

The HARTHILL Plot

Spring has sprung issue

March/April 2016

Spring at last - and welcome to new friends

Spring - the most exciting time of the year for most allotmenters, when hope springs eternal. Our spuds are going to be huge, our apples delicious and our pumpkins record breakers. For now, anyway.

We also get a lot of new tenants at this time of year, so a special welcome to all of you. It's worth reminding our new colleagues -and some not so new ones - of a few things.

First of all, having an allotment is meant to be fun, so make sure you enjoy yourself. Don't be afraid to ask more experienced plotters for advice, or even just have a chat. There are, of course, one or two rules you should be aware of. This isn't the place for a long lecture so you can save a lot of trouble by reading your tenancy agreement and Harthill's rules. Just a few reminders for now (and see separate box for advice about fruit trees): keep your *paths clear* so they can be mowed and other tenants can get by; don't *cut into* the paths, it makes mowing even harder work and we'll just fill the gap in anyway; *don't go onto other plots* (unless invited for tea and biscuits, of course); take any *rubbish* you can't burn or compost away with you.

Happy growing!

Before you plant that tree.....

Everyone likes a fruit tree on their plot. But before you plant one, read this. Harthill has rules about new fruit trees, not for the sake of it, but to avoid pitfalls from the past. Before you plant a tree you have to get the permission of the committee (you can email us). The wrong sort of tree can cause all sorts of problems, in particular excessive shading, obstructions to mowers, and encroachments on to neighbouring plots. Your cute little pear tree could end up dominating several plots in a few years time, possibly after you've left! You needn't worry - permission will not be unreasonably withheld, we just want to make sure that new trees are grafted on **dwarf stock** (so they don't grow too big) and are planted where they **won't cause an obstruction**.

I know what you're thinking. How about those huge fruit trees scattered round the site? These have generally been there for years and we're not going to tell people to cut down trees that have been happily producing fruit for years. But some of them do illustrate the problems we want to avoid. One of them now has to be looked after as a communal tree as it just became too much to manage. So remember - before you plant a new fruit tree, just ask!

FOOTNOTES.....

- * Thanks to new committee member Mike Curtis we will soon have our own singing dancing **website**. We'll advise you by email when it's up and running.
 - * If you must play **music while you work**, please keep it at a low volume. Not everyone shares your musical tastes and a lot of us like to enjoy the quiet and the birdsong.
 - * Same for **dogs**, really. If you bring a dog on to the site please keep it under control. I like dogs but not everyone does.
 - * Please use the **chippings** at the end of the path. Ideal for paths, tree mulching.
 - * Don't build weed or rubbish mounds - you'll come to regret it later.
 - * Whilst we wait for our **manure** supply, remember you can get vast amounts free of charge from nearby **Beechley Stables** (just down the road).
 - * Please empty **wheelbarrows** on your plot, not by the shed.
- That's enough rules, so finally, admire our **brand new ramp** to the compost toilet!

