

Kingston Federation of Allotment Gardeners

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Working together for Kingston's allotments

The Federation aims to:

- * *Promote and encourage allotment gardening in the Borough of Kingston upon Thames.*
- * *Provide information, support and advice to sites considering voluntary management of their Allotments.*
- * *Build relationships within and between the allotment sites so that ideas and experience can be shared.*
- * *For general allotment enquiries and updated information sheets about setting up a Plot holders' Association and Voluntary Management of allotment sites, contact the Secretary: gloriawallis@hotmail.co.uk. Tel: 020 8942 9686*



Self-seeded Spring salad leaves

This is our first newsletter for some time; however, we have been here throughout, answering your questions and helping with a range of site issues from lease renewals to Association problems. We have also responded to calls from the public desperately seeking an allotment, an overwhelming number, especially during the first year of the pandemic.

If you have questions or problems at your site do get in touch with us and we will do our best to help, to advise, to supply information or guide you in the right direction.

Committee changes: We are sorry to announce that Dudley Hewson has stepped down and would like to thank him for all his hard work for the Federation since its inception. And welcome to Andrew Brodie from Groveland Way allotment site. The Committee are now: Joan McConn, Chair; Gloria Wallis, Secretary; Ian Jewell, Treasurer; Lucy Launder and Andrew Brodie Committee members. We will be holding our AGM Wednesday, 6th April at 7.30pm at the Searchlight Centre by the entrance to Kingston Road Allotment site. Please let us know if you plan to attend so we have an idea of numbers to cater for.

Raeburn Avenue Allotments became a Voluntary Managed site bringing the total to 14 out of 22 in Kingston.

Toilets on Allotment Sites—3 sites : 3 different solutions

Kingston Vale installed 2 loo cubicles many years ago, thanks to sterling work by Jim Hunt and Dudley Hewson. The onion shaped fibre glass septic tank for waste water is pumped out about every 2 years at a cost of approx. £300 a time.

Addison Gardens installed the first compost loo on a Kingston allotment site in 2011. This cost little beyond the purchase of a shed and wood for the platform and steps. Voluntary labour provided the rest. Sawdust and wood shavings are the only addition. Maintenance and care are provided by site members.

Elm Road rented a Loo which was serviced by the supplier and a site volunteer checked it daily to replace loo rolls, soap etc. To reduce costs, they then purchased one second hand - which is still in use today. A daily check is still carried out and the 5-6 services a year cost around £60 per time.

Community Asset Listing

Two allotment sites in Kingston now have Community asset status. For further information on the potential benefit of this and how to apply, please contact us.

The FANTASIA blackberry was discovered growing on an allotment in Surrey (*believed to be Addison Gardens Ed*) "The canes are very vigorous, thick and thorny and bear outstanding crops of extremely large blackberries..... It has an excellent flavour and quality and is the only variety to have the subtle flavour of the wild blackberry. " Kenmuir.co.uk (*according to some, it is a bit of a thug. Ed*)

PTO

A History of Beverley Park Allotment Site, New Malden

A peaceful and secluded spot, in a corner next to Beverley Park and partially bordered by Beverley Brook, this is one of the Borough's smaller sites with a suitable growing area of 17.5 full plots, although it feels spacious. Some shaded areas are unsuitable as allotments and are grassed over.

Malden and Coombe Urban District Council bought the land to be used for Beverley Park in 1906 for £6,000 but it was not until 1913/14 that the land was drained and the area set out as a park with shrubs and trees planted, a central footpath, tennis courts, cricket, football and hockey pitches and a children's play area.

In July 1940, responding to a government directive that every piece of suitable land should be brought into cultivation for food crops, more than 6 acres of the Park on the southern side to the central main path, apart from the Rose Garden, was given over for Temporary Allotments as part of the "Dig for Victory" campaign. In 1942 the putting green was dug up and a further acre added to the allotment site giving 99 full (10 rod) plots which were all let and there was a waiting list.

In 1952 it was decided that all but 2.7 acres would be returned to use as park land and in 1953 the Council agreed that the remaining plots would become a Permanent Allotment Site. A chain link fence was installed and a mixed hedge of hornbeam and beech planted to separate the allotment site from the park, as it is today.

