

# WFAA Newsletter

## Summer 2022

Shared News, Views & Ideas

Website: [www.westonfavellallotments.co.uk](http://www.westonfavellallotments.co.uk)

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### The Seasonal Weston Favell Allotment Association Newsletter

#### The Queens Platinum Jubilee

The Queens Platinum Jubilee celebration in Weston Favell village on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2022.



It was a “live-in-the-memory-forever day”. A historic day we will recount to our grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We knew that there was not going to be a day like this for a very long time, if ever, a Platinum Jubilee.

Thanks to the amazing planning team led by Sue Marshall and Sue Wray and the Queen for the Day, Rosie Rushton.

The day before the Jubilee, residents in Church Way cleaned the road so that it was spotless on the day. I know the organisers would like to say a special thankyou to them for their efforts.

The day was a huge success despite the rain arriving in the middle when everyone disappeared into St Peters Church for shelter or the Church Hall for tea and cake and came back once the rain had stopped.

For me, at the heart of it all, lay St Peters Church

It was lovely to have ALL our uniformed organisations involved in various capacities all afternoon, running stalls and many of the games on Peters patch willingly sharing their equipment and time.

*Rosie Rushton with additions from Sue Wray*



# WESTON FAVELL



# VILLAGE SHOW



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### WESTON FAVELL VILLAGE SHOW

Saturday 3rd September

2.00 - 4.00 pm

in St Peter's Church and Church Hall  
High St. Weston Favell Village

The show combines all the interests of people in Weston Favell, fruit & vegetables, plants, flowers, many crafts, baking and classes for children too.

Schedule of Classes and Entry Forms can be Picked Up from the WFAA Summer House or on the Allotment website

### GUIDE TO ENTRY CLASSES

Pick up a Weston Favell Village Show Schedule and Entry Forms from the Allotment Summer House with suggestions for Showing Tips on the notice board.

These can be viewed on the web site, click below

<http://westonfavellallotments.co.uk/Events.htm>

Paper Entry Forms should be submitted and put in to the box in the Summer House or posted through the letter box on the wall of St Peters Church Hall in the High St. or direct to Sue at 33, Ridgeway rather than online entries or email.

**The Full Schedule lists all the entry classes for the village show.**

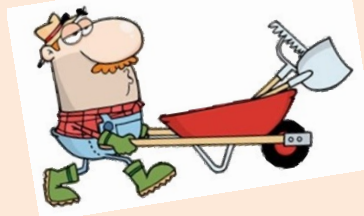
This is just a reminder to get digging, ordering and sowing those seeds.

**Entries to be staged between 10.00am – 11.00am Saturday 3rd September  
Entry forms must be submitted by Sunday 28th August at latest**

### Allotment Ownership – who is our longest plot holder?

I have been trying to find out who has had an allotment plot on the Weston Favell allotment site for the longest period of time.

Having spoken with Fran, our secretary, she tells me that she had her first half plot when she was pregnant with her first child in the Autumn of 1979.



She started visiting the allotments when she helped a friend out with their plot and got her own, heavily pregnant, and keen to get started. Her mother had gardened and grown vegetables firstly in Kent and then in the North of England and this had encouraged Fran to have a go. The 1970s was at a time when lady allotment holders were uncommon. She recalls her husband would be spoken to when he came to the site rather than her! She now has 2 plots and remains a keen allotment holder. This makes her one of the longest allotment holders on the site.

I then spoke with Frank at number 95. He had his first allotment on the site in the mid 1970s. His father had returned from WW2 with bad lungs and Frank recalls, aged 6, carrying the spade and tools for his father so that he could garden. This gave Frank an interest and he got a plot in the 1970s. He can remember a lot of his fellow allotment holders working in the boot and shoe industry, all growing vegetables for their families after work and at weekends.

My husband, Chris, and I have only had 143 since 2016 so we are newcomers.

Can you beat Fran and did you have an allotment earlier than the 1970s?

