

GRAFHAM COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT  
&  
GARDENING ASSOCIATION  
News Letter 10/09



## Welcome to our Second Newsletter

**WE are still eager to hear about any land that may be suitable.....you tell us we will explore the possibilities!**

### **Stop Press: - Parish Council approve a plot of land for Allotments**

Recently, we have been advised that there is a smallish plot of land in Ellington Village (at the north end by the A14 slip road), that we may be able to use as a community garden it is approximately the size of a standard allotment plot. We have confirmed that we would be interested in this plot and an extraordinary meeting of the parish council has agreed to progress with the plot for use by Grafham villagers.

As this is a small plot and some way from the village the parish council have agreed to continue to search for available land.

### **Save on seeds, onion sets and much more.**

We have onion sets to purchase, manure and we will be taking orders for discounted seeds. (See separate mail for details)

We are always looking for contributions please email or post your gardening tips to:

[Barb\\_2\\_nyg@hotmail.com](mailto:Barb_2_nyg@hotmail.com)/14 Inhams Way

### **Are you interested in becoming a committee member?**

Helping us build and move forward with the Grafham Allotment and Gardening association if so please contact Simon Platts at [Simon.C.Platts@btinternet.com](mailto:Simon.C.Platts@btinternet.com)

## **It's all so easy or is it?**

You know I thought growing your own 'veg' was going to be easy just a stroll through the park or should that be garden? I had visions of lovely salads with most of it home grown.... ah the taste of it would be incredible; yep I couldn't wait to get going. I started well enough I bought a small Greenhouse, planting pots, grow bags and sacks and of course the seeds.

Then things started going pear shaped. The trays I bought were not deep enough for the onion seeds, the grow sacks were probably too deep for the seed potatoes. The potatoes sprouted O.K. and kept on growing and growing until it looked like they were going to take over the greenhouse, meanwhile the onions had also burst forth but shriveled up through lack of water. By this time I was also growing tomatoes in my rather overcrowded greenhouse and red cabbage and some left over seed potatoes outside in a small vegetable plot. In addition I was trying to grow red peppers and courgettes in pots.

Well things started to go badly wrong, and in quick succession, it was too hot in the greenhouse, that I had a constant problem of wilting plants, it was also too wet outside where the slugs and snails were having a 'king's banquet' on my Cabbages. My tomato plants were going the same way as my potato plants, huge amount of greenery but very few developing fruits.

Anyway to cut a short story long I had almost no potato's, gave up the one sided fight with the slugs over the cabbages and gave up with the onions after trying to transfer them from the seed tray to the grow bag which they didn't like and promptly withered away.

The final chapter to this sorry tale is I might just get a few 'toms'. Am I going to give up on the whole idea of growing my own?

Absolutely not and can't wait to get going again this time though, with more of a sense that this is not easy and you have to work at it.

Happy gardening,

Nigel

## **Recipe of the Month**

### **CHUTNEY** Sent in by Simon Platt

Use up your unripe toms and your over grow courgettes with this great Chutney recipe:-

1kg marrows or overgrown courgettes, diced  
1kg tomatoes (red, green or a mixture), skinned and diced  
500g cooking apples, peeled, cored and diced  
500g onions, peeled and diced  
500g sultanas  
500g light soft brown sugar  
600ml white wine vinegar  
About 2 teaspoons dried chilli flakes, according to your heat preference  
1 teaspoon salt

*For the spice bag:*

25g dried ginger pieces  
12 cloves  
2 teaspoons black peppercorns  
1 teaspoon coriander seeds

Tie up all the ingredients for the spice bag in a piece of muslin.

Put it in a large, heavy saucepan with all the rest of the ingredients and bring slowly to the boil, stirring occasionally.

Simmer gently for 2-3 hours, uncovered, stirring occasionally to ensure the chutney does not burn on the bottom of the pan.

The chutney is ready when it is rich, thick and reduced; if you draw a wooden spoon through it, the mixture should part to reveal the base of the pan.

Pot up the chutney while still warm (but not boiling hot) in sterilised jars with plastic-coated screw-top lids; these are essential to stop the vinegar interacting with the metal.

Leave to mature for at least 2 weeks – ideally 2 months – before using.

Note: To sterilise jars, just put them through a cycle of the dishwasher and leave them until dry. Alternatively, you can wash them thoroughly in hot soapy water, rinse in fresh hot water, then put them to dry in a low oven for at least half an hour.