In 1982 the site decided to take up the Council's proposal and become voluntary managed, run by a committee of its plot holders. Beverley Park was the first of several sites around this time to take on independence and has been successfully V.M. for 40 years.

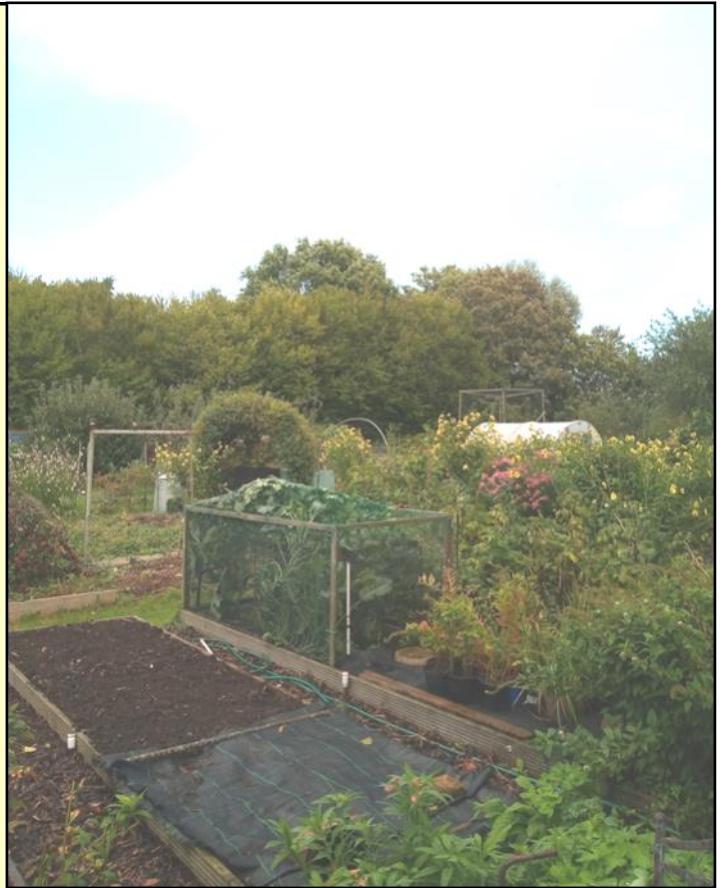
The Association still uses the old stable built in 1915 to house the horse, known as "The Lady Mare", which was used to pull the mower to cut the grass in the park.

In 1994 the driveway area was added to the allotment land to enable vehicle access directly to the site without crossing park land or coming into contact with the public.

In 1999 the "Millennium Orchard" was planted by ploholders at the far end of the site, on a strip of land unsuitable for an allotment, as part of a Council initiative to plant more trees.

Beverley Park is a very popular site; it has been fully let with an ever-increasing waiting list since 2000. It has an active Association and holds open afternoons when the public are welcomed in to see what goes on in our 'secret gardens', to enjoy delicious tea and cakes and buy a wide variety of plants.

This year is the 40th Anniversary of our voluntary managed status and we will be opening the site on Saturday 9th July, from 2 – 5.30pm. We are hoping to have some very special visitors - the NEW MUGs, a local ukulele band, to entertain us all. Do come along and join us. GW.



The Community Brain and Shedx Growing Ideas in Tolworth project produced a small book "Shedx – Grow for Good" about their project, and also celebrating the history of allotments in areas of Kingston. K FAG were happy to help. Contact@thecommunitybrain.org for a copy.

The book also refers to the landmark Model Agreement for voluntary managed allotment sites in Kingston. A standard lease agreement for all sites in the Borough was negotiated between the Federation and RBK in 2008. This was such a positive measure but with various staff changes at RBK there have been a few hiccups over the last few years. We trust that these will soon be resolved and sites becoming Voluntarily managed or renewing their leases will find the process more straightforward. If your site is renewing your lease—please check with us to ensure you have the updated version.

The grounds management company idVerde has been replaced by Glendale ... We wish them well.