

# The Plot

May 2011

A newsletter for members of Kettering Allotments

## Successful campaigning

### First communal rain water collection point built for Scott Road



This has been put in a place that is very far from the mains water troughs, to benefit those members whose plots are nearby.

Could you help to build something like this?

Can you provide any materials?  
**(this example cost nothing!)**

If so, see your field steward, or email the secretary (details below)

## Water Questionnaire

The committee is distributing a questionnaire to all members over the summer. This is to survey the opinions of our members about using mains water. The results will help guide the committee in future policy and will be published in the newsletter once compiled.

If you do not receive a questionnaire, contact us



Following our alert in the April newsletter, many members emailed and wrote to the Government “Burdens” team and our MP to maintain the protection enjoyed by allotments under current legislation. We received very supportive replies from our Mr Hollobone, MP for Kettering and also Jim Hakewell, the then leader of the Borough Council (KBC). The response from the “Burdens” team was also quite positive and we await developments. Many thanks to all members who wrote and emailed. This was an efficient and successful campaign.

## Photography Competition

Following the success of our poetry competition earlier in the year, we are launching a **photography competition**. The prize is a year’s rent for up to 10 poles next year.

The winner will have their allotment **rent-free** for 2012!

### Competition Rules

Rules:-

1. One entry per member.
2. The photo must be taken on an allotment in Kettering.
3. **All entries must be digital** photos (jpg files).
4. Entries to be e-mailed.
5. Entry gives permission for Kettering Allotments to use the photo on its website and other publicity.
6. The judges’ decision is final.
7. First prize is one year’s free rent (up to maximum of a 10 pole plot for the year 2012).

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**DOGS – rule reminder**

Please remember our [rule](#) number 6, namely dogs must be kept on a lead and not allowed to roam over other members' plots. The field stewards get regular complaints from members who have been distressed by irresponsible dog nuisance of one kind or another.

## Communication

If you are intending to give up your allotment, or wish to reduce the area, please let your field steward know as soon as possible. We can adjust the records, send correct rent reminders and allocate plots to those on the waiting list.

## Free Rotavator

One of our members has donated a very old "Merry Tiller" rotavator to the association. It almost goes, but will need some renovating to work properly. It has a manual with it, which will help in repairs and renovation.

This will suit someone who knows their engines and mechanics. If you want it, please email us. We have not set a price, but suggest a suitable donation to the association funds.

## Economies of Scale

Northfield Avenue members have negotiated a 10% discount on bulk (20+ bags) of corn etc for chicken feed.

Individuals are unlikely to need such bulk, but they can join with others. Those members with chickens who would like to benefit from this should contact Pete or Sandy Ludwig at the Northfield Avenue field or email

[sludwig@kettering.gov.uk](mailto:sludwig@kettering.gov.uk)

## New Policy – Scott Road gates

The committee has agreed that the new gates on the Scott Road field should be kept closed at all times. This will help security and prevent dogs belonging to members of the public using the right of way footpath wandering over our plots.

Will all members close the gates behind them – no need to lock them during the day, but lock them if you are the last out!

## Margaret Rd Gate

We have received a complaint from our neighbours about the noise made at the Margaret Road Gate. The resident works nights and needs to sleep in the mornings. Please try to open the gate quietly, **switch off car radios** and do your best not to disturb the neighbours.

## Free manure

Telephone Dai to arrange collection  
01536 483398

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## Bridgstock Cup

### Stones (kill 2 birds...)

Many members have been helping to fill the pot holes on the tracks and ridings to our fields.

The drive is now getting smoother. Many thanks for those "levellers".

Some members have also provided hardcore and pieces of broken slabs to fill the potholes.

This is welcome, but please check with your field steward, as there have been some instances of fly tipping and some **sharp** stones that may puncture a tyre.

Allotments are **NOT** rubbish tips, and such dumping will be considered a disciplinary matter.

