



# GREENFINGERS:

## Your allotment newsletter

### Issue 9: November

#### Message from the Property Services Team: Becky and Julie

We can't quite believe that we are approaching the end of another year, how time flies!

As we approach the winter months, many of you may think it becomes quieter on the plots, however there are many good reasons for you to keep visiting during the winter months. For example, it's the perfect time to plan your plot for next year including planting a range of crops that can be enjoyed over the winter months, such as leeks, cabbages, brussel sprouts and kale.

As always, this newsletter will be uploaded onto the NELC Allotment webpage, please let us know if you have anything you'd like us to share or if you have any content ideas for future editions.

#### Thinking of giving up your plot?

As we slowly come to the end of the year, it's a time where some tenants give up their plots.

If you are thinking of terminating your plot, please contact the allotment office or complete the online termination form which you can access [here](#).

Completing the form helps to save time and allows us to relet plots sooner rather than later to get them back in action for the new season.

#### Repairs & Maintenance

Do you need to report a broken tap, faulty padlock or damaged fence?

If so, call us on 01472 324696.



#### Why not take your children to the plot?

We've seen an increase of families taking on plots this year.

Children can enjoy the benefits of accessing healthy food, exercise and contact with nature.

The National Allotment Society have produced a leaflet to examine ways of ensuring that their time at the plot is enjoyable and safe. The leaflet can be accessed [here](#).

#### How to contact the team

Property Officer Allotment Team: Becky Ablard and Julie McFarlane

Allotment Office: 01472 324696 or

[allotments.enquiries@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:allotments.enquiries@nelincs.gov.uk) - Monday to Friday, excluding bank holidays.

Allotment website: [nelincs.gov.uk/leisure-and-things-to-do/allotments](http://nelincs.gov.uk/leisure-and-things-to-do/allotments)

NELC Security: 01472 325715 or 01472 313131 – 24 hour phonenumber



Working in partnership





## Fires

Small fires are now permitted onsite until the end of February. If you are planning a fire, please first consider if this is the best way to dispose of the material.

- Keep bonfires to a reasonable size
- Only have them during clear dry weather
- Only have them when there is little wind
- Don't cause a nuisance to households or highways with smoke.
- NEVER leave them unattended
- Ensure they are FULLY extinguished before leaving the plot

Anyone found not obeying the above will receive an official warning.

## Asian Hornet Invasion

The yellow-legged Asian hornet is a highly effective predator of insects, including honeybees and other beneficial species, which can cause significant losses to bee colonies and other native species. The fear is that hornet populations will have potential serious consequences and impact on insect diversity in countries where it is now established. It is important to report any suspected sightings of these.

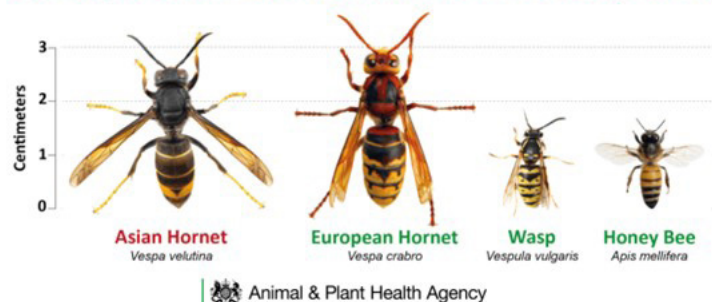
A Government free app has been launched to quickly and easily report possible sightings - The 'Asian Hornet Watch' app is available to download from the **Apple** and **Android** app stores.

Alternatively, you can submit sightings to [alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk](mailto:alertnonnative@ceh.ac.uk). When submitting, please include as much information as possible, such as location name, photos and a contact number.

In June 2023, **Hull Live** reported that a family had found a suspected Asian hornet, therefore these insects are potentially close to the North East Lincolnshire area.

The British Beekeepers Association have shared a DIY Asian Hornet monitoring trap. Details and an easy video can be found at [bbka.org.uk/faqs/how-to-make-an-asian-hornet-trap](http://bbka.org.uk/faqs/how-to-make-an-asian-hornet-trap).

## Think you've seen an Asian Hornet? Report it!



## Water

Water at all sites will be switched off early December. Ensure you have topped up any water butts before this time.



