

An allotment renaissance

The past year has seen a resurgence in the purpose and endeavours of the Allotments Committee, both on the social and horticultural fronts.

Earlier concerns over a growing number of vacant plots have largely been put aside. In the wake of a drive to publicise the existence of the 11 allotment sites in the Suburb there has been a surge of interest in recent months by those looking to provide for themselves fresh and healthy home-grown garden produce. The Trust Council, following a recommendation from the committee, agreed in principle to widen the catchment area of applicants for plots to include relations and friends of residents and those with work connections in the Suburb. With inquiries totalling more than a dozen – all but one from residents – since notices appeared in the Suburb News and library newsletter there has been a minimal application of the ruling which, nevertheless, remains in effect.

The committee, which includes the secretaries of the 12 sites, representatives of the RA and the HGS Horticultural Society and ex-officio attendants from the Trust, has resumed the regularity of its quarterly meetings.



Judging for the Phyllis Young trophy for best plot again took place and a well-attended and convivial Harvest Supper was held in Fellowship.

Attention to the general maintenance and attractiveness of the sites was boosted by the growing sense of involvement and a determination that such a rewarding pursuit as growing one's own food organically should not be allowed to lose its appeal. Many ploholders regard the benefits in the kitchen being

matched, especially in a metropolitan environment, by the therapeutic effects of being so close to nature and by the informal get-togethers prompted by this shared interest. Aspiring horticulturists wishing to join the existing 120-odd devotees should approach individual site secretaries (listed in the Suburb Directory) or the Trust office.

A feather in the allotment-eering cap is the decision to include one of the sites in this summer's open day of the

National Gardens Scheme. The Temple Fortune Hill allotments, where one of the plots has been worked by the same couple for 40 years, will join a dozen Suburb gardens in opening their gates to the public on Sunday, July 7. Sales, for the Gardens Scheme charities, of cakes and drinks and of plants are planned.

Members of the allotment community have long had close links with the Suburb's Horticultural Society and in the past year allotmenters have exhibited their produce – and won prizes – at the Society's spring and autumn flower shows in the Free Church Hall. This alliance is further indicated by the Seed Swap event, which will be held in Fellowship on Thursday, March 7.

Beyond their social and horticultural interests, the committee members carry the essential responsibilities of allocating plots, collecting rents and making recommendations concerning maintenance and matters related to the budget. Of the 12 sites, nine bear the title of the HGS Trust, the others being managed under the auspices of the Orchard and Fellowship.

PETER HODGSON
(Now chairman of the committee)



Fungi expert Andy Overall leading Big Wood walk

Woodland fungi discovered in Big Wood

On Sunday, October 28 Friends of Big Wood organised a 60 minute voyage of discovery to learn about the large range of fungi in the wood.

Fungi expert Andy Overall, a Golders Green resident, led over a dozen Suburb residents on a walk

through Big Wood identifying dozens of interesting mushrooms and toadstools, and answering detailed questions. Andy is not only an expert on British fungi but also brilliant at sharing his knowledge, and the event was much appreciated by all.



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