

BRIDPORT and DISTRICT ALLOTMENTS SOCIETY

Newsletter

Autumn 2021

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from the allotment web site—one of
lots of recipes to download . . .

MEMBERSHIP

Membership of the Bridport & District Allotments Society gives entitlement to discounts e.g. on some items at Groves. Our Membership Secretary/Treasurer Mandy Rathbone will be pleased to receive your subscriptions at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED]. For information please contact Mandy by email at [REDACTED]

From the SECRETARY

Receiving the newsletter:

We now send out the newsletter, meeting agenda and minutes by email — if any member is unable to receive these by email, please contact the Secretary, Lynne Atkinson, [REDACTED] to receive a copy by post or hand delivery.

Please let the Secretary know if you have changed your e-mail address so you can be sure to get up-to-date information.

THE WEBSITE

Visit our website at:
www.bridportallotmentsociety.co.uk

The website has the following sections:
Allotment sites, copies of back newsletters, recipes (see page 5), links, monthly tips, photos, diary.



But MAINLY YOURSELVES?

We have a web site and a quarterly newsletter — how could they best work for you? Let me know how you would like the newsletter to develop at [REDACTED]

More often? More interviews? More tips and experience? More — or less? It's your Society .

'BADAS' AGM WEDNESDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER 2021
7 pm in the Committee Room at Mountfield
(Subject to any Covid19 regulations in force at this time).

HUB SHED INSTALLED AT SKILLING NORTH



Fiona Dare reports . . .

Chris prepared the site and Beaminster Sheds erected our new shed on Wednesday 18th August.

It's been a long wait but looks like it was worth it. As per the advice from Daryl Chambers, it was built onto a 15" (minimum) base to allow for any future flood water to pass underneath. As I write this, we are discussing the best way to put in steps to ease access and are looking forward to using it for BADAS events in the very near future.

BADAS are also taking over the lower half of allotment 40 (next to the hub shed) and plan to plant fruit trees there in the autumn. Not only will they provide food but will also help to reduce the water content of that area which is prone to getting boggy.

As mentioned before, plans for the hub are for plant and seed swaps, social get-togethers and more. If you have any suggestions for activities that you think would be interesting to other members, please get in contact.



Photos : 1. Chris Miller strimming, 2. foundation holes being made to 3. raise the platform: 4. erecting the shed and 5. the final result.



PANDEMIC NEARLY PAST?

The 2021 BADAS summer barbecue was held on the 15th July and was a well-attended and most enjoyable evening; members enjoying burgers and sausages with a vegetarian option, provided by our chefs Fiona, Mandy and Roger with drinks dispensed from the bar by Jeni Edwards

Thanks also go to Chris Miller who trimmed the grass at the hub prior to the event. He was there with his friend Dan. All in all a great event held on a beautiful summer's evening!



September Chelsea offers local grower a great opportunity.

Local seed supplier, Chris Smith at Pennard Plants has his nursery at East Pennard near Shepton Mallet. He grows heritage & heirloom vegetables, fruit and all things edible.

September is an ideal time for showing the abundance of the harvest and so he will be presenting a display of vegetables, concentrating on 'the 10 tomatoes that changed the World!' in collaboration with Burpee Seeds, Europe.

Chris will be visiting Bridport to sell his seeds early in the new year.



Stuart Richards has a very practical view regarding the management of time and expectations to produce the maximum output with a minimum input. He has had an allotment at Skilling North since these became available - about 12 or 13 years ago.

He wanted to be a bit more self-sufficient and grow some of his own food. He has a small half plot but is not sure of the actual dimensions. The soil is a heavy clay which although difficult has some advantages: his rhubarb does exceptionally well; some people think that it is because he doesn't pick it - but in actual fact he picks a lot and it's still grows back! Currently, he grows more perennial crops which need less attention: raspberries, blackcurrants, white currents, gooseberries and rhubarb, and has a cherry tree as well. He would like to grow asparagus, but as it takes four years before yielding thinks that this is not practical for him. He would also like to grow peas and salads, but again, that could require too much time to be practicable.

