much used in coming years.

Your committee

Tony Hollander - chair

Virginia Wallis - secretary/lettings

Bob Crabtree - treasurer

Jonathan Clark - machinery/web

site

Stuart Skyte - social events/newsletter

Carol Jarvis - lettings/plant sale

Vibeke Mannion - shop

Neil Maclennan - vice chair

Peter Jarvis - pest control/plant sale

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