## Why make compost?

Save money, improve your soil structure and enhance its fertility by composting your garden waste and producing 'black gold'. You can even compost weeds.

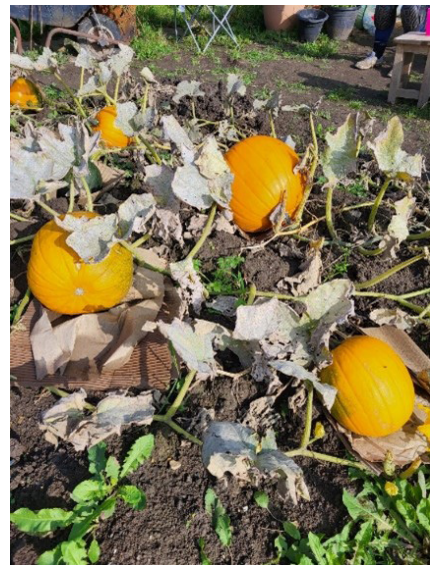
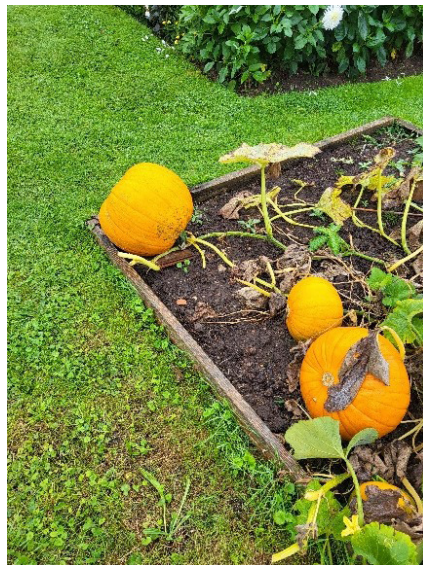
For more information visit **NSALG Why Make Compost**.



### Look at those pumpkins!

During our site visits in the last couple of months, we have been very impressed with the fabulous huge pumpkins you have been growing. Here are just a few examples.

If you have carved a particularly impressive pumpkin, made something bizarre or a delicious recipe using your produce, we would love for you to share with us at [allotments.enquiries@nelincs.gov.uk](mailto:allotments.enquiries@nelincs.gov.uk).



Becky Ablard, our Property Officer, along with her children and pup all got into the swing of Halloween this year!





## Speeding and one-way systems

We are once again receiving complaints of people driving too fast onsite. Please keep to the speed limit and drive at 5mph for the safety of yourself and others.

If your site has a one-way system in place this must be adhered to for the safety of all on-site.

## Concession rental rate

If you are currently in receipt of Universal Credit, Job Seekers allowance or Disability allowance you will have received a letter or email recently requesting that you forward evidence to the allotment office proving that you are still in receipt of these benefits.

In order for the concession rate to be applied to your 2024 invoice, we must receive this information by the end of November 2023. If you fail to provide this information you will automatically revert to a standard rate invoice.

Our system does not automatically update to apply a concession rate if you turn 60. If you have already turned 60 and are not receiving a concession rate, please contact the allotment office as soon as possible.

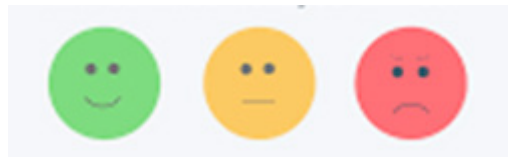
## Tenant survey

A tenant satisfaction survey will be emailed to you in January 2024.

If you are yet to tell us your email address, please contact the allotment office so we can update your records.

Once you have received this email, you will have 4 weeks to complete the short survey.

Unfortunately, we had a poor response rate earlier this year with only 13% of tenants completing the survey. Please take the time to complete the survey so that we can see which areas are working well and which require improvement.



## Site representative reminder

Each allotment has a site representative, excluding Saltings (on a temporary basis).

The reps are responsible for ordering skips and are an ideal first point of contact for any queries you may have.