Let us know by emailing [westonfavellallotments@gmail.com](mailto:westonfavellallotments@gmail.com).

### CHILDREN ON THE ALLOTMENT SITE

It is wonderful to see so many of you bringing your children down with you to garden. It's great that they learn where some of their food comes from and how to grow it. Most of the committee members remember gardening with their parents when they were small.

If you have children on site they need to stay on your allotment rather than roam about. Unaccompanied children under 18 are not allowed on site so don't hand over your key if they ask to visit alone.

If you have space spare they could have their own growing bed and a space for toys too, they will be quite happy to visit and stay for several hours whilst you work away.

I have 2 small grandchildren aged 4 and 5 and my husband, Chris, (their Poppa) has made a mud kitchen. It's built of wood, no plastic save for the washing up bowl, and the kids get endless fun out of it which allows us to garden for a while. A few kitchen bits and pieces from Ikea or Amazon and job done. Chris made it from old wood and pallets, wood being expensive at the present.

We also invested in a small Wendy House which they love and which is currently being painted pink at the request of our granddaughter. Plastic is a cheaper option but if you can avoid plastic toys please do. Remember to remove them when they are outgrown or you give up your plot.

## Slug Patrol



As relatively new ploholders, it sometimes feels that when it comes to dividing up of produce, it is: one for the slugs, one for the pigeons and one for us. "Us" is very often missed out all together!

Netting has significantly helped when it comes to protecting our tender and growing plants from the attention of the pigeons, but slugs still remain an issue for us.

Never having had an allotment before, but knowing we really did not want to go down the route of any sort of chemical spray or pellets, we searched the internet and Facebook for more organic solutions. For the past couple of years we have tried various recommendations including:

- Copper strips are supposed to work well, but we have a lot of raised beds and that seemed a bit expensive to us.
- We tried circles of sharp sand, which probably worked for a bit, but after watering and weeding had to be replaced, plus we have to go and buy the sand just for this.
- We saved up all our eggshells over the winter, crushed them and again made defensive circles. A bit better than the sand, but not great. The upside is that the shells apparently do provide some soil nutrient. We still save the eggs shells and sprinkle them around the tomatoes, in the belief that it is helping them grow strong. One thing we are certain of is that egg shells do not prevent blight! By the way you can buy crushed whelk shells for similar application, but at circa £14 per bag, egg shells seem to be a more economical option.
- My husband controls the weeds on our paved paths by applying salty water. Although it does a great job of killing the weeds (and lots of slugs that cross the slabs at their peril) it clearly is not the solution for anything that you want to keep growing.
- Yeast: Orange peels with beer were fine, until something tried to eat the orange peel, open containers were fine until it raised and the beer evaporated, and a discussion with my husband was always on the books about what exactly I want the beer for!

Fortunately, we came across this slug trap idea online, tried it and was delighted by how many slugs have been caught!

You will need a large yoghurt (or similar) container, making sure that you keep the lid. Cut 3 or 4 x 1 cm wide slits near to the top of the container.





## Slug Patrol....cont

Bury the container up to the bottom of the slits.



We found it useful to water the ground prior to the inserting the containers into the soil, as you can “cement” the yoghurt tub in.

This will allow you to lift the container out later when you need to empty it, while maintaining the hole.  
Make sure that the soil is level with the bottom of the slits.

Slugs apparently have a (fatal) attraction to yeasty smells, so you can either use beer or make up the a flour and yeast solution.

### Mix together

- 4 cups of water            4 tsps sugar
- 4 tsps flour                2 packets yeast (which is approximately 3 tsps).

Fill the containers up to the bottom of the slits and make sure you place the lids on each container. This ensures that the mixture is not diluted when it rains and helps to slow down evaporation.

Final thought – make sure you empty the containers out regularly, it really smells if you leave it too long.

We are not sure if this the best slug trap, but we have certainly caught quite a few!