Stuart tries to be organic and very loosely, uses a no dig system. He knows that he does not devote enough time to keeping his allotment tidy and devotes a couple of hours a week. The benefits include: being out in the fresh air - with time alone to think, and also the satisfaction of growing your own food and being able to bring back a big bag of produce and cook it for your family.

A good piece of advice that he once heard on gardeners' question time was: stick in the ground and it will grow! Stuart's advice to you is: don't do too much too soon; first of all cover your plot to eliminate the light and thus kill the weeds and then develop your plan and then stick with it. It is difficult to say what his expectations were when he first started. He knew that it was hard work: and it was! But he did discover that you can get away with doing a lot less and yet still be quite productive - in other words again, maximum yield for minimum input!

He notices there is a big turnover in allotment holders and imagines that they expect too much and then find that they aren't really up to it. You need to find a way to manage your time and expectations which suits your own lifestyle - and in fact everyone can do it!

The last newsletter featured a couple of allotments from the Flaxhayes site. This time it's the turn of

A West Allington Allotment

From Magdalene Lane you go down some unpromising steps between houses and over a wooden footbridge into the meadows. Another bridge, and between you and the Medical Centre are the West Allington Allotments. The main entrance is just beyond the Medical Centre off West Allington Road.

32 allotments are laid out in an 'L' shape and the variety of cultivations is fascinating. I had been invited to have a look at the site by Julia who has been working there for about six years. Her plot is organic and she introduced me to the idea of Hugelkultur. It seems that each allotmentee has their own philosophy of culture and this one comes from the development of permaculture. It is an organic method of cultivating where a mound is constructed from decaying wood debris and is then combined with other composting materials and soil and planted as a raised bed. Adopted by permaculture advocates, it is suggested the technique helps to improve soil fertility, water retention, and soil warming, thus benefiting plants grown on or near such mounds*.



Julia has used raised beds to confine her mounds. And as befits an organic grower she has a thriving compost area. Each bin is only part filled so it is easier to turn the contents and as it finally rots down is eventually combined for use. A wide variety of plants, fruit and herbs, a greenhouse and a shed complete the plot.

Also on the West Allington site you can find a Community 'Cow Shed' used as a therapeutic plot, a medicinal herb garden and other intriguing sites.

The cry from all the allotmentees I have met is that they wish there were younger people taking up the hobby. Suggestions to encourage please!

(*definition taken from Wikipedia.)

Runner bean and courgette chutney



By Caroline Bretherton 2012. Available from: <http://www.lovefood.com/guide/recipes/15912/runner-bean-and-courgette-chutney-recipe>

Ingredients

600 g (21.2oz) runner beans, thinly sliced
4 courgettes, thinly sliced
350 g (12.3oz) cooking apples, peeled, cored, and chopped
2 onions, finely chopped
450 g (15.9oz) light soft brown sugar
1 tsp. mustard powder
1 tsp. turmeric
1 tsp. coriander seeds
600 ml (21.1fl oz.) cider vinegar

Step-by-step

Put the beans, courgettes, apples, and onions in a preserving pan or a large, heavy, stainless steel saucepan. Then add the sugar, mustard powder, turmeric, and coriander seeds. Pour in the vinegar and stir.

Cook over gentle heat, stirring until all the sugar has dissolved, then bring to a boil and cook at a rolling boil, stirring occasionally, for about 10 minutes. Reduce to a simmer and cook for about 1 1/2 hours, stirring from time to time, until the mixture thickens. Stir continuously near the end of cooking time so that the chutney doesn't catch on the base of the pan.

Ladle into warm, sterilized jars with non-metallic or vinegar-proof lids, making sure there are no air gaps. Cover each pot with a waxed paper disc, seal, and label. Store in a cool, dark place. Allow the flavours to mature for 1 month and refrigerate after opening.