

August 2018: Seeing The Face Of Climate Change

This summer scientists [stated](#) that we can now see the face of Climate Change. Imagine trying to grow your crops in the hottest, driest summer since 1976 - without access to piped water. That is the challenge facing the Northfield allotment community...



Allotment holders Phil and Heather at Northfield allotments.

The Tale Of The Missing Water Supply



Over half of the site is now covered in weeds - many plots have never been properly cultivated. Northfield allotments is a small site of 18 quarter-plots created in 2014 by the Craigentenny and Duddingston Neighbourhood Partnership. A water supply was part of the plan. A pipe from the mains was laid and this runs into the allotment. But it wasn't connected up and standpipes never materialised. The job was not completed, leaving the site without a water supply. When the same Neighbourhood Partnership provided the comparable allotment site at Lochend Square the Area Board agreed on 5th March 2015 that the £10,000 price is “an essential cost that had to be included”.



Phil has no need to work out at the gym. Each 90 litre barrow-load is wheeled 400 metres from his home.

For the past 4 years Northfield ploholders have had to negotiate the busy A1 to draw water from the services provided by an Esso petrol station. Not easy when you're carrying heavy buckets. And not possible if you suffer a physical disability. Phil and Heather, pictured, who live in the area convey water in containers via a wheelbarrow from their home 400 metres away.



Phil and Heather on their plot. An oasis in the desert.

It is to the ploholders' credit that, given these challenges, anything at all is being successfully grown here. By the sweat of their brow a few crops have been produced. But the effort of forcing success out of the dry earth is squashing enthusiasm for the good life from the remaining ploholders and causing the site to become derelict - as can be seen from these photographs.



What's the point of this "security" fencing - that stops short of the edge of the site? It's useful for growing runner beans up, admittedly.

Plotolders have been speaking to local councillors - so far to no avail. Cllr. Alex Staniforth of the Scottish Greens has [raised](#) the issue but apparently without success. FEDAGA has offered to meet up with elected representatives and has sought to speak with officials to try to seek a solution. 4 years with nary a drop is 4 years too long. Watch this space.



All the details for entering your Allotment Show exhibits are on the FEDAGA [website](#). A limited number of paper copies of the show schedule have been sent out to site representatives.

We hope you will consider entering some of your produce into the Show. If you've never done this before - IT'S FUN! Every year people visiting to look at other people's efforts always say "oh, I wish I'd entered something". And if you have an artefact on the plot, in your

shed, or somehow related to allotment gardening that might be of interest to others or could be considered somewhat peculiar we'd like to see it. Please bring it along and share it with the rest of us.

If you have a glut of apples, bring them along and we'll put the apple press to work and make some delicious fresh apple juice.

Expert advice for plants with pathologies will be dispensed by Dr. Mark Hocart, Dean of Edinburgh Campus, Scotland's Rural College (SRUC). Tantalise our tastebuds in the Plot To Plate category with apple pie, vegetable cake, jam, jelly and chutney.

There's the children's section featuring a photography competition as well as the traditional veggie monster and miniature garden in a seed tray.

And there's Heritage Potatoes as well. Full details [here](#).

The Annual Tattie Boiling



"One spud or two, Madam?"

Stuart McKenzie writes:

One of the highlights of the year at Inverleith allotments is the annual 'Tattie Boiling'. It originated at another site, Balgreen - now long gone - established by a socially-minded plotholder, Johnny Hamilton. He'd invite everyone along to boil fresh potatoes and serve with plenty of butter and possibly a tune from his guitar. That was over thirty years ago.

We celebrate both the incredible diversity of the potato and all that is good about allotmenting. Everyone lifts a few tubers of their own crop, cleans them up and we cook and eat them. Steaming seems the best way we've found. Plenty of chat about which tastes best but the main reason is simply a get-together. Maybe a glass of something to accompany the samples too.

This year we enjoyed over a dozen different varieties; some commonplace, some from our trial with SASA (Science and Advice for Scottish Agriculture) who let us try and report back on some of their old varieties from their seed bank.

All quite different but all enjoyable. We even baked a few in the embers of a communal bonfire we'd had the day before.

I'd encourage sites to arrange their own 'Tattie Boiling' and enjoy the common bond we all share - the taste of a good tattie straight out of the ground.

The full list...

Amandine, Arran Pilot, *Aura*, *Bonnie Dundee*, Charlotte, *Hunters Gold*, *Irish Peace*, Kestrel, Nicola, Orla, Pink Gypsy, Red Duke of York, *Ulster Lancer*. (Those supplied by SASA *in italics*.)

WEST MAINS ALLOTMENTS

OPEN
DAY

Sunday
5 August
1-4pm

Come & explore our allotments ...





- ~homemade allotment veg stew and baking
- ~allotment produce, jams, preserves-flowers for sale
- ~pond-wildlife area

Entry Free



blackford avenue edinburgh eh9
disabled access along watertown rd
www.westmainsallotments.org.uk

Helpful Hints For Gardening In A Drought

Two important factors for keeping your veggies going in this hot, dry spell are - (1) apply water in the evening after the heat of the day has passed and (2) improve growing conditions by digging in organic matter to retain moisture and applying a mulch on top to limit evaporation. More useful details including how best to plant out and what to choose are available from the National Allotment Society [here](#).