*Ed – I’ve heard that coffee grouts can keep slugs has anyone tried this out? These can be collected free from any coffee shop (Costa, Starbucks etc). They seem to be pleased that someone wants them! Let us know if you use other environmental friendly methods.*

## Rubbish

We know that rubbish on allotment plots is a real nuisance and how to get rid of it can be an issue. Please don’t bring anything onto your plot that you do not intend using. For those who have taken on plots that have rubbish on them and are in difficulties in getting rid of it, please let the committee know and we will come and have a word and see what we can do.

We cannot promise that we can get rid of it for you but if we can assist we will do our best. We do now have a metal collector available and can give you details so that you can make contact yourselves.

## WELCOME TO OUR NEW PLOT HOLDERS

I have not yet had a chance to meet and greet all recent newcomers who have taken on a plot but hope to do so over the next few weeks.

Bernadette and Alex have recently taken on plot 140. Alex remembers running around an allotment in Poland when his parents were gardening and Bernadette's mother has always grown plants and vegetables. They moved to Northampton from London 9 months ago. Their garden is small and they want to keep it for flowers and herbs and to relax in. They decided to check out the area, found WFAA and got one in May 2022.

They want to grow things to eat and Bernadette wants to grow some flowers to pick for the house too. They are going to try a little of everything and welcome any tips and hints on how to grow various vegetables.

Helen and Abi took on plot 58 in April. There is lots to do Helen tells me and they have big dreams. They want to be able to grow vegetables, beans, courgettes and potatoes. Wendy at plot 132 has given them lots of tips and advice which is most welcome.

The committee are pleased to welcome them and send best wishes for a long and happy association with WFAA.

If you are a newcomer, I will visit you on your plot and include you in the next editions of the newsletter.

## PESTS – RODENTS, BLACKFLY, SLUGS to name a few....

My granddaughter, Emilia aged 4.5 years knows all about Mrs Mouse. We plant peas in gutters, and melons, pumpkins and squash. During the night, Mrs Mouse and her family visit and eat them all. We planted a whole gutter of peas recently and she ate the lot! Emilia was not amused to say the least.

I start my peas in gutters in my greenhouse. I have now resorted to covering them in environmental mesh and pegging the tops with plastic clothes pegs – a very useful bit of kit for attaching nets. Every Wednesday when Emilia visits me, she checks the peas and her other seeds to ensure that Mrs Mouse has not visited. Huge sighs of relief when they are safe. Temper when she has been!

As a result, Mrs Mouse has given up in my greenhouse and is now visiting my neighbours, Paddy and Jan on their respective allotments. Apologies.

Blackfly seems to be a real issue on the allotments currently. Everyone is complaining about them infesting the broadbeans and other vegetables. My runner beans have attracted them as well as my globe artichokes. How to get rid? There are the usual chemical sprays to be purchased and you can now buy organic ones. I have tried the jet of water and the soapy water approach but these have not really worked so I have resorted to chemical sprays again which does keep them under control.

Geny on Plot 84 has come up with an ingenious slug trap and an article about it appears above.

If there are other pests that are driving you mad and possibly your neighbours, and you have found a way to dispose of them, please let us know so that we can share the information in later editions.



## **VOLUNTEERING OPPORTUNITY**

Some years ago, I was given this advice by someone who worked with the voluntary sector. **“Only volunteer for something you know you will enjoy, not for something you think you ought to do.”**

With that in mind, if you like dealing with money and figures, keeping records and producing financial reports, we have a great opportunity coming up as **Treasurer of the Allotment Association**. Our current very able treasurer Ron is retiring in October.

The role involves: -

- Reconciling the cash taken with the receipt book for the Shop, banking the money and keeping appropriate records.
- Paying large invoices by cheque (co-signed by another committee member)
- Maintaining a reportable record of dealings for committee meetings – once every six weeks or so.
- Calculating and organising the payment of rents each Spring. This is done in collaboration with other committee members and most payments now are by bank transfer.
- Preparing an annual financial report for the Annual General Meeting.