A reminder of reps and where to find them:

- Carr Lane – Dave Griggs – Plot 592
- Littlecoates – Wayne Smith – Plot 12a or site hut
- Peaksfield - Tony Fisher – Plot 175
- Saltings – Contact Allotment Office
- Springfield – Alan Tregunno – Plot 20a
- Weelsby – John Hall - Plots 12, 20, 21 & 101
- Winchester – Andy McCurdy – Plot 65



## Apple Crumble Recipe

Do you have a recipe you would like to suggest in future newsletters? If so, please send it through to the allotment office with a photo.

Here is our first recipe supplied by Carla who is a tenant on Carr Lane allotment.



### You will need:

- 1.5kg mixed apples, (I like to use half Bramley)
- 150g golden caster sugar
- Dash of cinnamon
- 50g cold unsalted butter
- 100g plain flour

### Baking instructions:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C/400°F/gas 6.
2. Peel and core the apples, then quarter and chop into 3cm chunks.
3. Place in a saucepan on a medium heat with 100g of sugar and a dash of cinnamon.
4. Pop the lid on and cook for 5 minutes, or until the apples have softened. Remove the heat and leave to cool a little.
5. Meanwhile, cube the butter and place in a mixing bowl with the flour. Rub together with your fingertips until it resembles breadcrumbs, then scrunch in the remaining sugar to add a little texture.
6. Transfer the apples to a baking dish and sprinkle over the crumble topping.
7. Bake in the oven for 25 to 30 minutes, or until golden and bubbling. Delicious served with vanilla custard.

## Site occupancy

As requested, here are the latest occupancy levels:

| Occupancy based on plots available to let |            |
|---|------------|
|   | 01.11.2023 |
| Carr Lane                                 | 60%        |
| Littlecoates                              | 98%        |
| Peaksfield                                | 99%        |
| Saltings                                  | 96%        |
| Springfield                               | 98%        |
| Weelsby                                   | 92%        |
| Winchester                                | 76%        |





### Official warnings

Just a reminder that we operate on a policy that allows for a maximum of 3 warnings and if this is exceeded it will lead to termination. Any official warning will be issued in writing and logged on your record.

Please also remember that any serious breach of tenancy can also result in immediate termination.

## Site updates

### Carr Lane

A Carr Lane tenant has had great success this year using the no dig method. They have shared their experience:

*"Back in January I started my allotment as 100% no dig. To start, all I did was lay the cardboard down and overlapped the cardboard to the width of what I required. Then mixed topsoil and manure so it was laid on top of the cardboard. As the cardboard decomposes the plants that are on top are growing. At the end of every season all you do is lay compost and whatever organic material you have to hand. The worms take it down enriching the whole bed."*

Here are some photos of how it looks:



Everyone at the allotment office would like to say a massive thank you for allowing us to share your experience!

The National Allotment Society recommend that November is the ideal time to begin or top up with a thick 2-3 inches of mulch. This time of year, the soil is still moist and worms can access the compost and pull it down to the soil beneath, aerating and adding nutrients as they go.

If you are interested in finding out more there are various free websites which go into further detail about this.

Here are a few to get you started: **Soil Association Advice**, **Royal Horticulture Society Advice** and **Charles Dowding Advice**.



## Peaksfield

Peaksfield Community Allotment Association successfully applied and was awarded lottery funding to construct an allotment community polytunnel. The community polytunnel was officially opened on 16 September by Councillor Dan Westcott.

The polytunnel is for the use of all Peaksfield tenants. If you are a Peaksfield tenant and would like further details, please contact a committee member or email them on [Peaksfield.allotments@gmail.com](mailto:Peaksfield.allotments@gmail.com).

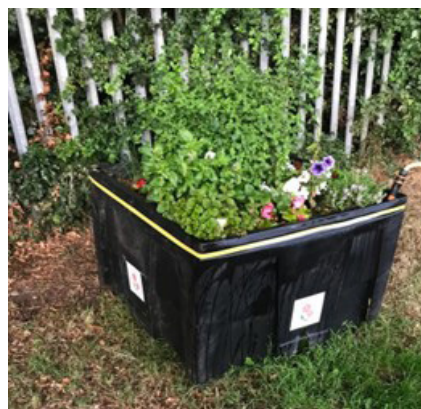
The Peaksfield Community Allotment Association have also since successfully won a bid for Ward Funding. This will help finish off the polytunnel works and the communal area behind the brick shed.