Again any recipe suggestions would be gratefully received at:

[Barb\\_2\\_nyg@hotmail.com](mailto:Barb_2_nyg@hotmail.com)/14 Inhams Way

### **GARDENING TIPS FOR NOVEMBER:**

- \* Time to plant late flowering spring bulbs, such as Lilies and Tulips.
- \* Dig up and divide established plants that are overcrowded and re-plant them.
- \* Apple and pear trees need to be pruned.
- \* Dig over vacant ground and work in well rotted manure or compost.

## **Guerrilla Gardening** – What is that? I hear some ask!

Traditionally this is where disused and waste land was taken or reclaimed and given a purpose. Guerrilla gardeners believe in re-considering land ownership in order to reclaim land from perceived neglect or misuse and assign a new purpose to it. Some guerrilla gardeners carry out their actions at night, in relative secrecy, to sow and tend a new vegetable patch or flower garden. Others work more openly, seeking to engage with members of the local community; it has grown into a form of proactive activism or pro-activism ([www.wikipedia](http://www.wikipedia) 2009). Similar projects are happening here in the UK, although technically there are no real waste areas within Grafham there are several areas, that fall outside people's boundaries for example around Inhams way there are grassed areas outside boundary walls who is responsible for them ??? the parish council as they arrange for their upkeep, on Church Road and Brampton Road there are wide grass verges and I'm sure others know of plots of grassed areas that fall under the Parish council's remit to keep tidy.

## **What's On?**

As an association we plan to become proactive within the community and to raise funds to help us provide gardening focused services and facilities for our members.

- A competition for village children and Spaldwick School children to design a logo for the GCA&GA
- Leaflet Drop
- Vegetable hanging baskets
- All interested in the allotment project showing solidarity at the Parish council's monthly meetings
- A Village Garden Calendar

If you would be willing to help us out with any of the above ideas please contact Simon or Clint on [Simon.c.platts@btinternet.com](mailto:Simon.c.platts@btinternet.com) or [j.c.thomasmorgan@btinternet.com](mailto:j.c.thomasmorgan@btinternet.com)

## **Food for Thought**

The greatest gift of the garden is the restoration of the five senses. ~Hanna Rion

"Dull November brings the blast,  
Then the leaves are whirling fast."

- Sara Coleridge [www.egreenway.com](http://www.egreenway.com)

Let us love winter, for it is the spring of genius."

- Pietro Aretino

If there is ice in November that will bear a duck, there'll be nothing after, but sludge and muck' (motto from The Country Diary of an Edwardian Lady)

## Quiz Corner

### Herbs and Kitchen word search

L	I	R	R	U	O	P	T	O	P
R	E	T	A	R	G	O	Z	A	A
O	C	M	I	N	T	T	R	Y	N
S	U	X	O	B	A	S	I	L	S
E	P	B	W	N	L	H	S	I	D
M	E	O	R	E	G	A	N	O	N
A	L	W	Y	M	V	R	U	T	O
R	D	L	P	Y	Q	R	A	S	O
Y	A	B	C	H	I	V	E	S	P
O	L	N	M	T	L	E	G	A	S

**BASIL**  
**BAY**  
**BOWL**  
**CUP**  
**CHIVES**  
**DISH**  
**GRATER**  
**LADLE**  
**LEMON GRASS**  
**MINT**

**PANS**  
**PARSLEY**  
**POTS**  
**POTPOURRI**  
**OREGANO**  
**ROSEMARY**  
**SAGE**  
**SPOON**  
**THYME**

## Childrens Corner

**Why did the frog cross the road?**

So he could hop a bus!

**Why do birds fly south for the winter?**

It's too far to walk!

**How do you make a potato puff?**

Chase it around the garden

**What kind of sharks never eat women?**

Man-eating sharks



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If you have any thoughts or suggestions on services you would like us to provide, events you would like to see us organize please contact Simon at [simon.c.platts@btinternet.com](mailto:simon.c.platts@btinternet.com)

GCAGA Committee Members are:-

Clint Thomas-Morgan	Chairman	<a href="mailto:j.c.thomasmorgan@btinternet.com">j.c.thomasmorgan@btinternet.com</a>
Sarah Smith	Deputy Chair	<a href="mailto:sarahsmith.1@btinternet.com">sarahsmith.1@btinternet.com</a>
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