GARDEN OPEN
FOR CHARITY

Craigentinny and Telferton Allotments
Telferton Road, off Portobello Road,
Edinburgh EH7 6XG

Sunday 5 August
2pm - 5pm

£3.00, children free
for Craigentinny Telferton Allotments and SGS Beneficiaries

Homemade Teas, Plants for sale,
Children's activities

Full information at
SCOTLANDSGARDENS.ORG

Registered Scottish Charity No 01421

Scotland's
GARDENS
Scheme

SAGS Advice On Allotment Consultation

As was mentioned last month the Scottish Government is giving you until **August 20th** to comment on Local Authority guidance for the

latest allotment legislation. The Scottish Allotments and Gardens Society (SAGS) has prepared some advice for those wishing to participate. You can read a summary [here](#).

As you'll see there is a general agreement, but with some clarification required on upgrading from a half to a full plot, self-managed sites being required to feed back waiting list information and devolution of management responsibilities. We now seem to be in a very good place with this and our thanks (and those of future plotholders) really should go out to SAGS for their diligent work to get us this far.

Background information from SAGS can be read [here](#). The relevant Government webpage containing papers and the opportunity to comment is [here](#).



Have You Got Cabbage Aphids?



Rachel Kehoe writes:

I'm currently doing a PhD using cabbage aphids as a model system to look into how climate change might impact insects. As such I need some cabbage aphids. I was wondering if any of you would be willing to check your brassicas for aphids and post them to me? I would naturally reimburse any costs and any donors would be mentioned in the resulting paper.

The address to send your samples (in a reasonably rigid container, please) is:

Rachel Kehoe,
Centre for Ecology & Conservation,
College of Life and Environmental Sciences,
University of Exeter,
PENRYN,
TR10 9FE.

Further information on cabbage aphids can be read [here](#).



K.C.A.A.

Annual Show

Saturday 18th

August 2018

1pm- 4pm


10am deadline for entries

1 entry per category

Children's Categories

- Children's "Best One Square Metre Plot"

(Collect stick with flag to identify position on your plot)

- Tallest Sunflower 
- Animal made from Fruit and/or Vegetables
- Mini-Garden in a

- Seed Tray

Adult Categories

BEST PLOT

Guest Judge

KCAA Community Spirit Award - for contribution to life of the site

(Vote by KCAA members)

Planted Container

(Portable)

Maximum 50cm diameter

Plot on a Plate

(collect a foil platter)

Longest Runner Bean



Biggest Crop of Potatoes in a

Bag £1 donation for black plastic bag. Supply own potato. More than one entry permitted

Produce from your Plot

4 Categories 

- Sweet e.g. jam
- Savoury e.g. chutney, pickles
- Baking
- Drink e.g wine, cordial



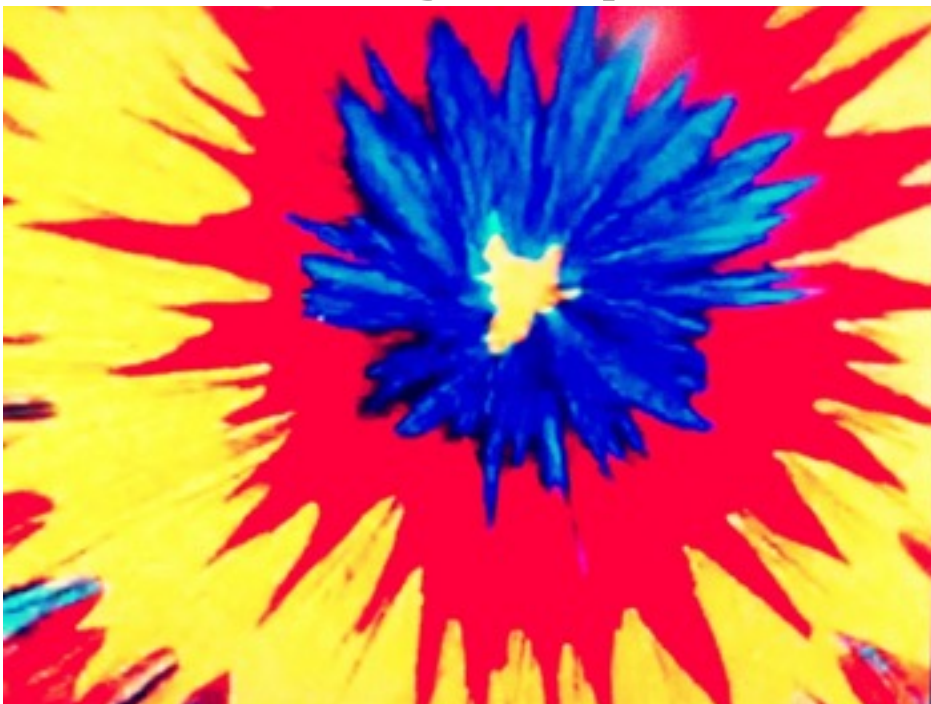
Vase of Flowering Stems

Vase diameter maximum 15cm



The Killandean Community Allotments Association site is at Kirkton South Road, Livingston EH54 7BH

...and finally: Explosive News!!



Someone found a hand grenade on a new allotment site opened in Fife last year.

They took it to the police who said it was a practice grenade and nothing to worry about. Then another was found and someone went to the papers, who went to the military who said it was for real. They exploded the pair of them.

Then another turned up...

The site was created using heavy equipment to plough and scrape it all flat. Incredible nothing went off then. Anyway, the site is now closed. No one is allowed to dig and Fife Council is paying for a full site clearance involving all sort of ground detection radar and whatever. Crops will be picked and returned to plot holders as each plot is investigated.

There's always someone worse off!

(For more details, pull the pin out [here](#).)