## Springfield

Congratulations to Scartho in Bloom who won a Silver Gilt award 2023.

Part of the inspection included a viewing of Springfield Allotments. A colourful planter was installed within the allotment boundary which has been maintained by Springfield tenants. The judges commented that the site was well maintained and community orientated whilst supporting and encouraging local wildlife.





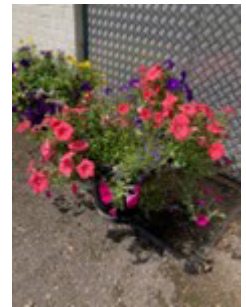
## Saltings

The Saltings Allotment Association hosted a Produce Show in July.

The winners of the produce made from plot grown produce were as follows:

- Jam: 1st Sally Bromley, 2nd Linda Revell, 3rd Janet Gaiger
- Jelly: 1st Jill Freer, 2nd Janet Gaiger,
- Chilli jam: 1st Linda Revell, 2nd Jill Freer
- Pickled beetroot: 1st Linda Revell, 2nd Jill Freer
- Runny honey: 1st Billy Booth, 2nd Chris Freer, 3rd Ed Bromley
- Set honey: 1st Billy Booth, 2nd Chris Freer
- Fruit wine: 1st Linda Revell, 2nd Linda Revell
- Fruit vinegar: 1st Linda Revell
- Cakes: 1st Janet Gaiger, 2nd Billy Booth
- Biscuits: 1st Chris Freer, 2nd Sue Statham
- Scarecrows: 1st Ed and Sally Bromley, 2nd Ali and Ana, 3rd Ellie Holmes

A huge well done to all the winners and to those that took part. Here are a few fabulous photos from the event.



Saltings also hosted a fundraising day on Saturday 23 September for Macmillan and Nunny farm. An AMAZING £1002 was raised for the two great causes!

## Weelsby

Community Payback are slowly continuing to clear over-grown plots.

They have currently been called away to other projects but will be back to Weelsby to continue their brilliant work as soon as possible.

Here is a before and after example of an overgrown area that has been cleared:







### Don't forget to renew your membership

Are you already an Associate member of Winchester, Weelsby, or Carr Lane or are you interesting in joining?

Grimsby & District Allotment Association memberships are due for renewal in January 2024.

If you are interested in joining the association, please see your site representative who will pass on the correct contact information. (Associations are not affiliated with the landlord).

### Seasonal jobs – Some monthly advice from the National Allotment Society

To view a whole year of monthly jobs visit: [nsalg.org.uk/growing-advice/monthly-advice/](https://nsalg.org.uk/growing-advice/monthly-advice/).

**November:** No time to rest. There is just enough daylight to clear and tidy up the allotment of any old crops in preparation for next year. Don't leave the remains of summer crops to rot and harbour overwintering pests and diseases. Wait for a clear, crisp, sunny day and go for it. You'll feel shattered but a lot better at the end of the exercise.

**December:** The year is coming to an end and the shortest day is in this month, which heralds the slow advance towards next season. So, take a bit of time to reflect on your successes and to consider what went wrong with some crops. Always remember, there are no failures in gardening, it is always down to the weather, furry things or, if all else fails, Acts of God. Allow yourself a little relaxing time around the New Year and be ready to hit the ground running.

**January:** January is probably the coldest period of the winter and on top of the floods and heavy rains of just before Christmas it is well worth taking the time to look over the allotment and prioritise the jobs for the month. Top of the list has to be clean up the plot and dispose of all of the damaged and rotten crops. Don't worry too much about soil preparations for now just concentrate on clearing the way for a February blitz; weather permitting of course. Most of the overwintering vegetables will have suffered under the wet conditions so make a list, visit the site shed or garden centres and get the replacement seeds or bulbs you need.

### Bees

We have seen a big increase in requests to keep bees at many allotment sites. Bees are a fantastic addition to allotments to increase pollination of crops. More information about bees and their benefits can be found at, [bumblebeeconservation.org](https://bumblebeeconservation.org).

If you are thinking of keeping bees, please remember that you must first request permission from the allotment office as there are certain requirements and guidelines that must be followed. To access the application, click [here](#).

A tenant at the Littlecoates allotment recently installed a fantastic set up for a new hive.