### Contact us

Email us on the address below

[pumpkinking@ntlworld.com](mailto:pumpkinking@ntlworld.com)

If you wish find out more about our association please visit the website

[www.ketteringallotments.co.uk](http://www.ketteringallotments.co.uk)

### A Shameful Act

It is with great regret that we have to report that a member on Scott Road had their rainwater stolen! This had been collected over the winter for use on the member's plot. When he looked in his barrels, the lids had been removed and the water taken.

The Bridgstock Cup is a fine trophy awarded to the best plot in our four fields. The committee has now appointed the judging panel for this year's award and they will be making their assessments over the next few weeks. This year's winner will be announced after the August committee meeting.

The cup is awarded annually by the committee to the plot holder who, in the opinion of a sub-committee, is deemed to have the best plot from all of the association's sites.

The criteria we look for are: a neat and tidy weed-free plot, a variety of produce, vegetables, soft fruit, flowers, evidence of composting, collection of rain water for irrigation and general good gardening practices.

### History of the Tom Bridgstock Cup

This cup was won by Tom Wallis Bridgstock known to his family as 'Pop' in 1913, 1914 and finally in 1921 when he kept it permanently as a three-times winner.

After winning the cup twice, he became a soldier in the First World War and whilst he was away fighting, his mother refused to hand back the cup until, in her words, "the boys come back".

Tom was a shoe worker all his working life and obviously he was a keen gardener in his leisure time. During his retirement he was a cobbler working from his garden shed mending shoes for his family and neighbours.

He passed away in 1967 at the age of 87.

The cup was donated to our association in 2006 by his grandchildren - Mrs Jan Crick, Mr Bud Bridgstock, Mr Neil Bridgstock, and Mrs Karen Parisi

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## Suggestions from our members

One of our members has made the following suggestions on ways of coping with the current drought.

You may like these thoughts for the next Newsletter. Its what I have been doing lately. *from Diane Bulley*

1. Move compost bins nearer to your water source. The decomposing material needs water, this saves carrying it. Also have your compost material nearer to the bins. A bed of Comfrey is useful.

2. Get better germination in dry weather by sowing Parsnip, Carrot, and Beetroot seed in fibre pots, they germinate in a week in the greenhouse. These pots should be stood in a solid bottom seed tray in about half an inch of water to stop the fibre pots drying out. When the seedlings are big enough transfer to the plot preferably in rows near to your water butts, check daily as the dry earth around the pots will dry them out.

Just a can of water alternate days until the seedlings get stronger and penetrate the pots. Sow pea seed in 2" pots and keep moist by the same method in a tray. This prevents germination failures and saves wasting gallons of water on rows of seeds where it just leaches into the ground, and dries out.

3. Celeriac is a Bog Plant ! I have made a bog for my 15 plants using compost as a raised bed, to keep it wet and conserve water with just a can full alternate days.

4. Use Haxnick cloches or make 20" high cloches with plastic covered wood strips, to over winter your Spring Cabbage plants. Protects them from birds. They are a welcome crop when the Purple Sprouters are finished, in April . The Cabbages are perfect, lovely flavour, no more leathery leaves !

5. Use any kind of material to mulch round the rows, to conserve moisture for the plants.

6. Grow plenty of Courgettes as they dont mind being dry. Fry the sliced fruit in butter, drain and tray freeze for Pizza bases in the winter. Make up the Pizza base using 9 ozs Wrights Premium Bread Mix (the small packets from Sainsbury's, they do one with sun-dried Tomatoes) 2 tablespoons Olive Oil, 4 fluid oz Warm water, half a teaspoon Sea Salt. Allow the dough to rise once in a warm place, then roll out to fit an 8"x12" flat baking tray. Spread with a third of a tube of Tomato Puree, lay plenty of Courgettes on top of the Puree, then a large Onion sliced and fried. Then 4 ozs shredded sliced cooked Ham, and 8 slices of Low Fat English sliced processed cheese on top of that. Bake for 20 - 25 minutes in a pre-heated oven until the base is a nice medium brown.

Never say you dont know what to do with Courgettes again !