If you think this would suit you, please get in touch as soon as possible. The longer we have for a handover, the better. Our email contacts are at the end of this newsletter. Hope to hear from you soon. Fran Woodley, Secretary WFAA.

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## RECENT WORK CARRIED OUT BY THE COMMITTEE ON THE ALLOTMENTS

**The Allotment committee are a group of volunteers who give their time to manage and maintain the allotments. What is it they do?**

### **Gate Locks**

Well there are the gate locks – we either don't get the keys back when people give up their allotment or they are lost. Clive spends a lot of time getting keys cut so try to hold on to yours and remember to hand it in when you leave to retrieve your deposit.

Note that the key deposit is increasing with effect from 1 July 2022 to £20. You get it back if you leave your plot and return the key to us.

The boundaries have been cared for with the hedge on the far side of the allotments being cut back and grubbed out. This should encourage the birds and wildlife in the spring.

### **Road Maintenance**

We have mended the roads. Recently scraping the centre to remove the ruts and filling pot holes.

This is unfortunately a necessary task. The speeding signs say that 5mph is the allotment speed.

**This is a real necessity** because the roads are not tarmac and speeding vehicles cause a lot of damage to the roads, potholes, etc which need mending. If you are caught speeding more than 3 times, you will be evicted from your plot. We don't want that any more than you so **please remember first gear not third.**

### **Water Tanks**

We have replaced water tanks to ensure that everyone has access to water when they need it. Don't use the water to wash tools, ensure that you close the lid when finished. If your tank leaks or is broken please email [westonfavellallotments@gmail.com](mailto:westonfavellallotments@gmail.com) or report at the Hut on Sunday morning.

The lids that cover the water tanks stop evaporation but mainly keep out the light to stop blanket weed forming. These should be provided (made) and maintained by the plot holders nearby. Have a chat with the committee if you need help with materials.

### **Security and Machines**

We had a break in at the hut and equipment was stolen. Did you know? We claimed on the insurance and got £891 back with which we have purchased some new tools that you can borrow for £5 contribution towards repairs and fuel. See in particular, David, at the hut on Sunday mornings.

### **Site maintenance**

This can involve clearing plots by brush cutting and tree felling. We strimmed some plots on 11 June 2022 to stop the grass seeds from spreading and to help new plot holders.

We always need volunteers to join the working parties which take place on the first Saturday of each month. We work from around 10am to 1pm and if you can assist then please make yourself known.

The more hands to deal with the jobs the better.

If you have other skills that you would be prepared to donate a little of your time you'd be very welcome.



# Your very own discount shop ....

## The Hut!

*Unfortunately Some Prices have risen due to supply price increases.  
However some have reduced too!*

	1.5kg	2kg	20kg	25kg
Lime	£0.60		7.00	
Growmore		3.20		36.80
Fish, Blood & Bone		2.00		24.00
Potato Fertiliser		3.60		43.00
Bonemeal		1.75		20.00
Sulph, Potash	£3.45	4.60		
Sulphate of Ammonia (ideal for composting)	£2.00			
Rose Fertiliser (High Potash)	£2.25			
Nitrate of Chalk (High Nitrogen)	£1.60			
Chicken Pell. (E. Bird)	£0.95		15kg - £8.75	
Onion Fertiliser		£3.20		
Doff Tomato Feed 1ltr		£2.50		

<b>Sundries</b>	
3ft Canes	15 for £2.55
4ft Canes	10 for £3.50
8ft Canes	5 for £3.50
Green String 110mtr	£2.25
Plant Labels 4"	£0.50 for 25
Butterfly Netting 2m Wide	£1.70 per metre
Bird Netting black, 2m wide	£1.15 per metre
Bird Netting black, 4m wide	£2.20 per metre
Debris Net (fine gauge) 2m wide	£1.20 per metre
Debris Net (fine gauge) 3m wide	£1.80 per metre
Fleece 1.5m wide 30 gauge (Thermagro)	£0.45 per metre
Ground Cover 2m wide (Permatex)	£1.40 per metre
Mulchtex 2.5m wide	£1.00 per metre
Doff Organic Slug Pellets 400g bott	£2.90

