

North Hainault Allotment Holders Association & Protection Society Ltd

Members' Newsletter

March 2017

Previous newsletters and more articles can be found on our websites:
nhaha.org.uk
 AND nnr-allotments.org.uk

Vegetable Shortage

Supermarket giants have restricted shoppers from bulk buying salads grown in the Mediterranean on account of the bad winter conditions and serious production losses in countries such as Spain and Greece. The price of courgettes is at an all-time high and even British grown produce is becoming increasingly expensive. What better time to grow your own! Apart from the cost of veg in the shops, home grown produce is so much more tasty, especially cucumbers and tomatoes! There is also the added benefit of knowing that your food has not been saturated in chemicals and of course the exercise you get during the process!

First Prize Photo
by Keith Meakin



**TRADING HUTS
OPEN**
Sundays 10am to 12 noon

**THE
WATER
SUPPLY TO
THE TANKS
WILL BE
OFF FOR
ANOTHER
MONTH**

Have you seen
Allotment Friends
on **Facebook**
This is a closed group
that has been newly
created just for tenants
of NHAHA

Alternatives to Carpet

As many of you will know we have had a considerably large amount of carpet on our sites. Most of this has now been removed, but there is still some lurking around on pathways and around sheds and compost bins. So what can be used instead of carpet?

This depends on the purpose of the carpet being used in the first place. For suppressing weeds on areas that are to be used for growing, cardboard and black plastic are good alternatives; cardboard and a thick layer of bark chippings are great for pathways as they not only suppress the weeds but are reasonably dry to walk on and will eventually rot down.

A few stone slabs around sheds can be easily removed at a later date as can bricks. Let's see how creative we can be without the carpet.

Allotment Sheds

Our lease with the council allows each plot-holder to erect a shed up to a size of 5' x 7'. Allotment sheds are often built of reclaimed materials and can look quite quirky. How they are used is often quite varied too. You may be considering building a new shed on your plot – will yours be 'shop bought' or will you be creating your own design? Below are some examples for inspiration...



Corrugated iron, pallets, old fruit trays and fencing form the basis of these sheds ...



Jobs in March

March is the best month to have a bonfire as most hibernating animals will have moved out by then, but move or turn-over a pile before you set it alight. To avoid incinerating any 'tenants' toss the pile a few times to wake them up and give them a chance to escape. March is also the best month to 'tidy up' your plot, prepare your compost bin and make your final plans for the growing season.

SPRING FACTS

This year the spring equinox falls on 20th March and the season will last until the summer solstice on 21st June. The equinox is an astronomical event in which the sun crosses the celestial equator - the projection of the Earth's equator into space. It is when the days become longer than the nights, giving more daylight hours. Meteorological spring begins 1st March and ends 31st May and to add more confusion: The clocks go forward one hour on Sunday 26th March at 1am.

What to Sow in March/April

Indoors

Aubergine Capsicum Celeriac
Celery Brussels Sprouts Tomato

Outdoors

Artichoke Broad Bean Cabbage
Garlic Leek Lettuce Onion
Parsnip Shallots Peas Potato
Radish Rhubarb Spinach
Turnip

Phew!

Contact the Committee

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Volunteers Always Needed
Can you spare some time to help?

