

May / June Newsletter

This continues to be a very busy time for allotment gardeners with the risk of frost passed. All plants can be transplanted out including courgettes, beans and sweetcorn and leeks.

Many varieties could still be planted direct into well prepared soil including peas, carrots beetroot, radish and lettuce varieties.

Why not check the show schedule and see if you can be growing a crop to enter in the summer show, even if you have never tried before. You might be surprised at how easy it is! We hope to see as many of you as possible on July 16 th.

More details to follow in the next newsletter.

In June we will be starting to judge the plots so this is a perfect time to get your plot into the best condition possible. The categories include marks for paths and edges, crop variety, quality of crops, and overall appearance including bare soil/ weeds. We are anticipating judging from 22 June to 26 th weather permitting.

Water

The water will be available from 1st May to 1 October each year.

Please note that we are all trying hard to reduce our usage and I hope you will read the Good Doctor's blog and check links to the website on top tips and other water saving ideas.

Slugs

It has been a mild and wet winter and the experts are predicting record numbers of slugs this year. The easy solution is to reach for the little blue metaldehyde pellets but before you do consider if there are other ways to minimize damage to your plants. These are toxic to other animals as well. Try reducing the places where slugs like to live eg under ground cover/ long grass /old vegetation. Think about whether you could encourage hedgehogs to your allotment by having a place for a pile of wood that they could shelter under. Slow worms too like warm spots in a compost bin and would eat your slugs. Try organic type preparations which act as a deterrent and a fertilizer in one application and which are sold at the trading store. Copper strips can be useful as well as the old way of trapping the slugs in a beer trap. Why not try a nematode preparation which can be purchased from the internet and is watered on the plot to parasitise the slugs before they breed.

Windmill visit

A few of us had an extremely interesting visit to the Willsborough Windmill with excellent and informative tours as well as refreshments afterwards in the tea and gift shop. The mill is a white smock mill built in 1809 with two story base and a miller's cottage. The sails turn the millstones which grind the wheat from local farms on Romney marsh. We saw the magnificent 1906 Hornsby 14 hp engine being used to power the sweeps using a litre of paraffin every 20 minutes.

Thanks to Brian and all the volunteers which made this a lovely afternoon.

The Trading Store is open this Bank Holiday weekend on Saturday from 10 am and may close early before 2 pm . Enjoy the extra time this may provide on our plots.

Penny Winston