### Equipment ....

Equipment for loan to plot holders;

**Petrol Rotovators \* £10.00**

**Strimmers \* £5.00**

**Lawn Mowers \* £5.00**

**Hedge Cutters \* £3.00**

**Overgrown Plot Clearance**

(operated by Clive)

**Wheeled Trimmer \* £10.00**

**Brush Cutter \* £5.00**

*\* This is not a cost to hire the equipment  
but to cover fuel and maintenance*

## To Rotavate or not?

Many people, when they acquire a new plot, or come back to their plot after an absence, look at the wilderness and think that the instant answer is to rotavate.

### **Beware!**

The commonest and most persistent weeds at the Weston Favell site are twitch or couch grass, bindweed and mare's tail.

All of these have deep roots and every little bit of root will grow.

So, if you rotavate and chop up the weeds, all you will do is create more!

Rotavating can save a lot of digging but is only useful on clean, weed free soil. To achieve this, there are several options.



The easiest is to cover the ground with porous membrane, cardboard or any other porous and light excluding material. Not carpet as this is banned. This will suppress the general weeds and when you remove it you will at least be able to see the pernicious weeds and dig them out. This is a good option if the ground is dry and too hard to dig. It is also a good way of keeping some of your plot under control while you tackle other parts. Various membranes are sold in our shop – Sunday mornings 10-12.

Digging is another option, removing all the weeds and composting them. Easier when the ground is moist and soft. Tackle a small area at a time.

Weedkiller is another option but very wasteful on long grass etc. Better to cut the tall weeds down and spray when they start to grow again. Use an organic option which doesn't stay in the soil, pick a windless day and be very mindful of your neighbours.

**Once you have your plot under control, or have cleared parts of it, then you can successfully rotavate!**

To help identify those weeds to avoid before rotovating pictures and a few facts follow:

### **Bindweed**

**Hedge bindweed** or bellbind (*Calystegia sepium*) with its pure white trumpet flowers is a familiar sight, choking plants in borders and twining around any plant shoot or cane.



**Field Bindweed** The smaller field bindweed (*Convolvulus arvensis*) with white or pink flowers can be problematic in long grass and bare soil.



## Bindweed - Cultural Control

These weeds are difficult to eradicate by cultural methods as their roots can extend deep into the soil

Digging: Fork out to remove as much of the roots when carrying out any routine autumn and winter digging. In spring as new growth appears, dig out new shoots

Hoeing: In areas where it is not possible to dig without disturbing plant roots, sever the weed at ground level with a hoe. This will need to be repeated throughout the growing season as new growth reappears

For more information and use of weed killer see: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/weeds/bindweed>

## Mares Tail (Horse Tail)

Horsetail (*Equisetum arvense*), often called mare's tail, is an invasive, deep-rooted perennial weed that will spread quickly to form a dense carpet of foliage, crowding out less vigorous plants in beds and borders.



Cultural control

Removing horsetail by hand is difficult. Although rhizomes growing near the surface can be forked out, deeper roots will require a lot of excavation. Shallow, occasional weeding is not effective and can make the problem worse, as the plant can regrow from any small pieces left behind. However, removing shoots as soon as they appear above the ground can reduce infestation if carried out over a number of years.

For more information including weedkiller control see: <https://www.rhs.org.uk/weeds/horsetail>



**Figure - Docks**



**Figure - Couch Grass**

Credit and Thanks for contributions to this Newsletter edition go to:

Carol Hill - article author and researcher;

Rose Etheridge - Photographer (Summer Flowers)

Geny Foster - Author: Slug Patrol and Elderflower Cordial;

Frances Woodley - author Rotovating;

David Walpole- All round Yoda

Trevor Berry Plot 18 - layout and presentation

If you would like to contribute to the Newsletter get in touch.

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